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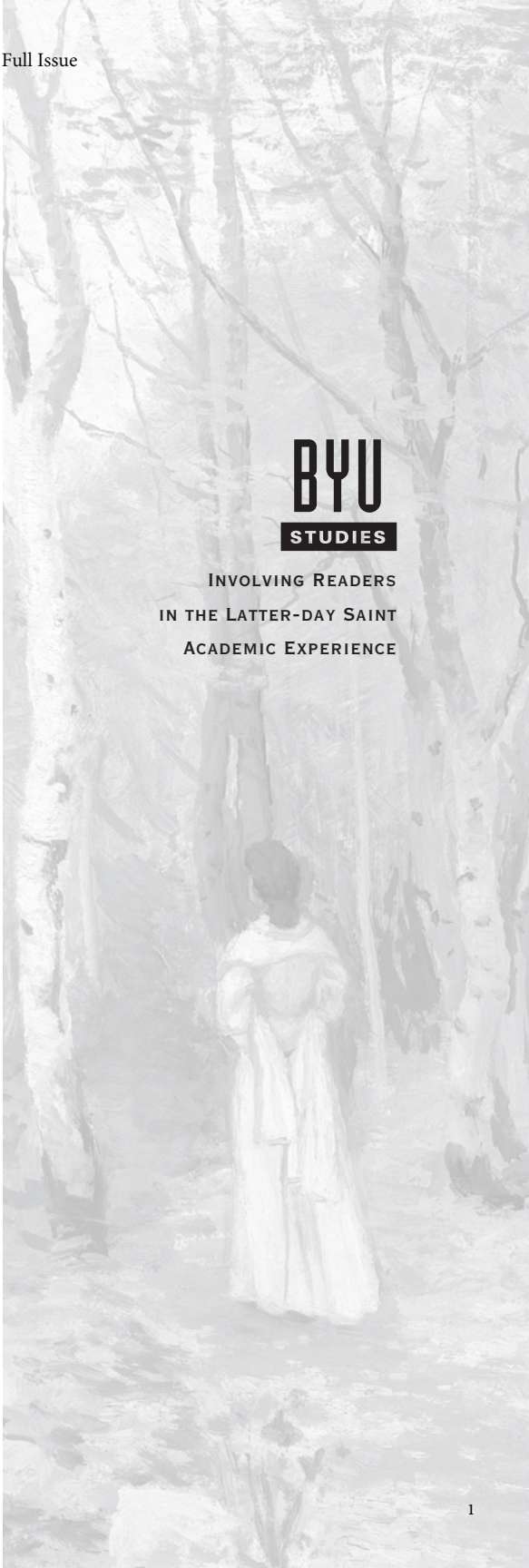

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With a recent resurgence of interest in Calvinism, Robert L. Millet's comparison of the teachings of Joseph Smith and John Calvin is timely. The Restoration, says Millet, provides a "striking contrast" to the Reformers' views on the Atonement, divine election, the depravity of man, and God's grace.

Joseph Smith Encounters Calvinism

Robert L. Millet

Joseph Smith once remarked that he intended "to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the whole world."[1] He hoped that "Mormonism" would "revolutionize and civilize the world, and cause wars and contentions to cease and men to become friends and brothers."[2] Doctrinal disputes dominated the centuries before the time of Joseph Smith. Religious wars and theological debates raged between Catholics and Protestants in Germany during the Thirty Years War (1618–1648), as well as between Puritans and Episcopalians in England during the Cromwellian Revolution (1640–1660). The underlying issues long remained hotly debated.

Mormonism, which did not spring into existence in a spiritual or intellectual vacuum, offered divine responses to what Christians of Joseph Smith's day either generally accepted or were still discussing. For example, many Reformers such as John Hus (c. 1374–1415), Martin Luther (1483–1546), and John Calvin (1509–1564) emphasized the exclusive authority of the Bible, salvation by grace alone, and the "priesthood of all believers," which was in direct opposition to the Catholic reliance on traditions in addition to scripture, on ordinances in addition to grace, and on the necessary powers of bishops and priests. Among the main points of controversy were five ideas advanced by the Calvinists, namely, the total depravity of man, God's unconditional election of certain people, the limited nature of the Atonement, the irresistibility of God's grace, and the perseverance of the Saints. These basic tenets of Calvinism were formulated in response to the "five points

1. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 366.

2. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 316.

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of Arminianism." After giving a brief account of the Calvinist-Arminian controversy, this article will compare the teachings of Joseph Smith on these same five points of doctrine. My focus of attention will be on the prevailing views of Calvin, but I will also bring the Arminian points of view into the discussion as well—not only because these points clarify the essence of these important debates, but they also sharpen the comparison between Joseph Smith and John Calvin, showing just how relevant, useful, and distinctive the theological contributions of Mormonism actually are.

The Controversy Between Calvin and Arminius

John Calvin was a French theologian and Protestant reformer whose influence continues to be felt throughout the world today. Recent decades have seen a major revival of Calvinist or Reformed theology, particularly among Evangelical Christians. Reactions to Calvin's teachings in the sixteenth century came almost immediately and most strongly from reformer Jacob Arminius (1559–1609) and his followers, known as the Remonstrants. Arminius was a Dutch theologian who himself had been schooled in the emerging Reformed tradition but had begun to find fault with its premises and conclusions. After Arminius's death, a document called the Five Articles of Remonstrance was prepared to set forth the major views and concerns of Arminius and his followers. Its points included:

1. God decreed from the foundation of the world that certain individuals who accept Jesus Christ and his gospel will receive eternal life, while all rebellious unbelievers will be damned. In other words, Arminians believed in predestination but not in unconditional election of individuals to eternal life.

2. Jesus Christ suffered and died for the sins of all humankind, but only the faithful (namely those who accept him as Lord and Savior) will enjoy the reconciliation and pardon that come through the Atonement.

3. Man cannot obtain saving faith through his own unaided efforts; he cannot generate it within himself; divine aid or grace is required.

4. The grace or enabling power provided by Deity is the channel that initiates the process of conversion, is the power by which one is sanctified throughout life, and is the final means by which one is glorified in the world to come.

5. Some cooperative and synergistic endeavor exists between man and God; yet this cooperation, on the part of man, is merely a nonresistance to God's outstretched hand.[3]

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3. I have taken the liberty of paraphrasing and summarizing these principles, as set forth in Roger E. Olson, *Arminianism: Myths and Realities* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2007), 32. See also Kenneth J. Stewart, *Ten Myths about*

As Roger Olson of Truett Seminary at Baylor University has explained, the Arminian Articles had direct bearing on doctrines such as original sin, the salvation of children, grace, repentance, faith, and mercy: "Arminians believe that Christ's death on the cross provides a universal remedy for the guilt of inherited sin so that it is not imputed to infants for Christ's sake." In other words, "in Arminian theology all children who die before reaching the age of awakening of conscience and falling into actual sin (as opposed to inbred sin) are considered innocent by God and are taken to paradise."[4] Moreover, the Remonstrants taught, in harmony with their Dutch leader, that "Christ's atoning death on the cross removed the penalty of original sin and released into humanity a new impulse that begins to reverse the depravity with which they all come into the world." In other words, every person born into the world is entitled to what the Remonstrants called "prevenient grace," which is "simply the convicting, calling, enlightening and enabling grace of God that goes before conversion and makes repentance and faith possible." This initial grace is, however, resistible by those who choose to reject Jesus's pardoning mercy.[5] Finally, the Remonstrants did not set forth an official position relative to the question of whether a man or woman may fall from grace or whether they enjoy "eternal security" following conversion.[6]

A noteworthy proponent of Arminian theology was John Wesley (1703–1791), the father of Methodism, a man President Brigham Young more than once lauded to be as good a man as lived on earth.[7] Today, many millions of Christians hold to the principles of Arminianism, whether they be Methodist, a part of one of the many offshoots of Methodism (the Holiness movements), or Baptist. Many Christians today, who may not be precise about or knowledgeable of their own theological tradition—even a surprising number who have a Reformed background—hold to Arminian perspectives. Their own personal, homespun version of religion is often instinctively more Arminian than Calvinistic.

The Synod of Dort, however, held in 1618–19 (over a period of seven months), opposed Arminius. The final decree of this council was the response of the Reformed theologians to the Remonstrants' challenge. Only thirteen Arminian representatives were present at this synod, and they were not allowed to vote. As a result, Calvin's system became a major part of

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Calvinism: Recovering the Breadth of the Reformed Tradition (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2011).

4. Olson, *Arminian Theology*, 33.

5. Olson, *Arminian Theology*, 34–35.

6. Olson, *Arminian Theology*, 32.

7. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards and Sons, 1851–86), 7:5; 11:126.

orthodox Christianity's statement of faith and eventually was incorporated in 1646 into the very significant Church of England document known as the Westminster Confession of Faith. Essentially, the followers of Calvin responded to each of the "five points of Arminianism," namely, (1) freedom of the will, (2) conditional election, (3) universal atonement, (4) resistible grace, and (5) falling from grace.[8] The Calvinist theologians then created the acronym TULIP to set forth their basic beliefs on these five points. The letters refer to:

T = Total Depravity
U = Unconditional Election
L = Limited Atonement
I = Irresistible Grace
P = Perseverance of the Saints

In short, the Five Points of Calvinism were a direct reaction to the Five Points of Arminianism.

With this as background, I now turn to compare these five principles of Calvinism and Reformed theology with the teachings of Joseph Smith and the Restoration's perspective on each of them. The following discussions draw from the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the teachings of Joseph Smith and his apostolic and prophetic successors in order to clarify the similarities and differences between LDS teachings and the key points of doctrine advanced by John Calvin and his adherents still today.

1. Total Depravity

A Reformed Perspective

Calvinism rests upon the central teaching of the sovereignty of God the Almighty. He is the Father of lights. He is over all, above and beyond all. Nothing takes place that is not part of his mind or his plan. God embodies every virtue, every divine attribute, and every positive quality. He has all power, knows all things, and is, inasmuch as he is incorporeal, everywhere present, in and through all things. Further, God is holy. As a transcendent and eminent being, he is separate and apart from all his creations and stands independent of the same. He is timeless (outside of time), impassible (incapable of feeling pain or suffering injury or damage), and immutable (does not change).

8. See Frank S. Page, *Trouble with the Tulip*, 2d ed. (Canton, Ga.: Riverstone Publishing, 2006), 26–28.

Mortal men and women, on the other hand, are fallen, corrupt, wayward, prone to evil, rebellious—they are depraved. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, to be sure, but as a result of the Fall that image has been bent and marred. Humanity is unholy. In other words, no one deserves to be saved; all are sold under sin and deserve only to be damned and condemned by the wrath and justice of God.

Our good works, as Isaiah was instructed, are as "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). It is not that men and women are as bad as they can possibly be, nor is it impossible for them to perform noble actions, but rather every facet of the human personality is corrupt and at odds with the purposes of Deity. Total depravity is not, as Edwin H. Palmer has observed, absolute depravity. "Absolute depravity means that a person expresses his depravity to the *n*th degree at all times. Not only are all of his thoughts, words, and deeds sinful, but they are as vicious as possible. . . . It is not that he cannot commit a worse crime; rather it is that nothing that he does is good. Evil pervades every faculty of his soul and every sphere of his life."[9] The Heidelberg Catechism clarifies that good works are "only those which are done from true faith, according to the law of God, and to His glory."[10] Palmer adds: "A relatively good work, on the other hand, may have the correct outward form but not be done from a true faith or to the glory of God. Thus non-Christians can perform relatively good deeds, even though they themselves are totally depraved."[11]

An LDS Perspective

Joseph Smith taught that we worship "a God in heaven, who is infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, the same unchangeable God, the framer of heaven and earth, and all things which are in them" (D&C 20:17). Our Father in heaven is a gloried, exalted, resurrected being, "the only supreme governor and independent being in whom all fullness and perfection dwell; . . . in Him every good gift and every good principle dwell; He is the Father of lights; in Him the principle of faith dwells independently, and He is the object in whom the faith of all other rational and accountable beings center for life and salvation."[12] The Almighty sits enthroned, "with glory, honor, power, majesty, might, dominion, truth, justice, judgment,

9. Edwin H. Palmer, *The Five Points of Calvinism: A Study Guide*, enl. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1980), 9.

10. Question and Answer 91, cited in Palmer, *Five Points of Calvinism*, 11.

11. Palmer, *Five Points of Calvinism*, 11.

12. *Lectures on Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 2:2.

mercy, and an infinity of fulness" (D&C 109:77). He is not a student, an apprentice, or a novice.

In 1840, Matthew S. Davis, a man not of the LDS faith, heard Joseph Smith preach in Washington, D.C. In a letter to his wife, he explained that Joseph taught, "I believe that there is a God, possessing all the attributes ascribed to Him by all Christians of all denominations; that He reigns over all things in heaven and on earth, and that all are subject to his power." Davis also reported that he heard the Mormon prophet say, "I believe that God is eternal. That He had no beginning, and can have no end. Eternity means that which is without beginning or end."[13]

As to the nature of humanity, Latter-day Saints often distinguish between *eternal man* and *mortal man*. We believe that we are the spirit sons and daughters of God, that we have upon us God's image and likeness, and that within us, albeit in rudimentary form, are divine attributes and qualities. In short, we have the power and potential, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, to grow spiritually and become more and more Christlike, more and more like God, to become, as Peter taught, "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4).

At the same time, we live in a fallen world, are conceived in sin (Moses 6:55; see also Ps. 51:5), and inhabit a corruptible and fallen body. While Latter-day Saints do not believe they are either accountable or responsible for Adam's transgression in Eden (Moses 6:53; A of F 2), it is safe to say that they are affected dramatically by that fall—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. In the words of the brother of Jared, "because of the fall our natures have become evil continually" (Ether 3:2). We are, in the language of Lehi, "lost because of the transgression of [our first] parents" (2 Ne. 2:21). In my view, there are few doctrines that receive a stronger confirmation in daily life than the Fall. People are sinful, they stray, they often avoid what is elevating and yearn for that which is despicable. If they are devoid of divine aid and without spiritual resuscitation, they remain forever lost and fallen (1 Ne. 10:6), enemies to God and to themselves (Mosiah 3:19; Alma 41:11), spiritually stillborn. This is a sobering perspective on the Fall, but without it there may be no solid reverence for the holy Atonement; one does not fully appreciate the medicine if he or she does not suspect or take seriously the malady.[14]

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13. Joseph Smith Jr., *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), 4:78–79.

14. See Ezra Taft Benson, *A Witness and a Warning* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 33.

And yet in spite of the clarity of teachings, particularly within the Book of Mormon, regarding the cataclysmic effects of the Fall, few Mormons would speak of humankind as "totally depraved" by nature. For one thing, most followers of Joseph Smith would state that because God had forgiven Adam and Eve their transgression in Eden, there is no "original sin," "original guilt," "curse of Adam," or taint perpetuated through the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve (Moses 6:53–54; see also Moro. 8:8). From an LDS perspective, the Fall was as much a part of the foreordained plan of the Father as the Atonement; Jesus was indeed "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8; Moses 7:47). We are not now, as traditional Christianity would aver, a part of God's Plan B, Plan A having been foiled by our first parents' presumptuous and power-hungry quest to be like the Almighty.

C. S. Lewis did not hold to a traditional Christian view of human depravity either, but rather represents eloquently a perspective similar to the views and attitudes of Latter-day Saints. For one thing, Lewis concluded that if people are depraved, they cannot even decide between what is good and what is evil. "The doctrine of Total Depravity—when the consequence is drawn that, since we are totally depraved, our idea of good is worth simply nothing—may thus turn Christianity into a form of devil-worship." Lewis also observed: "I disbelieve that doctrine [total depravity], partly on the logical ground that if our depravity were total we should not know ourselves to be depraved, and partly because experience shows us much goodness in human nature."[15]

Lewis observed that the Fall offered "a deeper happiness and a fuller splendour" than if there had been no Fall. Because man has fallen, he pointed out, "for him God does the great deed." For man, the prodigal, "the eternal Lamb is killed." Thus "if ninety and nine righteous races inhabiting distant planets that circle distant suns, and needing no redemption on their own account, were made and glorified by the glory which had descended into our race"—namely Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God—then "redeemed humanity" would become "something more glorious than any unfallen race." "The greater the sin," he continued, "the greater the mercy: the deeper the death, the brighter the rebirth. And this super-added glory will, with true vicariousness, exalt all creatures and those who have never fallen will thus bless Adam's fall."[16] Or, stated more simply, redeemed humanity will rise to greater heights hereafter than unfallen humanity.

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15. C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 32, 59; see also C. S. Lewis, *Christian Reunion and Other Essays* (London: William Collins Sons, 1990), 60.

16. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 162.

It has been my experience that few Christians with whom I have associated are completely comfortable with the stark expression that people are by nature totally *depraved*. That word seems an apt description of characters like Ghengis Khan or Adolf Hitler or Ted Bundy or Osama bin Laden, but very few of us have daily dealings with such types. As a result, my observation is that there has been an effort among Christian writers to make this concept more palatable.[17] Many of my Reformed colleagues speak instead of "Total Inability,"[18] of men and women's incapacity to extricate themselves from the chains of hell without the intervention of a Savior. They note that total depravity is merely a graphic expression intended to sober us to the everlasting reality that we are helpless and hopeless without the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ and the cleansing powers of his Atonement. As my Evangelical friend and colleague Richard Mouw put it, "Even if we were not fallen, we would be totally dependent on God's goodwill."[19]

In summary, Joseph Smith's teachings provide a more optimistic picture of the human race than either Calvinism or Arminianism, both of which hold to a view of human depravity. The Book of Mormon describes us as fallen and lost, natural men, without the mediation of Jesus Christ (1 Ne. 10:6; Mosiah 3:19). At the same time, there would be no place within LDS circles for a kind of Edwardsian "sinners in the hands of an angry God"[20] motif; neither would there be place for the Arminian claim that man "by himself [can] neither think, will, nor do any thing that is truly good."[21] All humans are the spirit sons and daughters of their Father in Heaven, Latter-day Saints are taught, and from him we inherit remarkable spiritual possibilities.

2. Unconditional Election

A Reformed Perspective

John Calvin taught clearly that God loves all of his children and would that all might be saved. As I have indicated above, however, no single person *deserves* to be saved, for, in the words of Paul to the saints at Rome, "all

17. I say this in light of the revival of the old-time Calvinism through the writings and sermons of such contemporary Evangelical Christians as John Piper, R. C. Sproul, James Montgomery Boice, and John F. MacArthur.

18. See Palmer, *Five Points of Calvinism*, 14.

19. Richard J. Mouw, *Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport: Making Connections in Today's World* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2004), 28.

20. Jonathan Edwards (1703–58) is perhaps the most revered Calvinistic theologian/evangelist of the First Great Awakening.

21. The Five Articles of the Remonstrants (1610), Dennis Bratcher, ed., www.crivoice.org/creedremonstrants.html.

have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). However, the Almighty chose from before the foundations of this world—long before they were born on earth (while they were yet only anticipations in the mind of the Father)—to save a portion of his creatures whom he designates as the *elect*. All others are among the *reprobate*, the lost, the damned.

The Westminster Confession explains that the elect are chosen, not for any act of their own, not for any grand deeds they will necessarily perform as mortals, but rather as a supernal manifestation of God's loving kindness. The reprobate are damned from eternity. The elect are those who will respond to the word in mortality, while the reprobate will remain outside the pale of heaven's mercies and Christ's salvation.[22] This doctrine, known to the world as predestination, affirms that God's purposes will not fail, that salvation will come to his elect unconditionally. Richard Mouw calls this a form of "divine selectiveness." It is "a divine power that seems to reach down and grab a person by surprise." Further, he adds, "many of us have to admit that our coming to faith has a strong element of being drawn in against our own inclinations."[23]

Another Calvinist aptly described the reaction to divine election or predestination by most persons on the street: "When the terms *predestination* or *divine election* are used, a shiver goes down many people's spines; and they picture man caught in the clutches of a horrible, impersonal Fate. Others—even those who believe in the doctrine—think it is something that is all right for the theological classroom, but that it has no place in the pulpit. They would rather have people study it in secret in the privacy of the home." This writer went on to certify, to the contrary, that predestination "is perhaps the finest, warmest, most joyous teaching in all the Bible. It will cause the Christian to praise and thank God for saving him, a good for nothing, hell-deserving sinner."[24]

Or, as R. C. Sproul has declared:

> Our final destination, heaven or hell, is decided by God, not only before we get here, but before we are even born. It teaches that our ultimate destiny is in the hands of God. Another way of saying it is this: From all eternity, before we ever live, God decided to save some members of the human race and to let the rest of the human race perish. God made a choice—he chose some individuals to be saved unto everlasting blessedness in heaven and others he chose to pass over, to allow them to follow the consequences of their sins into eternal torment in hell.

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22. The Westminster Confession of Faith, 3.6a, 12.1, http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/.

23. Mouw, *Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport*, 31, 32.

24. Palmer, *Five Points of Calvinism*, 24.

Further, to say "that God foreordains all that comes to pass is simply to say that God is sovereign over his entire creation. If something could come to pass apart from his sovereign permission, then that which came to pass would frustrate his sovereignty. . . . If God is not sovereign, then God is not God."[25]

An LDS Perspective

The doctrine of divine election or predestination is comforting to many Christians, inasmuch as it lays stress upon God's power to accomplish his eternal purposes. It is a tight theological system, void of any doctrinal wiggle room. People are either saved or damned. They are either chosen before they were ever born to be heirs of heaven or selected before they took their first breath as inheritors of hell. It is interesting to note that four members of young Joseph Smith's family joined the local Presbyterian Church in Palmyra (JS–H 1:7), and we would be safe in presuming that Reformed theology informed the teachings of that church. Joseph Smith Sr. was a deeply spiritual man and found himself more attracted to Universalism, a belief that the Almighty will eventually find a way, through his infinite love and endless patience, to save all of his children and bring them to heaven. Young Joseph reported that he was somewhat impressed with Methodism (JS–H 1:8) and thus may have been more Arminian in his thinking at that young age.

It would seem that the earliest serious study in the Prophet Joseph's life bearing upon the question at hand would have been his translation of the Book of Mormon. This text certainly points its readers to the majesty of God and to the plight of fallen men and women and of their utter helplessness without the intervention of a Savior. And yet it also speaks at great length about our capacity to choose for ourselves whether we will take the path of salvation or the path of damnation (2 Ne. 2:25–26; Hel. 14:30). Similar teachings are to be found in the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 58:26–28; 61:22; 62:8).

Joseph Smith clarified that election is a synergistic work between man and God: "This is the election we believe in, . . . in the words of the beloved Peter and Paul, we exhort you to 'work out your *own salvation* with fear and trembling, for it is *God which worketh in you* both to will and to do His good pleasure.'"[26] Instead of trying to separate into "water-tight compartments" what God does and what man must do, God and man are working

25. R. C. Sproul, *Chosen by God: Know God's Perfect Plan for His Glory and His Children* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1986), 22, 26.

26. Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:266; italics added.

together toward the salvation of the human soul.[27] To be sure, while many Reformed thinkers are convinced that every electron that moves does so under the sovereign eye of Deity and every human decision to choose right or yield to evil is predetermined according to a *monergistic* plan (God governs in all affairs and preplans the end from the beginning), yet a form of human free will exists.[28] In that vein, since the time of Calvin many of his followers have tended to shy away from what has been called "double predestination," the belief that God not only chooses some for heaven but also actively predestines some to eternal hell and torment; instead, they accept that man's movement toward the good is God-directed and God-empowered, while an individual must actually choose *not* to accept Christ. That is, the depraved demonstrate why they should be damned. On the other hand, John Wesley plainly taught that an acceptance of unconditional election necessitates an acceptance of double predestination.[29]

Joseph Smith may have encountered the doctrine of premortal existence, the belief that we lived as spirits or organized intelligences (Abr. 3:22–23) before we were born, as early as his translation of Alma 13 in the Book of Mormon, although Orson Pratt offers his opinion that these teachings may not have registered with the Prophet at the time.[30] It was most likely when Joseph was involved in his inspired translation of Genesis (Moses 3:5; 4:1–4) that the concept of life before this life burst upon his understanding. Out of this salient teaching came the doctrine of foreordination. "Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the grand council of heaven."[31] And yet the thirteenth chapter of Alma makes clear that all premortal calls and assignments are conditional, that not all of those who were ordained there to carry out important labors in this second estate will live worthy of their foreordination (Alma 13:4). In the words of President Harold B. Lee:

> Despite that calling which is spoken of in the scriptures as "foreordination," we have another inspired declaration: "Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen" (D&C 121:34). This suggests that even though

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27. See C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 131–32. Lewis makes specific reference to Paul's synergistic thinking in Philippians 2:12–13, in which the Philippian saints are told to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, but then are instructed that it is God who is working within them both to do and will his good pleasure. An LDS perspective might be stated similarly.

28. See, for example, Norman Geisler, *Chosen but Free: A Balanced View of Divine Election*, 2d ed. (Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany House, 2001).

29. See Olson, *Arminian Theology*, 108.

30. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses,* 15:249.

31. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 365.

> we have our free agency here, there are many who were foreordained before the world was, to a greater state than they have prepared themselves for here. Even though they might have been among the noble and great, from among whom the Father declared he would make his chosen leaders, they may fail of that calling here in mortality.[32]

Latter-day Saints place freedom of the will at the heart of the plan of salvation and insist that only a free and open acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ—motivated by one's acknowledgment of and love for the Savior—brings happiness here and eternal reward hereafter. In a similar vein, Arminian Roger Olson points out that "the main reason Arminians reject the Calvinistic notion of monergistic salvation, in which God unconditionally elects some to salvation and bends their wills irresistibly, is that it violates the character of God and the nature of a personal relationship. If God saved unconditionally and irresistibly, why doesn't he save all? . . . If the humans chosen by God cannot resist having a right relationship with God, what kind of relationship is it?"[33]

Moreover, while Mormonism diverges less from Arminianism than from Calvinism on the point of election, it should be remembered that the LDS concept of election goes beyond matters of personal belief and includes the performance of ordinances by those in authority. An Arminian "priesthood of all believers" stands in stark contrast to the ordered system of Church priesthood offices and keys as found among Latter-day Saints.

Further, Latter-day Saints almost never use the term *predestination* in connection to their own salvation; however, Joseph Smith indicated that there was one matter that was indeed predestined from before the world was, namely, the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. The King James Version of Romans 8:29–30 reads: "For whom he [God the Father] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Even though the word "whom" at the beginning of these three phrases is a plural relative pronoun (*hous*) in the Greek, note how the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) of this passage reads these as singular references to Christ, consistent with the singular "firstborn" in verse 29: "For him [Christ] whom he [God the Father] did foreknow (*proegnō*), he also did predestinate (*proōrisen*) to be conformed

32. Harold B. Lee, in Conference Report, October 1973, 7. For a strong statement against predestination, see James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1961), 191.

33. Olson, *Arminian Theology*, 38.

to his [God's] image, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, him whom he did predestinate [apparently still referring to Jesus], him he also called; and him whom he called, him he also sanctified; and him whom he sanctified, him he also glorified."

Clearly, the JST shifts the emphasis away from the supposed predestination of the saints to the predestination of Christ, consonant with Peter's focus in Acts 2:23 on the deliverance and crucifixion of Jesus by lawless hands "by the determinate (*hōrismenēi*) counsel and foreknowledge (*prognōsei*) of God." If salvation is to come, it will come through Christ and in no other way. That proposition is set, fixed, established, and unchangeable. It is predestined. Joseph Smith thus explained that "unconditional election of individuals to eternal life was not taught by the Apostles," but rather that through the plan established from the foundation of the world, "God did elect or predestinate, that all those who would be saved, should be saved in Christ Jesus, and through obedience to the Gospel."[34]

As to the matter of reprobation, the concept that persons were preordained to damnation and to serve as a hindrance and impediment to the ongoing work of God's kingdom, President Joseph Fielding Smith stated:

> Every soul coming into this world came here with the promise that through obedience he would receive the blessings of salvation. No person was foreordained or appointed to sin or to perform a mission of evil. No person is ever predestined to salvation or damnation. Every person has free agency. Cain was promised by the Lord that if he would do well, he would be accepted (Gen. 4:6–7; Moses 5:22–23). Judas had his agency and acted upon it; no pressure was brought to bear on him to cause him to betray the Lord, but he was led by Lucifer. If men were appointed to sin and betray their brethren, then justice could not demand that they be punished for sin and betrayal when they are guilty.[35]

The scriptures plainly attest that Christ "will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). The Lord is longsuffering toward us, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

In summary, while many of the fires of "high Calvinism"[36] burned brightly and steadily in the nineteenth century, principally within Presbyterian and Congregational circles, the Book of Mormon writers spoke

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34. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 189.

35. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., comp. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954–56), 1:61.

36. Theodore Beza (1519–1605), the man many consider to be Calvin's successor, did much to extend and intensify Calvin's teachings into what is known as high Calvinism.

of a God who would extend himself to bless and save all his children but who would extend salvation only to those who made a personal choice for the gospel of Jesus Christ. God had not predestined the Zoramites, who extolled their elect status atop the Rameumptom (Alma 31), nor would he save or damn any soul either casually or capriciously.

3. Limited Atonement

A Reformed Perspective

The Reformed perspective on the saving breadth of Christ's Atonement rests upon the two previous elements of the faith: total depravity and unconditional election. Since no one deserves to be saved, and since only a select portion of God's children will enjoy eternal life, it follows that only some of the human population will accept and apply the propitiatory offering of Jesus's suffering and death. That is to say, the Atonement is limited to those who are elected to salvation, only to those predestined for heaven.

In defining a limited Atonement, or as some have called it, "Particular Redemption,"[37] Calvin himself pointed out:

> The whole world does not belong to its Creator except that grace rescues from God's curse and wrath and eternal death a limited number who would otherwise perish. But *the world itself is left to its own destruction, to which it has been destined*. Meanwhile, *although Christ interposes himself as mediator, he claims for himself, in common with the Father, the right to choose*. "I am not speaking," he says, "of all; I know whom I have chosen" (John 13:18). If anyone asks whence he has chosen them, he replies in another passage: "From the world" (John 15:19), which he excludes from his prayers when he commends his disciples to the Father (John 17:9). This we must believe: when he declares that he knows whom he has chosen, he denotes in the human genus a particular species, distinguished not by the quality of its virtues but by heavenly decree.[38]

Calvin later added that "the doctrine of salvation, which is said to be reserved solely and individually for the sons of the church, is falsely debased when presented as effectually profitable to all."[39]

This point of view raises questions: For whom did the Savior give his life? For whom did he intend to die? To which men or women does Christ open the door to salvation here and glorification hereafter? "The doctrine of the limited atonement," Richard Mouw has observed, "has been the most debated of the TULIP teachings within the Calvinist camp, and there are

37. See Mouw, *Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport*, 40.
38. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.22.7; italics added.
39. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.22.10.

more than a few Calvinists who . . . simply reject it outright." That is to say, they are now four-point rather than five-point Calvinists. "Actually," Mouw continues,

> it has always struck me that the **L** in TULIP contains the one odd adjective of the lot. The other four adjectives have a somewhat expansive feel to them: "total," "unconditional," "irresistible," "persevering." And then right in the middle the Calvinists plunk down the word "limited." Not that this disproves the doctrine—if the atonement is limited, so be it. But surely there is something wrong with giving the impression that the one important thing we want to emphasize about the atoning work of Jesus Christ is that it is "limited." This certainly does not capture my mood when I reflect on what Jesus accomplished in his atoning work. In my best moments I like to sing about the *magnitude* of the work of the cross.[40]

Presumably, most Calvinists would not suppose that any offering made by the divine Redeemer, any price paid by him, would or should be wasted. Surely, in other words, the infinite Atoner would not suffer or die for persons who will never recognize, receive, and rejoice in his tender mercies.

An LDS Perspective

Latter-day Saints believe in the Bible and in the message of the Bible, especially as pertaining to the most significant moment in salvation history—the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Consequently, in evaluating the Reformed doctrine of Limited Atonement, with our Arminian friends we are left to wrestle with numerous biblical verses that emphasize the universal reach of the Savior's Atonement (see Matt. 18:14; John 1:29; 3:16–17; Rom. 5:18; 1 Cor. 15:21–22; 2 Cor. 5:14–15; Heb. 2:9). In summary, as Paul wrote to Timothy, Christ "will have *all men to be saved,* and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4; italics added). Further, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also *for the sins of the whole world*" (1 Jn. 2:1–2; italics added).

The Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants likewise speak of the broad and comprehensive scope of our Lord's suffering and death (2 Ne. 9:21, 23; 26:24, 27; 3 Ne. 11:10–11, 14; 27:13–14; D&C 18:10–11; 19:16; 138:1–4). The crux of the matter? "And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—that he came into the world, even Jesus, *to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world*, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness; . . . Who

40. Mouw, *Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport*, 40, 44.

glorifies the Father, and *saves all the works of his hands*, except those sons of perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him" (D&C 76:40–41, 43, italics added).

In summary, Calvinists feel that the economy of God dictates that only those who are predestined in mortality to come unto Christ are the elect, the Atonement being limited to whom God chooses. Arminians would open that avenue a bit more widely, saying that Christ died on the cross for all mankind, though only those who believe can actually enjoy the gift.[41] Latter-day Saints would open up the matter of election more widely still; while not Universalists (they do not believe that every son and daughter of God will enter into the eternal presence of God in the highest heaven), theirs is in several respects a universal view of salvation: "His blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned" (Mosiah 3:11). With Christ's death and rising again, the resurrection is a free and completely universal gift: "Behold, he bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead. . . . All shall come forth from the dead" (Alma 40:3–4). The plan of God made the opportunity for the highest salvation open to all of God's children. Joseph Smith stated the doctrine succinctly in the Wentworth Letter: "We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, *all mankind may be saved*, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel" (A of F 3; italics added).

4. Irresistible Grace

A Reformed Perspective

From a religious perspective, grace is a gift from God. It is unearned divine assistance, unmerited divine favor, divine enabling power to accomplish things that could never otherwise be accomplished. The Reformed doctrine of irresistible grace is inextricably linked with the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and the unconditional election of those chosen for eternal life before the world was. Calvinists propose that God is all-powerful, that his eternal intentions will be realized, and that nothing happens that he has not decreed. Sometimes spoken of as the *effectual* or *efficacious* or *unconquerable* or *certain* call, this doctrine states that the saved will be saved, the elect will be elected, the faithful will always come to faith.

Edwin Palmer cautioned:

> But do not misunderstand the word *irresistible*. To some it may give the meaning of causing someone to do what he does not want to do. . . . All

41. Articles of the Remonstrants, www.crivoice.org/creedremonstrants.html.

> that irresistible grace means is that God sends his Holy Spirit to work in the lives of people so that they will definitely and certainly be changed from evil to good people. It means that the Holy Spirit will certainly—without any and's, if's and but's—cause everyone whom God has chosen from eternity and for whom Christ died to believe in Jesus.[42]

Timothy George provided a slightly softer description of irresistible grace:

> It means simply that God is able to accomplish what He has determined to do in the salvation of lost men and women. Arminians are right to protest the notions of mechanical necessity and impersonal determinism suggested (and sadly sometimes taught) under the banner of *irresistible grace*. God created human beings with free moral agency, and He does not violate this even in the supernatural work of regeneration. Christ does not rudely bludgeon His way into the human heart. He does not abrogate his creaturely freedom. No, He beckons and woos. He pleads and pursues, He waits and wins.[43]

God is sometimes spoken of by Christians—reverently, I hasten to add—as the "Hound of Heaven," a phrase coined by the English poet Francis Thompson.[44] It refers to God's tenacity in seeking out his elect, the Good Shepherd's quest to bring home the lost sheep, a sovereign, loving, and unstoppable force that eventually brings the wanderer to repentance and to faith in the Almighty through the mediation of his beloved Son. Some have pointed toward this celestial scheme as found in the twenty-third Psalm: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me"—more precisely, will haunt me, will track me, will stalk me—"all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps. 23:6). God will entice and lead his elect to salvation.

An LDS Perspective

Although Latter-day Saints believe that salvation is available to all men and women (A of F 3), they acknowledge at the same time that the effects of the Fall tend to entice humankind away from God, from godliness, and from an acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To counteract this influence, there are unconditional blessings and benefits—graces that flow from the Almighty. For one thing, Latter-day Saints believe that every man and woman born into mortality possesses the Light of Christ or the Spirit of Jesus Christ. An important manifestation of the Light of

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42. Palmer, *Five Points of Calvinism*, 57–58.

43. Timothy George, *Amazing Grace: God's Pursuit, Our Response* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2011), 74.

44. Cited in Lyle W. Dorsett, *And God Came In: An Extraordinary Story—Joy Davidman, Her Life and Marriage to C. S. Lewis* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991), 64.

Christ is conscience, a moral monitor by which people know right from wrong, good from evil, important from insignificant. If persons are true to this light within them, they will in time be led to higher light and deeper understanding (Moro. 7:12–19; D&C 84:44–48). A second avenue of the Latter-day Saint version of prevenient grace would include the freedom to choose, a freedom that comes as a result of the redemption from the Fall (see 2 Ne. 2:25–27; 10:23; Hel. 14:30–31).

Latter-day Saint prophets have taught that how we lived before we were born does indeed have an influence upon us in this life. Those who were true and faithful in the first estate come to this earth with a spiritual predisposition to recognize and receive the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Master's sheep do in fact know his voice (see John 10:4, 27).[45] This is, however, a conditional election, an inclination, and a proclivity, not a destiny or an assured reality. For, as we have seen already, some who exercised exceedingly great faith in the first estate "reject the Spirit of God [in this life] on account of the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds" (Alma 13:4).

In summary, while God is all-powerful, omniloving, and omnibenevolent, Latter-day Saints generally believe that God can be resisted; his proffered gift of salvation can be spurned; a hardened heart and a sin-filled or preoccupied soul can fail to hear the still, small voice. Likewise, in contrast to the Arminian fourth article of remonstrance,[46] Latter-day Saints believe that human agency can involve more than a nonresistance to grace; it can be an active force for good that works in tandem with God's saving power. They tend to sing what they believe, and the hymn declares:

> Know this, that every soul is free
> To choose his life and what he'll be;
> For this eternal truth is giv'n:
> That God will force no man to heav'n.
>
> He'll call, persuade, direct aright,
> And bless with wisdom, love, and light,
> In nameless ways be good and kind,
> But never force the human mind.[47]

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45. See Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 149–50; Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 12–14; Lee, Conference Report, 7–8; Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: The First Coming of the Son of Man*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979–81), 1:23; Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 38–39.

46. Articles of the Remonstrants, www.crivoice.org/creedremonstrants.html.

47. *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 240.

5. Perseverance of the Saints

A Reformed Perspective

This final element of TULIP may be stated quite simply: once saved, always saved. In other words, once individuals have been saved—have acknowledged their sinfulness, have recognized their pitiable plight, have received Jesus as Savior and Lord, and have given their heart and life to him—there is nothing that can be done to break that binding seal. Once a person has committed to Christ, Christ is forevermore committed to the eternal glorification of the person; he or she will go to heaven and have no reason to fear hell. The flame that burns brightly in the soul, the peaceful assurance of "eternal security," cannot be quenched. As Charles Hodge explains, salvation here and hereafter is as fixed and immutable as God's love: "The perseverance of the saints is to be attributed not to the strength of their love of God, nor to anything else in themselves, but solely to the free and infinite love of God."[48]

An LDS Perspective

It should be obvious why this is perhaps the most mentioned and the most treasured of the five points—it removes all worry about the future and allows people to live unshackled from anxiety concerning their standing before God. It is likely also one of the most abused of all the tenets of Calvinism, one that enables people to make a profession of faith and thereafter live any way they choose, knowing resolutely that they are heaven-bound. Sin does not get in the way. Apostasy does not foreclose future privileges. Indecency and immorality pose no threat. Many Calvinists sense the problems with such an entitled view and would be quick to add that persons who have truly been saved would not do such things. Their hearts have been changed. They have been liberated from both the taint and the tyranny of sin. They have been born again and have become new creatures in Christ.

I agree that true conversion to the Lord should result in such a mighty change. When men and women sincerely nail their sins to the cross of Christ, their identity is changed and their nature is transformed. And yet, as major Christian writers have pointed out recently, too many professing Christians have walked an aisle, signed a card, prayed a prayer, and still not forsaken worldliness. They talk the talk but do not walk the walk: they do not live essentially any differently than people of the world.

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48. Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1838), 126.

And why is this? The consensus among many of these recent Christian writers is that so much emphasis has been placed upon salvation as a free gift, upon the grace of Deity and the warning against legalistic obedience, that too little emphasis has been placed upon the discipleship associated with the Savior's invitation: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23), or: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Salvation has been teased apart from discipleship. Conversion and rebirth have been separated from obedience. An unintended but inappropriate wall has been constructed between justification and sanctification.[49]

Joseph Smith taught that if people receive the gospel, strive to remain loyal and true to the Savior, as manifest by their desire to keep his commandments, "hungering and thirsting after righteousness" and being "willing to serve God at all hazards" (2 Pet. 1:10), they will eventually make their calling and election to eternal life sure.[50] That is, they will have passed the tests of mortality, will have had the day of judgment advanced, and will receive the promise and assurance here of eternal life hereafter. And yet even this lofty assurance is something from which one may fall. That is, the Saints may fall from grace. Every human soul is called upon to "endure to the end" (Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; James 5:11; 1 Ne. 13:37; 3 Ne. 15:9; 27:16–17; D&C 6:13; 14:7; 18:22; 20:25, 29; 50:5; 101:35), to remain steadfast and true—clearly with and only through the enabling power of Christ—until they have safely passed into the world to come.[51]

Notice the following statements from early Christian thinkers, which are often quoted by Latter-day Saints to support their understanding of the perseverance of the saints:[52]

> The whole past time of your faith will profit you nothing, unless now in this wicked time we also withstand coming sources of danger. . . . Take heed, lest resting at our ease, as those who are the called, we fall asleep in our sins. For then, the wicked prince, acquiring power over us, will thrust

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49. See Ronald J. Sider, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience: Why Are Christians Living Just Like the Rest of the World?* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2005); Robert Jeffress, *Grace Gone Wild: Getting a Grip on God's Amazing Gift* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Water Brook Press, 2005); Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus's Essential Teachings on Discipleship* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006); John MacArthur, *Hard to Believe: The High Cost and Infinite Value of Following Jesus* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2003).

50. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 149–50.

51. See Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–73), 3:325–54.

52. All are taken from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 10 vols., ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1981).

> us away from the kingdom of the Lord. . . . Let us beware lest we be found to be, as it is written, the "many who are called," but not the "few who are chosen." (Barnabas, in *ANF* 1:139)
>
> He who hopes for everlasting rest knows also that the entrance to it is toilsome and narrow. So let him who has once received the gospel not turn back, like Lot's wife, as is said—even in the very hour in which he has come to the knowledge of salvation. And let him not go back either to his former life . . . or to heresies. (Clement of Alexandria, in *ANF* 2:550)
>
> It is neither the faith, nor the love, nor the hope, nor the endurance of one day; rather, "he that endures to the end shall be saved." (Clement of Alexandria, in *ANF* 2:600)
>
> No one is a Christian but he who perseveres even to the end. (Tertullian, in *ANF* 3:244)
>
> Some think that God is under a necessity of bestowing even on the unworthy what He has promised [to give]. So they turn His liberality into His slavery. . . . For do not many afterwards fall out of [grace]? Is not this gift taken away from many? These, no doubt, are they who, . . . after approaching to the faith of repentance, build on the sands a house doomed to ruin. (Tertullian, in *ANF* 3:661)

John Stott, a respected Christian thinker, made the following insightful observation about salvation:[53]

> Salvation is a big and comprehensive word. It embraces the totality of God's saving work, from beginning to end. In fact, salvation has three tenses, past, present, and future. . . . I have been saved (in the past) from the penalty of sin by a crucified Saviour. I am being saved (in the present) from the power of sin by a living Saviour. And I shall be saved (in the future) from the very presence of sin by a coming Saviour. . . .
>
> If therefore you were to ask me, "Are you saved?" there is only one correct biblical answer which I could give you: "yes and no." Yes, in the sense that by the sheer grace and mercy of God through the death of Jesus Christ, my Saviour, He has forgiven my sins, justified me and reconciled me to himself. But no, in the sense that I still have a fallen nature and live in a fallen world and have a corruptible body, and I am longing for my salvation to be brought to its triumphant completion.[54]

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53. With but very few exceptions, the word *salvation*, as used in ancient and modern scripture, means the same thing as exaltation or eternal life (see Mosiah 3:18; Alma 11:40–41; Hel. 13:38; D&C 6:13; 14:7; 123:17; Abr. 2:11; A of F 3; and Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978], 129, 306). This is why I feel comfortable with the quotation above from Stott: if we are being true to our canonical texts, when we speak of salvation, we are speaking of eternal life in the highest heaven, just as those Christians not of our faith would be. Neither they nor we are speaking only of resurrected immortality.

54. *Authentic Christianity from the Writings of John Stott,* ed. Timothy Dudley-Smith (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 168.

In the document entitled "The Gospel of Jesus Christ: An Evangelical Celebration" (1999) are found these words: "Salvation in its full sense is from the guilt of sin in the past, the power of sin in the present, and the presence of sin in the future. Thus, *while in foretaste believers enjoy salvation now, they still await its fullness.*"[55]

From an LDS perspective, is there any way to know we are saved other than receiving the more sure word of prophecy? I think there is. That same Holy Spirit of Promise—promised to the followers of Christ—that searches the hearts of men and women, that ratifies and approves and seals ordinances (sacraments) and seals the faithful, that same Holy Spirit serves, as Paul indicates, as the "earnest of our inheritance" (2 Cor.1:21–22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14). The Lord's "earnest money" on us, his down payment, his indication to us that he will save us, is the Holy Spirit. We know that we are on course when the Spirit is with us. We know that our lives are approved of God when the Spirit is with us. We know that we are in Christ, in covenant, when the Spirit is with us. And we know, I suggest, that we are saved when the Spirit is with us. If we live in such a way that we enjoy the gifts of the Spirit, then we are in the line of our duty, we are approved of the heavens, and if we were to die suddenly, we would go into paradise and eventually into the highest heaven. The following is an intriguing statement from Brigham Young:

> If a person with an honest heart, a broken, contrite, and pure spirit, in all fervency and honesty of soul, presents himself and says that he wishes to be baptized for the remission of his sins, and the ordinance is administered by one having authority, is that man saved? Yes, to that period of time. Should the Lord see proper to take him then from the earth, the man has believed and been baptized, and is a fit subject for heaven—a candidate for the kingdom of God in the celestial world, because he has repented and done all that was required of him at that hour. . . .
>
> It is present salvation and the present influence of the Holy Ghost that we need every day to keep us on saving ground. . . .
>
> *I want present salvation*. I preach, comparatively, but little about the eternities and Gods, and their wonderful works in eternity; and do not tell who first made them, nor how they were made; for I know nothing about that. *Life is for us, and it is for us to receive it today, and not wait for the Millennium. Let us take a course to be saved today,* and, when evening comes, review the acts of the day, repent of our sins, if we have any to repent of, and say our prayers; then we can lie down and sleep in peace until the morning, arise with gratitude to God, commence the labors of another day, and strive to live the whole day to God and nobody else.[56]

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55. Cited in J. I. Packer and Thomas C. Oden, *One Faith: The Evangelical Consensus* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 88; italics added.

56. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses,* 8:124–25; italics added.

"I am in the hands of the Lord," President Young pointed out, "and never trouble myself about my salvation, or what the Lord will do with me hereafter."[57] As he said on another occasion, our work "is a work of the present. *The salvation we are seeking is for the present, and sought correctly, it can be obtained, and be continually enjoyed.* If it continues today, it is upon the same principle that it will continue tomorrow, the next day, the next week, or the next year, and, we might say, the next eternity."[58]

"If we are saved," Brother Brigham declared, "we are happy, we are filled with light, glory, intelligence, and we pursue a course to enjoy the blessings that the Lord has in store for us. If we continue to pursue that course, it produces just the thing we want, that is, *to be saved at this present moment*. And that will lay the foundation to be saved forever and forever, which will amount to an eternal salvation."[59]

Likewise, President David O. McKay taught that "the gospel of Jesus Christ . . . is in very deed, in every way, the power of God unto salvation. It is salvation here—here and now. It gives to every man the perfect life, here and now, as well as hereafter."[60] On another occasion, he stated: "Sometimes we think of salvation as a state of bliss after we die. I should like to think of salvation as a condition here in life today. I like to think that my Church makes me a better man, my wife a better woman, . . . my children nobler sons and daughters, here and now. I look upon the gospel as a power contributing to those conditions."[61]

Living in a state of salvation does not entail an inordinate confidence in self but rather a hope in Christ. To hope in our modern world is to wish, to worry, to fret about some particular outcome. In the scriptures, however, hope is expectation, anticipation, and assurance. Faith in Christ gives rise to hope in Christ. "And what is it that ye shall hope for? Behold I say unto you that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal" (Moro. 7:41). To have faith in Christ is to have the assurance that as we rely wholly upon his merits and mercy and trust in his redeeming grace, we will make it (see 2 Ne. 31:19; Moro. 6:4).

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57. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses,* 6:276.

58. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses,* 1:131; italics added.

59. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses,* 1:131; italics added.

60. David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals* (Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953), 6.

61. David O. McKay, cited in *Church News*, published by *Deseret News,* February 28, 1953. For a recent excellent treatment of the concept of "being saved" in LDS theology, see *True to the Faith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2004), 150–53.

As early as the time of the organization of the Church in April 1830, the Saints were instructed:

> And we know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true; and we know also, that sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds, and strength. But there is a possibility that man may fall from grace and depart from the living God; therefore let the church take heed and pray always, lest they fall into temptation; yea, and even let those who are sanctified take heed also. (D&C 20:30–34)

"The doctrine that the Presbyterians and Methodists have quarreled so much about," Joseph Smith noted some fourteen years later,

> once in grace, always in grace, or falling away from grace, I will say a word about. They are both wrong. Truth takes a road between them both, for while the Presbyterian [the Calvinist] says: "Once in grace you cannot fall"; the Methodist [Arminian] says: "You can have grace today, fall from it tomorrow, next day have grace again; and so follow on, changing continually." But the doctrine of the Scriptures and the spirit of Elijah [the sealing power, the power by which people are sealed to eternal life] would show them both false, and take a road between them both, for, according to the scripture, if men have received the good word of God, and tasted of the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, it is impossible to renew them again, seeing they have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame [see Heb. 6:4–6; compare Matt. 12:31–32]; so there is a possibility of falling away; you could not be renewed again, and the power of Elijah cannot seal against this [unpardonable] sin.[62]

Jesus will not only bridge the chasm between the ideal and the real and thus provide that final spiritual boost into eternal life, but he will also extend to us that enabling power so essential to daily living, a power that equips us to conquer weakness and begin to partake of the divine nature. In light of the above, I suggest that being in a saved condition is living in the quiet assurance that God is in his heaven, that Christ is the Lord, and that the plan of redemption is real and in active operation in our personal lives. I would grant that this state of salvation means we are not totally free of weakness, but it means we can proceed confidently in the Savior's promise that in him we will find strength to overcome, as well as rest and peace, here and hereafter.

In summary, Calvinists believe in the perseverance of the saints, that once they are saved or fully converted to Christ they will forevermore be saved; one cannot fall from grace. Arminians are less decisive on the issue,

62. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 338–39.

but generally they believe that grace will always attend believers on the condition of their nonresistance to God.[63] Joseph Smith taught that people may know that their course in this life is pleasing to God[64] and, further, that those who pursue righteousness with devotion can know that their calling and election to eternal life is sure. But the scriptures make plain the sobering fact that the Saints must press forward, endure to the very end, and hold to the rod of faith until they have finished their work on earth.

Conclusion

The principle that drove and informed the writings and sermons of John Calvin was the sovereignty of God. One who seeks to be sensitive to what Calvin emphasized can appreciate why each of what his followers called the "Five Points of Calvinism" is linked inextricably with divine sovereignty:

- God is in complete control of everything.
- As the supreme Creator, he is utterly above and beyond his entire creation; all things bow in humble reverence before him.
- For anything to take place independent of him or apart from his active participation is a contradiction in terms.
- No one can or will be saved who was not already decreed and destined for salvation from eternities past.
- The economy of God requires that the Atonement of Christ—the immediate means of salvation—operates only in behalf of the elect, those who are predestined for heaven.
- Because God is omnipotent, he will bring all of the elect to faith.
- All those who have been called will be chosen for salvation; not one of them will be lost.

Joseph Smith also revealed a sovereign God who has all knowledge and all power; the major difference in that understanding of God's power is set forth in modern revelation: "Man was also in the beginning with God.

63. The fifth article states: "Whether they [mankind] are capable, through negligence, of forsaking again the first beginning of their life in Christ, of again returning to this present evil world, of turning away from the holy doctrine which was delivered them, of losing a good conscience, of neglecting grace, that must be more particularly determined out of the Holy Scripture, before we ourselves can teach it with the full confidence of our mind." Articles of the Remonstrants, http://www.crivoice.org/creedremonstrants.html.

64. *Lectures on Faith,* 3:5; 6:4–7.

Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, *neither indeed can be.* All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence. Behold, here is the agency of man" (D&C 93:29–31; italics added). Hence, a Latter-day Saint response to the above bullet points might include a dynamic interaction between the will of God and the agency of his children:

- God is sovereign but does not control the moral agency of humankind.
- God's will and desire is that all humanity be saved; because people have the power to reject his grace, some things happen independent of God's will.
- A loving God does not decree or enforce a limited salvation; all are free to choose eternal life through the Atonement of Christ.
- The Atonement of Christ is infinite and eternal, and through it all may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.
- God is omnipotent according to all righteous powers that exist, but he cannot force into salvation the elect who later use their independent agency to reject him.

Clyde D. Ford pointed out that

> although the Book of Mormon contains teachings that are similar to those of various early nineteenth-century groups, clearly Book of Mormon theology does not consistently reproduce any existing early nineteenth-century theological perspective. . . . Thus the Book of Mormon presents neither a completely early nineteenth-century Arminian nor Calvinistic theology but sometimes offers . . . a compromise between the two and at other times, a unique perspective, such as the question of accountability for those not exposed to Christian teaching.[65]

God demonstrates his infinite love by being willing to entrust men and women with the moral agency that could in the end either save them or damn them. God does predestinate that if salvation is to come it will come in and through the person and power and work of Jesus Christ, or it will come not at all. The Prophet Joseph made known a Savior who suffered and bled and died for all, even though the painful truth is that the substitutionary Atonement will not prove efficacious for those who refuse the proffered gift.

65. Clyde D. Ford, "Lehi on the Great Issues: Book of Mormon Theology in Early Nineteenth-Century Perspective," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 38, no. 4 (2005): 95.

Joseph Smith also revealed a God whose aim is to save all of his children who will be saved, not merely those who were preselected before birth. The respected Roman Catholic Father Richard John Neuhaus has written:

> If we pray for the salvation of all, it would seem that we must hope for the salvation of all. How is it possible for you to pray for what you do not hope for? At the same time, we must take seriously the many statements in the New Testament that some, perhaps many, might be damned. . . .
>
> *If* it is possible that many will be eternally lost and *if* it is possible that all will be saved, which should we hope for? In view of the command to love all people, must we not hope that in the end all will be saved? Can we love others and *not* hope that they will be saved? . . .
>
> The hope that all may be saved, the hope for . . . all the rest of unknowing humanity living and dead, offends some Christians. It is as though salvation were a zero-sum proposition, as though there is only so much to go around, as though God's grace to others will somehow diminish our portion of grace. . . .
>
> But one hears the objection, "What's the point of being a Christian if, in the end, everyone is saved?" People who ask that should listen to themselves. What's the point of being first rather than last in serving the Lord whom you love? What's the point of being found rather than lost? What's the point of knowing the truth rather than living in ignorance? What's the point of being welcomed home by the waiting father rather than languishing by the pig sties? What's the point? The question answers itself.[66]

God will not compel obedience, nor will he pass over anyone's sins.[67] At the same time, because he loves his children and desires their happiness and joy, he will do all in his power to save them. As Joseph Smith put it, "Our heavenly Father is more liberal in His views, and boundless in His mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive."[68] The preaching of Joseph Smith, the message of the Book of Mormon, and the divine encouragement from modern revelation seemed as a cool breeze, a refreshing spiritual oasis to those nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints who had felt only the parching winds of high Calvinism. Many have yearned through the centuries to worship more than an impersonal, impassible deity; to enjoy fellowship with that Lord who did not dictate all things but invited us to be yoked with him; and to be clasped in the loving arms of him who acknowledges human dignity by insisting on human agency. The

66. Richard John Neuhaus, *Death on a Friday Afternoon* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 49, 57.

67. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 187, 189.

68. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 257.

restored gospel represented a stark and often ignored theological corrective. For Latter-day Saints today, it stands as a striking contrast to the Reformers and a welcome invitation into God's plan of happiness.

Robert L. Millet (who can be reached via email at byustudies@byu.edu) received his PhD from Florida State University in Religious Studies. At Brigham Young University, Millet has served as Ancient Scripture Department Chair and as Dean of Religious Education and currently serves as Publications Director of the Religious Studies Center. Professor Millet is the author of over sixty books, including *Bridging the Divide: The Continuing Conversation between a Mormon and an Evangelical* (Rhinebeck, N.Y.: Monkfish, 2007) and *LDS Beliefs: A Doctrinal Reference* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011).

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Coming to Terms

The Challenge of Creating Christian Vocabulary in a Non-Christian Land

Van C. Gessel

The Illusion of Communication

"In the beginning was the word." Leaving to others the explication of the multiple meanings of *logos* (the Greek term that was translated into *word* by English Bible translators), my concern in this essay is the dilemma of trying to communicate absolute truth by means of the imperfect, human languages that hobbled forth from the wreckage after the collapse of the Tower of Babel. However we wish to deconstruct the layers of meaning in John 1:1, it is sufficient for my purposes here to propose that because "the Word was God," or "the Word was with God," or even, in Joseph Smith's translation, "the gospel was the word," we must consider the "Word," as He and It reside in the heavens, to be a perfect mode of communicating a perfect truth. Surely there was and is a celestial language. But it did not take very long after the beginnings of life on earth for a being who was not of the heavens to begin the perpetual process of deceiving Adam and Eve and their posterity by using *words* (with a lowercase *w*) to twist the truth, to express half-truths (we should remember that language is one of the primary means through which the father of lies tells his lies), and to lead us away from the Living Logos and into a fallen realm of degraded language that would become even more diverse and corrupt in the wake of the blunder of Babel.

To put it simply, I am proposing that part of what must have happened at the time of the Fall was the corruption of our ability to communicate, a calamity that rendered us half-mutes, able only to *approximate* imperfectly what we think and feel, and so often frustrated in our failure to convey those thoughts and feelings unadulterated to others. Because, as Arthur Miller

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puts it, "we meet unblessed . . . after, after the fall,"[1] part of our fallenness was and is manifest in the disconnect between the objective world, individual thought, and the words through which we can describe our apprehensions of that world and interpretations of our thoughts. After Eden, we are separated from God and from one another, not just because of our different languages but also within the realm of our common languages. The great Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset observes:

> Let us say, then, that Man, when he begins to speak, does so *because* he thinks that he is going to be able to say what he thinks. Well, this is illusory. Language doesn't offer that much. It says, a little more or less, a portion of what we think, while it sets an insurmountable obstacle in place, blocking a transmission of the rest. . . . Languages separate us and discommunicate, not simply because they are different languages, but because they proceed from different mental pictures, from disparate intellectual systems—in the last instance, from divergent philosophies. Not only do we speak, but we also think in a specific language, and intellectually slide along preestablished rails prescribed by our verbal system.[2]

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1. Arthur Miller, *After the Fall* (New York: Bantam Books, 1965), 162.

2. José Ortega y Gasset, "The Misery and the Splendor of Translation," trans. Elizabeth Gamble Miller, in *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*, ed. Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 101. Ortega expresses here a theory of language and communication that fits well within what came to be called structural linguistics, a philosophy that assumes languages are actually distinct worldviews and are therefore theoretically impossible to translate. As Anthony Pym puts it, "Since different languages cut the world up in very different ways, no words should be completely translatable out of their language system. Translation should simply be impossible." And yet, concedes Pym, himself director of postgraduate programs in translation and intercultural studies at Rovira i Virgili University in Spain, "translators exist, they produce, and their products are found to be useful." Anthony Pym, *Exploring Translation Theories* (UK: Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2010), 10. This more practical view of language led, in the 1960s and 1970s, to natural equivalence theories of translation and numerous procedures to uncover (or create) that presumed equivalence between languages, some of which I will discuss below. Inevitable shortcomings in natural equivalence theory led, in turn, to subsequent theories of translation.

The important point here is that translation theory is by no means a settled matter, and vastly differing theories can have valid observations, applications, and reasons for their existence. No single theory of translation is adequate in dealing with the myriad challenges and conundrums inherent in transferring both form and content from one language to another. Consequently, no human translation is ever perfect. Perfect equivalence may occur occasionally with words or phrases, but at the document level, and probably even at the paragraph level, it is beyond human capacity to achieve. Ortega, in this essay on the misery and splendor of translation, maintains that translation is a form of utopianism—the striving toward an

By Ortega's reasoning, then, the "things . . . in heaven" cannot ever be fully and clearly expressed by these "things . . . in the earth" (D&C 88:79) that we call language, since in the terrestrial realm we now dwell in what Frederic Jameson called the "prison house of language."[3] Joseph Smith, at least early in his prophetic career, apparently agreed with this assessment. In a letter to William W. Phelps, Joseph lamented, "Oh Lord God deliver us in thy due time from the little narrow prison almost as it were totel darkness of paper pen and ink and a crooked broken scattered and imperfect language."[4] The Prophet, who was attempting to find appropriate expression for revelations from the Lord that were apparently given more as nonverbal concepts than as word-for-word dictations, may have concurred with a distinction made

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ideal—but he makes a distinction between bad utopianism (the belief that "because [translation] is *desirable,* it is possible" [p. 98]) and good utopianism ("*because* it would be desirable to free men from the divisions imposed by languages, there is little probability that it can be attained; therefore, it can only be achieved to an approximate measure" [pp. 98–99]). Incidentally, my use of quotations from Ortega is, as some readers may have already discerned, somewhat paradoxical, since these are but translations of his actual words in Spanish and therefore only approximately capture his intended meaning. Ortega argues that a "translation is not the work, but a path toward the work" (p. 109), and therefore recommends creating diverse translations, each emphasizing a different dimension of the original work, in order to come even closer to a complete understanding of the original.

As this article was going to press, a new and insightful book by David Bellos, director of the Program in Translation and Intercultural Communication at Princeton University, was published. Titled *Is That a Fish in Your Ear? Translation and the Meaning of Everything* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2011), the book argues for a practical, positive view of translation: "No translation is the same as its source, and no translation can be expected to be like its source in more than a few selected ways. . . . When we say that a translation is an acceptable one, what we name is an overall relationship between source and target that is neither identity, nor equivalence, nor analogy—just that complex thing called *a good match*" (322; emphasis added). Ultimately the argument Bellos (a prize-winning translator himself) makes is that a translation isn't designed to supplant the original text, but rather to be like it, to match it in ways acceptable to the target reading community.

3. The complete title of Jameson's 1972 book is *The Prison House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism,* published by Princeton University Press. As Ernst Beller points out, the phrase "prison house of language" is attributed to Nietzsche, but is in fact a rather too loose translation of a phrase that should have been rendered something like "the constraint of language." See Beller, "Translating Nietzsche in the United States," in *Translating Literatures, Translating Cultures: New Vistas and Approaches in Literary Studies,* ed. Kurt Mueller-Vollmer and Michael Irmscher (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1998), 142.

4. Joseph Smith to William W. Phelps, July 31, 1832, in Joseph Smith Jr., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith,* ed. Dean C. Jessee, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 287, original spelling and punctuation preserved.

by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger: "Translation is one thing with respect to a business letter, and something quite different with respect to a poem. The letter is translatable; the poem is not."[5] On a continuum from business letters to poems, scripture, whether being translated into another language or being received as inspired ideas, would certainly fall closer to poetry than to business correspondence. Both scripture and poetry produce multiple levels of meaning, liberally employ symbolism, and often marry content with form in ways not manifested in more mundane types of writing. Extending this idea even further, German linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt noted that "all forms of language are symbols, not the objects themselves, not prearranged signs, but sounds; they find themselves, together with the objects and ideas that they represent, filtered through the mind in which they originated and continue to originate in a real or, one might even say, a mystical relationship."[6] Because words, in any of the languages of mortality, are not actual concrete objects but simply "sounds," "symbols," or "signifiers" that at best can only be a shadowy approximation of reality and truth, we must regard language as one of the slipperiest of the slippery treasures of mortality. If language itself produces, at best, a shadowy approximation of reality and truth, then translating that shadowy approximation from one language to another significantly compounds the slipperiness.

While some languages share a common ancestry and are spoken in countries with similar cultures (English and German, for instance), other languages are truly foreign to each other, in almost every way possible. English and Japanese would certainly fall into the latter category. Thus, finding instances of natural equivalence should be far more likely in closely related languages, which suggests that translation between truly "foreign" languages should be much more challenging. Since my own experience with translation involves English and Japanese, the questions I will address in this paper are: What are the challenges inherent in attempting to translate Christian doctrine and, specifically, LDS vocabulary into Japanese, a traditionally non-Christian language; what approaches have been employed in this effort; how effective have these efforts been; and what, if anything, can translators do to increase their effectiveness?

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5. Martin Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1957), 163, translation in Pym, *Exploring Translation Theories,* 99.

6. Wilhelm von Humboldt, "From the Introduction to His Translation of *Agamemnon,*" trans. Sharon Sloan, in Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation*, 57.

Translating Revealed Truth into Japanese

In 2005, I published an article on the three Japanese translations of the Book of Mormon.[7] More recently, a splendid article by Professor Shinji Takagi, focusing on the 1909 translation, appeared in the *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture.*[8] Takagi's article makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the process of translating the Book of Mormon into a language such as Japanese, a language that has been used for a few millennia without the underpinnings of Judeo-Christian culture and, for most of its history, without a need for vocabulary to discuss the doctrines of Christianity, either sectarian or revealed.

I am persuaded that the challenge of translating our unique LDS theological vocabulary is not limited to renderings into the languages of non-Christian nations. We are all familiar with the obstacles we face in helping those of sectarian Christianity understand that we mean something different from their understanding when we use such words as *godhead* or *Son of God* or *salvation* or *the Fall* or *grace* or *soul* or myriad other key terms. The questions I will raise here involve not just the challenge of translating ideas into a foreign language, but also the more fundamental difficulty of conveying absolute truth in the very ambiguous, ephemeral medium we call "language." John Dryden succinctly captures the impossible assignment of the translator when he says, "'Tis much like dancing on ropes with fettered legs."[9] Schopenhauer, too, came up with a compelling metaphor to describe the challenge: "A library of translations resembles a gallery with reproductions of paintings."[10]

In my earlier article on Japanese translations of the Book of Mormon, I spent a good deal of space discussing some of the choices that the superb translators made when rendering the religious vocabulary in that book of scripture into Japanese. Professor Takagi, in his article, however, respectfully

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7. Van C. Gessel, "'Strange Characters and Expressions': Three Japanese Translations of the Book of Mormon," in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 32–47. A revised version of that essay, under the title "Languages of the Lord: The Japanese Translations of the Book of Mormon," appeared in *Taking the Gospel to the Japanese, 1901–2001,* ed. Reid Neilson and Van C. Gessel (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2006), 233–61.

8. Shinji Takagi, "Proclaiming the Way in Japanese: The 1909 Translation of the Book of Mormon," *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* 18, no. 2 (2009): 18–37.

9. John Dryden, "On Translation," in Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation,* 18.

10. Arthur Schopenhauer, "On Language and Words," in Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation,* 33.

responds to my arguments by asserting that "the choice of words to express foreign concepts is not fundamental to the process of interlingual translation. If, for example, there is no equivalent word in Japanese for a certain concept, all we have to do is create one (as was frequently done during the nineteenth century). . . . If there are religious words the average Japanese reader is not familiar with, it is a question of education. . . . The assignment of words is essentially a simple case of literal information transfer, conceptually the most straightforward aspect of translation."[11]

My training and research in literature predisposes me to have somewhat less faith in words and in the ability of education to close the gap between speaker intention and listener comprehension, especially when those words allow multiple shades of meaning and open the door to a variety of interpretations. In some ways, this may reflect the different attitudes toward language represented by those in more practical disciplines and those in the humanities. In the worldview of the accountant, for instance, things equate, they add up, they are consistent and reliable. Many students of literature, however, labor under the curse of ambiguity and the blight of multiple, relative meanings. But the history of travails experienced by Christian missionaries ever since Francis Xavier set foot on Japanese soil in 1549 persuades me that translating religious terms into Japanese is not so straightforward an issue as Professor Takagi makes it appear to be. As Christian translators have attempted to borrow words from other languages or invent Japanese terms that somehow summon up the same kinds of spiritual associations that words in the Indo-European languages do, their levels of success have been somewhat underwhelming.

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11. Takagi, "Proclaiming the Way," 34–35. I am, of course, not arguing against the need for education; it lies at the core of understanding language to any extent. But education works best with narrowly defined nouns, as evidenced by the myriad English terms that have been adopted by other languages. But complex religious concepts such as *atonement* are much more difficult to create equivalence for in a traditionally non-Christian language. Over time, with repeated use and education, "created" words can come to acquire at least some of the subtleties of meaning they were intended to assume. This, however, applies only among those who have repeated exposure to the terms. Thus, a word may mean something very specific to a Church member, but a nonmember investigating the Church may be bewildered by the unfamiliar meaning attached to it. As suggested above, however, this is not just a problem in translation. English-speaking investigators may at first be baffled by our peculiar usage of such terms as *Beehive, Laurel, Mutual, endowment, fast Sunday,* or *agency* and may wonder why we refer to nineteen-year-olds as elders and twelve-year-olds as deacons.

"The Smile of the Gods"

One of Japan's great modern masters of the short story form, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介, created a splendid metaphor for the dilemma I am trying to describe. In his 1921 story, "Kamigami no bishō" 「神々の微笑」 (The Smile of the Gods), Akutagawa presents a theological debate between a Catholic missionary laboring in Japan in the early seventeenth century and one of the native gods of the land who has survived for centuries in the syncretic stew in which native Shintoism, along with Buddhism and all the other faiths that have come to Japan, have learned to coexist in hazy harmony with one another. When Organtino, the Catholic priest, insists that he is having success in winning converts to Christianity, the ancient deity, far from feeling threatened, replies that the native Japanese gods have survived the importation of Buddhism just fine, thank you, and that the coming of Christian beliefs will not make any significant difference in how the Japanese visualize the beings they worship. He insists that when Japanese Buddhists fall asleep and dream of the Buddhist sun god, Dainichi, the image that appears before them is that of their own indigenous Shinto sun goddess, Amaterasu. And he asserts that the Japanese who are converted to Christianity will likewise cling within their own minds and hearts to images of the Western God that are indistinguishable from the faces and forms of the native gods they have worshipped for centuries. The power of the local deities, he proudly announces, is not the power to destroy foreign ideologies, but the more insidious power to "transform" (造り変える) them, to "recreate" imported gods in the image of their own idols, as it were. (If I may be allowed the liberty, it is the power to "translate" God in their own terms.) Just before he disappears from view, the Japanese god warns Organtino, "You must be on your guard. Your God will not necessarily win [this battle]. No matter how widely your Christian teachings spread throughout the country, it doesn't necessarily mean you have been victorious. . . . Even your God may just be transformed into one of our native gods, just as those who came here from China and India were transformed. We [Japanese gods] are in the trees, in the shallow streams, in the breezes that blow across [your imported] roses, and in the evening glow that shines on your temple walls. We are everywhere, at all times. You must be on your guard!"[12]

12. Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, "Kamigami no bishō," in *Hōkyōnin no shi* (Tokyo: Shinchō Bunko, 1968), 96–97. The translation here is mine. An English translation of this story was published in *Japanese Religions* 31, no. 1 (January 2006): 39–44.

Latter-day Linguistic Challenges

Latter-day Saints were late in joining in the process of translating Christian vocabulary into Japanese. When Heber J. Grant led the first contingent of missionaries into Japan in 1901, he was arriving forty-two years after the Protestants (who had produced their translation of the New Testament in 1880), while the Catholics had been fighting terminology turf wars since Xavier's arrival in 1549. During the five years between 1904 and 1909, when a very young and phenomenally gifted Alma O. Taylor completed the first Japanese translation of the Book of Mormon, he made a number of inquiries of the First Presidency regarding the proper interpretation of certain unique doctrinal terms so that he might seek out a suitable Japanese translation for them. For instance, he wrote to the Brethren in April 1908, "There is no word in Japanese for 'soul' which could possibly be stretched to include both body and spirit."[13] For the most part, however, Taylor seems to have made the only choice that any translator wishing to maintain a modicum of sanity would have made in the same circumstances: for most of the Christian vocabulary that appears in the Book of Mormon, he adopted the Japanese terms that had already appeared in the Protestant New Testament translation, since, as Professor Takagi notes, "The task of assigning existing words or inventing new words for most abstract Western concepts had largely been completed by the turn of the twentieth century."[14] Left unanswered is the question of whether the appropriated Protestant choices—a few of which I will examine herein—are adequate to convey the essence of truth as revealed through the sacred writings and prophets of the Restoration.

I will focus on four general categories of religious vocabulary translation that highlight the challenges we face in trying to help individuals in a non-Christian nation understand what we are trying to teach. While my examples will be drawn from Japan, similar examples could no doubt be found in other cultures.

1. Words that have been appropriated from existing Japanese religious vocabulary

The initial entry in this category must be the attempts that Xavier made to come up with a proper term to translate the Catholic concept of "God" into Japanese. Because his own knowledge of Japanese was minimal at best,

13. Alma O. Taylor to the First Presidency, April 15, 1908, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. The quotation is printed in context in Gessel, "'Strange Characters and Expressions,'" 44.

14. Takagi, "Proclaiming the Way," 35.

Xavier had to rely upon Anjirō,[15] the first Japanese Christian, who was baptized in Goa in 1548.[16] Anjirō had been a merchant in Kagoshima but fled Japan in 1546 after purportedly committing a murder. He studied Portuguese in Goa, and following his conversion and baptism, he was chosen to accompany Xavier to Japan. Because he was the only member of the Catholic party who was in any respect qualified to translate their religious concepts from Portuguese into Japanese, Anjirō by default became the first Christian to attempt to identify Japanese words that could convey their beliefs. Though contemporary Jesuit accounts praise him for his faith and his intelligence, he had not been well educated before fleeing Japan, was marginally literate in the written Japanese language, and knew very little about native Japanese religious beliefs and practices. Left essentially to his own devices, and unable to receive any specific guidance from the fathers who commissioned him to translate for them, Anjirō did the best he could by studying and then applying primarily Japanese Buddhist terminology to explain Christian ideas. As one sympathetic modern Japanese historian has noted, "Buddhist terms were perhaps the only available Japanese counterparts to express salvific religious and philosophical concepts of Christianity."[17]

Consequently, for nearly two years after his arrival in Japan, Xavier went about the countryside preaching that salvation could come to the Japanese people only if they set aside their heathen beliefs and put their faith in the One True God, whom, at Anjirō's recommendation, he called *Dainichi* 大日. But *Dainichi* is the Japanese name for Vairocana, the "cosmic Buddha; the focus of devotion in Esoteric Buddhism. . . . He is the principle or the essence of the universe and all phenomena are embraced in him; Dainichi is thus the Buddha of beginningless and endless ultimate reality."[18] Xavier became uneasy when priests of the Shingon Buddhist sect welcomed his preaching, and further inquiry revealed to him the horror of the mistake he was making, all unwittingly. Despairing of the possibility of finding a suitable Japanese equivalent for the Christian notion of God, he immediately switched to the use of the Latin and Portuguese term, *Deus.*[19]

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15. In some sources, his name is given as Yajirō.

16. Goa is a small state on the western coast of India that was captured by Portugal in 1510.

17. This is a paraphrase of Ebisawa Arimichi's argument, which is cited in Ikuo Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan: Kirishitan Belief and Practice* (London: Brill, 2001), 9. I have followed Higashibaba for many of the details in this summary of Xavier's linguistic dilemma.

18. *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan,* 9 vols. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1983), 2:64.

19. This became problematic for Xavier, since Buddhists in Kyushu mocked him because the Japanese transliteration of *Deus* was *Deusu,* which they claimed was a dialectical pronunciation of *Daiuso,* meaning "The Great Lie."

I shall return shortly to the problems raised by the japanizing of foreign words, which began with the work of Xavier and continues today, but first we must go back to the question of how to give a name to the object of our worship in a language that does not know God. Ortega makes an insightful observation about the challenge of conveying religious concepts to a culture that does not share those fundamental concepts:

> The Basque language . . . forgot to include in its vocabulary a term to designate God and it was necessary to pick a phrase that meant "lord over the heights"—*Jaungoikua.* Since centuries ago lordly authority disappeared, *Jaungoikua* today means God directly, but we must place ourselves in the time when one was obliged to think of God as a political, worldly authority, to think of God as a civil governor or the like. To be exact, this case reveals to us that *lacking a name for God made it very difficult for the Basques to think about God*. For that reason they were very slow in being converted to Christianity; the word *Jaungoikua* also indicates that police intervention was necessary in order to put the mere idea of divinity into their heads. So language not only makes the expression of certain thoughts difficult, but it also impedes their reception by others; it paralyzes our intelligence in certain directions.[20]

In the case of Japan, it appears from the historical records that by 1582, when several of the young sons of Christian warlords traveled to Europe as the first Japanese to lay eyes on the nations of the West, a new term for God, which had won out over several other possibilities,[21] was in common usage among the Japanese Christians. The term was *Tenshu* 天主, which literally means "the Lord of heaven." At a later date, Catholicism became known as *Tenshukyō*, or the "religion of the Lord of heaven." But less than fifty years after that youthful embassy journeyed to the West, Christianity and its accompanying vocabulary had been all but swept from the minds and hearts of the Japanese due to fierce governmental persecutions that produced thousands of martyrs and apostates alike.

The translation problem reared its persistent head again in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when both Protestant and Catholic missionaries were allowed back into Japan and, after 1873, given permission to teach their faith not just to foreign residents, but, at long last, once again to the Japanese people. One of their first efforts involved translating the New Testament,

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20. Ortega y Gasset, "The Misery and the Splendor of Translation," 102–3, emphasis added.

21. Ōno Susumu, one of the most renowned linguists of modern Japan, in his book *Nihonjin no kami* (Tokyo: Shinchō Bunko, 1997), cites on page 117 the entry from the 1595 Latin-Portuguese-Japanese dictionary (*Ra-Po-Nichi Jisho*) defining Deus as "Tenshin" (heavenly deity), "Tentei" (emperor of heaven), and "Tenshu" (heavenly lord).

then the Old Testament, into Japanese. They made the reasonable decision to draw upon the Bible translations that had earlier been done by missionaries in China. Amid the debates over the proper Chinese term for the Christian God, two American missionaries, W. J. Boone and W. M. Lowrie, hit upon the Chinese character *shen* 神 (pronounced *shin* in the Japanese approximation of Chinese pronunciation used for character compounds; pronounced *kami* in the native Japanese reading of the character). Though a number of other missionaries mounted sound arguments against the use of this word, a complete Bible translation was published in China in 1859 employing *shen* as the term for deity. The original meaning of this Chinese character is along the lines of: "the incomprehensible power of Nature as manifested in phenomena such as lightning."[22]

When J. C. Hepburn and S. R. Brown undertook the first complete Japanese translation of the Bible in 1872, they followed the precedent set by other American missionaries in China and used the *shen* character for God. Unfortunately, the native Japanese pronunciation of the character, *kami*, launched one of the longest-standing translation dilemmas in the history of Christian proselytizing in East Asia. Unlike the case in China, the term *kami* in Japan has, for centuries, been associated with the indigenous animistic deities of Shinto and was broadened to subsume the Buddhist gods that subsequently arrived on Japanese soil.[23] This can hardly be considered a significant improvement over Xavier's use of *Dainichi.*

Subsequently, an attempt—to my mind, a rather feeble one—was made to distinguish the Christian God from the pantheon of divinities that were central to the comingled Shinto and Buddhist traditions. And how was this done? By taking the term *kami* and adding an honorific ending on it! The *kami* became *kamisama* 神様; but nothing is solved by adding an honorific suffix to a native term that, to the Japanese mind, denotes "a superior and mysterious force of either creative or destructive character, which resides in natural elements, animals, and certain human beings, causes ambivalent feelings of fear and gratitude, and is the focus of ritual behavior."[24]

I am more than willing to concede Professor Takagi's assertion that it is the responsibility of the members of a faith to educate investigators and new converts as to the specific meanings of the core vocabulary of their dogma.

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22. See, for instance, the description of the character's meaning in the *Shinjigen,* ed. Ogawa Kanki, Nishida Taichirō, and Akazuka Tadashi (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1975), 720.

23. See Ōno, *Nihonjin no kami,* 115–23.

24. Definition taken from *Kodansha Encyclopedia,* 4:125. *Kamisama* is the Japanese term used today in the LDS Church in Japan.

But there remains, like a thorn in our sides, the post-Eden, post-Babel quandary: any such education must be done using the elusive medium of words, the interpretation of which might lead to different meanings in different languages. I am convinced that inventing a completely foreign terminology and then trying to force new meanings on it by using the bludgeon of language is bound to lead to confusion, frustration, and, ultimately, the breakdown of communication. I am quite certain that tortured translations must bear some responsibility for the fact that some Japanese Christians today can blithely and proudly declare that their God happens to be the greatest of all among the Shinto and Buddhist deities that proliferate across the land.

Babelesque confusion over how to name God in Japanese was not the only challenge that confronted the first Christian missionaries in the sixteenth century. For some time they used *Jōdo* 浄土 for paradise or heaven; it is the term used in Pure Land Buddhism to indicate the "Western Paradise of the Amida Buddha." In some documents, the Christian faith is referred to as *Buppō* 仏法, which quite clearly means the "Law of the Buddha." The Catholic concept of man's "spirit" was originally translated with an existing Japanese term, *tamashii* 魂, which was already recognized from primitive Shinto animistic belief as the spiritual essence that makes up the omnipresent *kami*. *Sō* 僧, the word for a Buddhist priest, was also applied to the Portuguese padres, and when they received permission from the Japanese government to build churches, they were called *tera* 寺, or Buddhist temples; the most famous of these was erected in Kyoto in 1578 and was named by the foreigners the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. But by the Japanese, both converts and non-Christians alike, it was called the *Nambanji* 南蛮寺 (the Buddhist Temple of the Southern[25] Barbarians).[26]

I could cite many other examples, but I believe these few make the point: The attempt to adopt existing Japanese religious terms and to somehow "convert" them into Christian vocabulary was problematic at best. It is difficult to imagine how such an approach could bear fruit in any culture of any age. By 1555, Father Baltasar Gago felt compelled to pen a letter stating:

> These [Buddhist] Japanese have a number of words which they use in their sects. For a long time we preached them the truth through the medium of these words. Once I had become aware of them, however, I changed them

25. "Southern" because they had entered Japan through Kagoshima, at the southern tip of Kyushu.

26. Most of these examples are cited in Stefan Kaiser, "Translations of Christian Terminology into Japanese, 16–19th Centuries: Problems and Solutions," in *Japan and Christianity: Impacts and Responses,* ed. John Breen and Mark Williams (London: Macmillan, 1996), 8–29. Additional examples may be found in Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan*, especially chapters 1–3.

> immediately because, if one wishes to treat the truth with words of error and lies, they impart the wrong meaning. For all words, therefore, which I realised to be damaging, I teach them our own words. Even just the things that are new require new words. Besides, theirs have in essence very different meanings from what we mean.[27]

By "our words," Gago of course meant either Latin or Portuguese.[28] Which leads me to my second category:

2. Attempts at "translating" Christian religious vocabulary by using foreign terms

This is a practice born out of desperation over finding any proper Japanese equivalents. I have to use the word "translating" rather loosely, since the mere act of pronouncing a foreign word with Japanese sounds does not mean that the word can be instantly understood. Since I speak Japanese, it is not particularly difficult for me to use Japanese pronunciation when saying, for instance, *fe-su*. But am I talking about "face" or "faith"?[29] Either way, I am not likely to be communicating any unambiguously true content to a native Japanese listener.

The result of merely pronouncing European religious terms in Japanese was, to my mind, an incomprehensible torrent of "Babel sounds," something that even a highly educated Japanese person of the time must have found utterly baffling. To illustrate how much mishmash might be created when foreign terms are introduced without proper elaboration, I provide here an English translation of one passage from the catechism used in the late sixteenth century in Japan, substituting Japanese words every time a Latin or Portuguese term appears: "The sixth *hiseki* is called *jokai*. With

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27. Kaiser, "Translations," 10.

28. It could be argued that the Latin and Portuguese terminology Gago was teaching to the Japanese may have suffered from the same shortcomings as the Japanese terms he rejected, since the individual books in his own Bible had not been written initially in either of those languages, but in Hebrew, Greek, or perhaps Aramaic. In essence, translating the Old Testament from Hebrew into Latin in the early centuries of the Christian era may have created a dilemma similar to the one I am describing, since the Romans had their own pantheon of gods and a pagan religious tradition quite unlike the monotheistic, messianic beliefs of the Jews and early Christians.

29. I actually heard an interesting misinterpretation involving this word at the first area conference of the Church in Japan, held in the summer of 1975. In his concluding remarks on the second day of the conference, President Spencer W. Kimball said, "I pray that you will not lose your faith." The interpreter, a Japanese brother who had done an extraordinary job throughout the sessions, was probably a bit weary by this point, and what he heard, and how he translated it into Japanese, was "I pray that you will not lose face."

this *hiseki* a *shisai* gives one the rank of *seishokusha* who administers the *hiseki*. It is the *hiseki* through which the Lord *Iesu Kirisuto* offered *onkei* to those who receive the *hiseki* so that they will be able to perform their roles well."[30] This passage "explains" the sixth Catholic sacrament, that of ordination. But how is it possible that such a statement could have made any sense to a sixteenth-century Japanese who had never even heard of Christianity?

The problem of trying to import foreign religious vocabulary into Japan and have the people somehow conjure up, intuit, or receive inspiration on what the terms might mean has not been solely a premodern Catholic challenge. Right up to the present day, no matter what brand of Christianity we name, the attempt to find just the "right word" to convey a religious concept has led many fine, earnest translators to throw up their hands and, in a fit of despondency, merely use the foreign word in Japanese pronunciation, hoping that a glossary or a concordance or a patient bilingual minister can somehow offer an explanation of sufficient meatiness that it will cling to the bare linguistic bones.

Again, I shall cite only a handful of examples. We may as well begin—at the end this time—with *A-men* アーメン. *Pan* パン, from the Portuguese, is still used in Japanese to describe bread, including the sacramental bread. Then there are *suteeku* ステーク and *waado* ワード, *baputesuma* バプテスマ and *endaumento* エンダウメント, and *bishoppu* ビショップ.[31] Curious, isn't it, that two of the most important ordinances for salvation and exaltation do not seem to have adequate Japanese equivalents? The faithful Protestant translators of the late nineteenth century, who were the first to render the complete New Testament in Japanese, had to take a vote among fifty-five foreign missionaries in Japan to determine whether to use *senrei* 洗礼 (the ordinance of washing) or *baputesuma* to describe the ordinance that cleanses the sins of the penitent. The final vote was sixteen for *senrei*, thirty for *baputesuma,* and nine abstentions (presumably all of them unrepentant). One Baptist minister resigned from the translation committee after the vote was taken, and in his own subsequent translation of the New Testament, he coined the term *shinrei* 浸礼, meaning "baptism by immersion."[32] Latter-day Saints in Japan today use *baputesuma.*

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30. Adapted from Higashibaba, *Christianity in Early Modern Japan,* 171.

31. These are, of course, respectively "stake" and "ward," "baptism" and "endowment," and "bishop." In 2009, the Church in Japan ceased official use of the Japanese position title, *kantoku* 監督—which has a core meaning of "supervisor" or "coach" in common usage but has also been used to denote a Christian ecclesiastical leader—in favor of the English loan word *bishoppu*. A hypothetical Brother Tanaka, who would once have been called "Tanaka Kantoku," is now addressed as "Tanaka Bishoppu."

32. Bernardin Schneider, "Bible Translations," in *Handbook of Christianity in Japan,* ed. Mark R. Mullins (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 209–10.

The use of what linguists refer to as "borrowed words" or "loan words" is, of course, a common phenomenon in any language whose speakers have had ongoing interaction with those speaking a different tongue. But the overarching problem with using loan words to render Christian terminology into Japanese has to do with issues involving both the eye and the ear—and, ultimately, the heart. Words imported into Japanese from other languages (as is the case with the religious terms cited in the previous paragraph) are generally written in *katakana,* a phonetic syllabary that has, in modern times, been reserved almost solely for "foreign" words. It is as though the words were both italicized ***and*** bold-faced to point out to the Japanese just how alien they are. They stand out like sore thumbs in a normal Japanese sentence. And, of course, they sound peculiar to the Japanese ear unfamiliar with the words. In a nation such as Japan—which for centuries preserved its national, ethnic, racial, political, and social structures separate from those of the outside world, and which takes a great deal of pride in what its people see as their "uniqueness" in all the world—using foreign terms to describe something as intimate and personal and close to the heart as religious beliefs builds up an enormous barrier before the core doctrines can even be taught. Up to the present day, Christianity is perceived in Japan as a foreign religion suited to foreigners but unjapanizable and therefore not necessary or even desirable to the Japanese. And language is one of the chief offenders in marking Christianity as an invasive, imperialistic ideology that the Japanese seem to feel very happy being without. After all, despite nearly 250 years of active proselytizing by various Christian sects in Japan, at present perhaps only 1 to 2 percent of the population claims to be Christian.[33] Christianity is,

33. Different sources give different totals. "There is no clear census on the exact number of Christians, according to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, which monitors religious activity. The Christian community itself counts only those who have been baptized and are currently regular churchgoers—some 1 million people, or less than 1 percent of the population, according to Nobuhisa Yamakita, moderator of the United Church of Christ in Japan." Mariko Kato, "Christianity's Long History in the Margins," *The Japanese Times Online,* February 24, 2009, http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20090224i1.html. "The Agency for Cultural Affairs reported in 2006 that membership claims by religious groups totaled 209 million persons. This number, which is nearly twice the country's population, reflects many citizens' affiliation with multiple religions. For example, it is very common for Japanese to practice both Buddhist and Shinto rites. According to the Agency's annual yearbook, 107 million persons identify themselves as Shinto, 89 million as Buddhist, 3 million as Christian." United States Department of State, "2009 Report on International Religious Freedom—Japan," October 26, 2009, available at the UN Refugee Agency, *Refworld,* http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4ae86131a5.html. In a country of 127.6 million in 2006, 3 million

to many Japanese, what raw fish is to many Americans—alien, slippery, a bit hard to swallow, and not something they want to make a part of their daily diet. And at least some of the reason for that lies in the difficulty Christians have had coming up with palatable terminology to explain the gospel of Jesus Christ in ways that it can be "delicious to [them]" (see Alma 32:28).

3. Words, phrases, or grammatical expressions that can easily be misinterpreted, or interpreted in multiple and sometimes contradictory ways

My examples here will be drawn from the Japanese language triple combination currently in use in the Church, which, though revised in 2009, is based on translations done in 1995 by a devoted committee of Japanese translators who were commissioned to produce as "literal" a translation as they could possibly manage.[34] One of the most useful features of this new edition of Latter-day Saint scriptures in Japanese is the addition of "The Guide to the Scriptures"—"Seiku Gaido" 聖句ガイド at the end of the volume. Surely this vital supplement goes a long way toward meeting Professor Takagi's requirement for Japanese Saints to be "educated" as to the doctrinal meaning of the vocabulary that has been chosen to render religious terms. But I would argue that the unavoidable reality that these educational entries have to be written in human language can, on occasion, actually just compound the problem of properly communicating spiritual truths. For example, in the entry under *Ten no on-chichi* 天の御父, meaning "Heavenly Father"

Christians translates into 2.35 percent, but this number could include many people who practice more than one religion. Of course, Latter-day Saints make up only a small part of this already small Christian total, whatever it is. With just over 124,000 members, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accounts for less than .1 percent of Japan's population.

34. I assume that "literal" means that the translators must be careful not to introduce what the Apostle Peter called "private interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20) into scriptural passages. Bellos, describing the translation philosophy of Eugene Nida, whom he calls "the most respected authority on Bible translation in the world," says that Nida "was an unabashed proponent of the view that, as far as the Bible was concerned, only dynamic equivalence ['where the translator substitutes for source-text expressions other ways of saying things with roughly the same force in the culture of the receiving society'] would do. In that sense he was renewing the translator's defense of the right to be free and not 'literal.' Nida's overriding concern . . . is that the holy scriptures be brought to all people—and that what is brought to them be the scriptures, as nearly as can be managed. A Bible that makes no immediate sense in the target language, or Bibles that can be read or understood only by trained theologians or priests, are not well suited to missionaries' aims." Bellos, *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?*, 170–71. This is not to say that Nida's overriding concern is the only interest in need of attention.

or "Father in Heaven," we read this very simple definition: "Zenjinrui no rei no chichi 全人類の霊の父." On the surface, this is a straightforward definition that means "The father of the spirits of all mankind." Now, what could possibly be wrong with that from a doctrinal point of view? It is most assuredly true. But those conspiracy theorists who insist that Japanese is a vague language, a language of often deliberate obfuscation,[35] might gleefully point to a basic grammatical principle that somewhat muddies the waters here. The connective particle *no*, used twice in this short phrase, often signifies a modifier, as in *zenjinrui no rei*—"the father of spirits." But the elusive *no* can also be a grammatical substitute for *de aru*, the copula that means "who is." So this phrase could be taken to mean "the father of all mankind, who is a spirit."

"The Only Begotten of the Father" is another vital doctrinal concept that has a unique and ennobling meaning for Latter-day Saints. The Protestant translation of the term, as in John 3:16, merely says, "hitori-go 独り子"—the "only child" or, possibly, "only Son" of the Father. It loses all sense of begetting, except in the implicit understanding that "a son is the child of his father," but it seems to me to lose a good deal of the metaphorical as well as literal power of the word "begotten." Here, too, the translators of Latter-day scripture have followed the precedent set by the sectarian translation of the Bible into Japanese, leaving something of a barrier to a Japanese person's attempts to understand through the scriptures the full nature of the relationship between the Father and the Son.

Another path I must travel down in this study is the use of the word *michi* 道, which has a multitude of meanings, the most common of which are "road/path" and "way." Thus, for example, when the Savior describes himself as "the way, the truth, and the life," the Japanese term for "way" is

35. There is a highly nuanced debate, both among linguists and the Japanese public, over whether the Japanese language is better at imprecise utterances than other languages. Some of the best references in support of "vagueness" (or "indirectness") as one of the characteristics of the Japanese language include Horikawa Naoyoshi, "Hanashikotoba ni okeru Nihonjin no ronri"「話しことばにおける日本人の論理」(The Logic of the Japanese as Demonstrated in Their Spoken Language), originally published in his book, *Nihonjin no seikaku*「日本人の性格」(The Personality of the Japanese), published by Asakura Shoten in 1970; it is easily accessible thanks to its inclusion in a language textbook, *Modern Japanese: An Advanced Reader*, ed. Gen Itasaka, Seiichi Makino, and Kikuko Yamashita (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1974), 8–17. The best description I have seen of a moderate view of the Japanese language's facility for indirectness comes from Jay Rubin: "The Japanese *language* can express anything it needs to, but Japanese *social norms* often require people to express themselves incompletely or indirectly." Rubin, *Gone Fishin': New Angles on Perennial Problems* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1992), 13.

michi. It is also employed in the 1909 Book of Mormon translation for "the plan," as in "the plan of salvation" or "the great plan of happiness."[36]

This Chinese character, read in Japanese as *michi*, is in the pronunciation derived from its Chinese roots read either *dō* or *tō* and is the character used to describe "the Way of the Gods" (Shintō). Perhaps even more potentially perplexing to the Asian mind is the fact that the character in Chinese is read *Dao*, as in Daoism, and as in the title of the classical text of Daoism from the sixth century BC, the *Dao De Jing* 道徳経. It is instructive, I think, to ponder the fact that the word *michi*/*dao* that is used in translating Christian scriptures into the languages of East Asia is precisely the word that appears in the opening passage of the *Dao De Jing*:

> The Way [*Dao*] that can be told of is not an unvarying way [*Dao*];
> The names that can be named are not unvarying names.
> It was from the Nameless that Heaven and Earth sprang;
> The named is but the mother that rears the ten thousand creatures, each after its kind.[37]

There is the distinct possibility that we are left with a translation of John 1:1 in Japanese that could mean something like "In the beginning was the Dao, and the Dao was with God, and the Dao was God." All we really need to do is rename it the *Dao De John.* Of course, I am not suggesting that it is likely for any intelligent reader to do such a garbled reading; my point is that the fluid changeability (the very thing the opening passage of the *Dao De Jing* proclaims) of language opens the door to a multiplicity of meanings, and that it is difficult to control how individuals choose to decode a string of words, each of which can have manifold interpretations. One can almost hear Peter shuddering each time he observes someone applying a "private interpretation" to the prophecies of scripture (2 Peter 1:20), for interpretation is unavoidable in the act of translating.

4. Terms that simply don't communicate

While it is true that as Latter-day Saints we have our own set of unique religious jargon in every language, one of the issues in a truly foreign land[38]

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36. See Takagi, "Proclaiming the Way," 30. It is most interesting, but not relevant to the current discussion, that, as Takagi notes in this article, the 1880 Japanese translation of the Bible played one of the salutary tricks of the Japanese written language in writing the character *michi* for "logos" but then glossing its reading as *kotoba,* literally meaning "word."

37. *Tao Te Ching,* trans. Arthur Waley, in Arthur Waley, *The Way and Its Power: A Study of the Tao Te Ching and Its Place in Chinese Thought* (New York: Grove, 1958), ch. 1.

38. I might note here, lest my description of Japan as a "truly foreign land" sounds derogatory or racist, that I use it in the sense that the Japanese language has

like Japan is that some words we have decided to use in translating our beliefs into their language actually *impede* rather than foster communication. They may be archaic words that no well-educated Japanese person knows anymore or simply vocabulary describing a concept that remains so vague in their minds that they cannot comprehend it sufficiently well to embrace it in their own personal set of beliefs.

In a previous article, I dealt with the challenge of teaching the law of chastity, since the Japanese word used to translate "adultery" in the Ten Commandments and in modern-day scripture (*kan'in* 姦淫) is not a word that would ever be heard today in colloquial conversation or used in everyday written discourse. Many educated Japanese today would not even understand the characters used to write the word. It would be akin to teaching the law of chastity to an English speaker today and citing the relevant passage in Exodus as "Thou shalt not commit advowtry," a term the Oxford English Dictionary tells us survived until 1688. I wonder whether even a Japanese person of the seventeenth or nineteenth centuries would have understood the Japanese word that is still used in Christian scriptures today.

To my mind, perhaps the most painful example of inadequate translation is the Japanese term for "atonement." Granted, this is such a profound and profoundly critical doctrine for all of our Father's children that it cannot be satisfactorily explained in words alone. But of all our sacred concepts, this is the one we simply have to get right—or as close to right as possible! I suspect we have some advantages when we take the revealed doctrine of the Atonement to nations where the resident spiritual memory contains some sort of variation on the Christ archetype, and there are certainly many civilizations, ancient and modern, that claim some such variation. It is no doubt true, as James George Frazer argued in *The Golden Bough* (1890), that the myth of the Dying God belongs to a great many of the world's spiritual traditions.[39] But as C. S. Lewis argues in his critique of Frazer's thesis, Frazer

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been classified as a "truly foreign language" by many American linguists, including the late Eleanor H. Jorden.

39. James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A New Abridgement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). This study of humankind's progression from magic through religion to scientific inquiry was controversial at the time of its publication because Frazer was sufficiently bold to rank Jesus in a long genealogy of "dying gods," thereby suggesting that he was merely another manifestation of a generations-old prototype. The assertion met with such opposition in Victorian England that Frazer consigned the argument to an appendix in the third edition of 1906–15, then eliminated it altogether in the final 1922 abridgement. See the "Introduction" to the Oxford edition, pp. xxiv–xxvii. The primary sections in which Frazer presents his arguments of a "dying god" archetype, including the killing of divine kings, the sacrificing of the sons of kings, and several manifestations of the

has it backwards by queuing Christ up in a long line of pagan archetypes and concluding therefrom that Jesus is merely another in the series; Lewis argues that what is unique about Christianity is that it takes the myth and makes it fact. He writes: "Does not the Christian story show this pattern of descent and re-ascent because that is part of all the nature religions of the world? We have read about it in *The Golden Bough*. We all know about Adonis, and the stories of the rest of those rather tedious people; is not this one more instance of the same thing, 'the dying God'? Well, yes it is."[40] But he goes on to say: "Now as myth transcends thought, Incarnation transcends myth. The heart of Christianity is a myth which is also a fact. The old myth of the Dying God, *without ceasing to be myth*, comes down from the heaven of legend and imagination to the earth of history. It *happens*—at a particular date, in a particular place, followed by definable historical consequences. . . . We must not be nervous about 'parallels' and 'Pagan Christs': they *ought* to be there—it would be a stumbling block if they weren't."[41] In at least the metaphorical sense, it is because of the *almost* universal existence of some version of the Christ narrative that the message of the restored gospel can strike a resonant chord in the hearts of a large portion of the world's population. Western literature is filled with examples of Christ figures that echo the wide familiarity with the paradigm: Sydney Carton in Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, Santiago in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea,* Jim Casy in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Gandalf in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings,* and of course Lewis's own creation, Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*—each of these "stand-ins" for Christ can speak across many cultural and linguistic lines.

My readings in early Japanese mythology, however, have not led me to a death-to-rebirth story therein that is a close correlate to the myths of Adonis, Osiris, or Balder, much less to the reality of Christ himself. The closest correlate I can think of is the story of the two deities, Izanagi and Izanami, who are the parents of the Japanese islands. When the goddess Izanami dies in childbirth, her husband goes, Orpheus-like, to the underworld to try to retrieve her. But, importantly, he fails—in fact, he fails spectacularly: not only does he not bring Izanami back to life, but she is so incensed at his attempt that she tries to kill him and then swears to massacre a thousand of

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scapegoat, are Book II: Killing the God (pp. 223–554 in the Oxford edition), and Book III: The Scapegoat (pp. 557–705).

40. C. S. Lewis, "The Grand Miracle," in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics,* ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1970), 83.

41. C. S. Lewis, "Myth Became Fact," in *God in the Dock,* 66–67.

his people every day. Hardly a story that will be memorialized in the annals of worldwide Christianity.

My point here is that we share so very little mythological and theological turf with the Japanese that we simply cannot blurt out one of the words used to translate atonement—*aganai/shokuzai* 購い・贖罪—and expect it to call up all manner of associations in the cultural memories of the people. Both *aganai* and *shokuzai* are dated words that mean "compensation, reparation, or indemnity" and, as a verb, "to pay money to get something out of hock" or "to purchase the contract of one who belongs to another." Note that each of these meanings relates, in one way or another, to the exchange of money. (In fact, the final meaning of buying up another person's contract most frequently refers to the early modern practice of freeing a courtesan from her indentures.) While it is true that we have all been "bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:20), as Paul puts it, and "ransomed" (see Matt. 20:28) by Christ's blood, I question whether there is any corollary in the Japanese tradition, since their narratives do not provide any types and shadows—such as Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, or the sacrificial "lamb of God," or the image of blood painted on door posts to save the faithful from the destroying angel—that might be adopted as metaphors for Christ (see Mosiah 13:10). Likely the closest Japanese traditions come to our atonement narratives—and it is still pretty distant—is in the making of offerings to the gods to appease angry spirits, which are viewed in Shinto as the cause of all human ills. But to reduce something as supernally magnificent and loving as the Savior's willing sacrifice for all humanity to some kind of animistic act of soothing the savage breast by means of coinage is to drain it of all its essential power and beauty.[42]

Conclusion

If language is as slippery and imperfect—sometimes to the point of being deceptive—a medium of communication as I have argued here, what can be done to improve the ways in which the gospel of Jesus Christ is expressed and explicated in a language such as Japanese? It goes without saying (but I shall say it anyway) that the Translation Department of the Church is tirelessly dedicated to grappling with this issue (see sidebar on page 55), and

42. It is instructive, I think, that virtually the only word used in Japanese translations of the scriptures for "atonement"—whether in the Old Testament or New Testament senses—is the above-mentioned *aganai,* which is employed for "atonement," "ransom," and "propitiation," suggesting that the Japanese tradition does not make allowance for any subtle distinctions between these concepts. And there is no equivalent in Japanese that can match the powerful wordplay of the Anglo-Saxon "at-one-ment."

that considerable progress has been made over the years. The combination of intelligence, inspired guidance from Church leaders, and linguistic excellence represented by the Church's translation team has demonstrated time and again that the "crooked broken scattered and imperfect language" over which even the Prophet Joseph agonized can, with ongoing efforts at improvement, narrow the gap between the imperfect mortal instrument of language and the flawless voices of angels that convey the things of God.

But as marvelous a work as has been done, it is a process that must be continued, and it is unlikely to be able to declare its labors done until the Lord chooses to do whatever he will with human language when he comes to earth again. The struggle must continue.

How best, then, to respond to these challenges posed by the intricate imperfections of man-made language? Surely it is incumbent upon those of us who engage in the work of translation to continue our efforts over time to leap the hurdles of translation and propose increasingly accurate and evocative words and phrases to convey—with as little distortion as possible—the saving truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. But where to begin, if the word, as John claims, is primary? It perhaps makes sense to start with the name of God. Do we follow Xavier's example and simply japanize our word, calling him "Goddo"? I think not. That still calls up too many theologically imperialistic notions in the Japanese mind. Do we pronounce one of his non-Japanese names, such as Elohim, in Japanese fashion? Do we create a new term altogether and begin the seemingly endless chore of educating the Japanese on what we mean by it? Risky. But I would assert that the efforts to refine our religious vocabulary must continue.

I take as precedents the apparent dissatisfactions that the Prophet Joseph felt with the King James Version of the Bible, which led him to work on his own inspired translation, and, more recently, the significant labors done in the Church to produce the Spanish translation of the Bible, the *Santa Biblia,* in order to "provide Spanish-speaking members worldwide with a uniform Bible that contains study helps to enhance their understanding of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ."[43] This is a mammoth undertaking, one that certainly required several years and scores of participants to bring to

43. The LDS edition of the *Santa Biblia* "was prepared and reviewed by a team of translators, General Authorities, Area Seventies, professional linguists, and Church members . . . under the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles." The Church indicates that a quality translation (the 1909 Reina-Valera Bible), which was no longer protected by copyright, "underwent a very conservative update of outdated grammar *and vocabulary*" (emphasis added). These quotations are all taken from the webpage on the Church's official site: http://lds.org/santabiblia/q-a.html#01.

Translation in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Tod R Harris, Manager, Scriptures Translation, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Translation is a critical part of the work of the worldwide Church, and all official translation is performed by the Church's Translation Division under the direction of presiding councils. This means that the Translation Division translates only material that is approved by these councils into languages that are also approved. Currently, there are about 180 approved languages into which the Church translates materials such as curriculum manuals, magazines, hymns, and, increasingly, software and websites.

Originating Church organizations provide English source texts to the Translation Division. These texts then undergo specialized preparation before they are sent out to mostly native-speaking translators, often residing in their native countries. This preparation includes preliminary electronic formatting (to streamline final production) as well as a function called "adaptation." This step is performed by linguists and writers who scan the text for passages that are difficult to translate, such as ones containing specialized terminology or descriptions of uniquely American cultural activities, and who write explanatory notes to assist translators in preserving the meaning of the original material. Translation project supervisors also work with translators and reviewers to help them produce translations of curriculum and other day-to-day materials that are as correct and sound as natural as possible in the respective target languages.

The Translation Division is also responsible for translating the Church's standard works, including the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. The scriptures of the Church are translated according to a much higher standard than are other materials.

Since the time of Joseph Smith, the Church has followed a very conservative scripture translation philosophy, striving to be as literal to source texts as possible. Though the Church reveres the Bible, it recognizes that it has gone through many iterations, some more faithful to source texts than others; hence the

qualifier in Article of Faith 8 "as far as it is translated correctly." The Book of Mormon has been translated from its source language to English only once, and since the original plates are no longer available, Joseph Smith's English translation has become the de facto source text for all subsequent translations.

To facilitate the preservation of this relatively literal and therefore very accurate translation, the Book of Mormon and other scriptures are translated in accordance with a policy statement issued by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles that requires translations of the standard works to be literal translations, insofar as possible. Recognizing that it is not possible to translate all words and phrases in a literal way into every language, the Translation Division strives to produce "modified-literal" translations of scriptures in order to provide an experience for target-language readers that is very similar to the one readers of the original English text have.

The Church uses teams of native-speaking members residing in their respective countries to perform scripture translation. The work is overseen by scripture translation supervisors working out of the Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. These supervisors train translation teams to preserve the meaning of the scriptures (including key terms) as their first priority, but also assist translators to be as literal as possible within the constraints of the target language's structure. This difficult balance is achieved by using specialized translation guides and other materials prepared by Translation Division exegetes. The supervisors work constantly with the teams to assure that the proper balance between literalness and language acceptability and understandability is maintained.

When each translation of scripture is completed, it also undergoes an ecclesiastical review by a committee of native-speaking local leaders who provide a final certification that the translation is doctrinally accurate as well as acceptable to the intended audience. This certification is submitted to presiding councils who then authorize the translation to be published. Policy and processes are also in place to revise translations of scriptures as the need arises.

fruition. But since it is the God-given right of every person to "hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language" (D&C 90:11), I believe it to be a worthy investment of every necessary effort to produce a similarly revised translation of the Bible into Japanese. Until we can provide nonmembers and members alike with scriptures that are, to the extent humanly possible, free from overt doctrinal error,[44] we will have to continue with the cumbersome, seemingly endless task of twisting the definitions of existing terms to suit our—and the Lord's—purposes.

Was Bertrand Russell right after all when he said that "no one can understand the word 'cheese' unless he has a nonlinguistic acquaintance with cheese"?[45] Was the Dutch linguist Henry Schogt correct when he made the following rather gloomy pronouncement?

> Communication between two people who do not share the same native language is impossible, even if one of them has learned the language of the other. Even those who think they have learned a foreign language remain prisoners of their mother tongue's value system, and are therefore incapable of truly communicating with those whose language they think they have mastered. . . . The language one speaks focuses on elements of the outside world and creates abstract notions that other languages may leave either unnoticed or, in the case of abstract notions, unconceptualized.[46]

Only the fruits of ongoing labors by the kinds of qualified teams who produced the new LDS Spanish edition of the Bible will be able to provide the ultimate answer to that question. But if those labors continue, and similar work is done in other major languages of the Church population, I remain hopeful that we will become more and more effective in teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in lands such as Japan where culture, customs, and language are so far removed that they seem complete "strangers and foreigners." There remain many challenges in translating—or, to borrow

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44. I have written elsewhere about the translation of a term into Japanese that raises all manner of doctrinal issues. It is the translation of "natural man," as used both by Paul and by King Benjamin. Both the Japanese Bible and the most recent translation of the Book of Mormon use the phrase "umarenagara no hito 生まれながらの人," which literally means "man in the state into which he is born," as close an approximation to the false doctrine of "original sin" as I can imagine. See my "'Strange Characters and Expressions,'" 32–47.

45. Quoted by Roman Jakobson in "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation," in Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation,* 144.

46. Henry Schogt, "Semantic Theory and Translation Theory," in Schulte and Biguenet, *Theories of Translation,* 194.

Ortega's delightful word, "transubstantiating"[47]—our religious vocabulary into a language as obstreperous as Japanese. Although we have yet to arrive at the hoped-for linguistic destination, I do not for a moment believe that words are our only or even our most effective tools of communication. In fact, though our earthly tools may have dull edges and broken handles, it is, in the final analysis, not the words themselves that bring individuals to a knowledge of their Redeemer.

Can words be as much an obstacle as a medium of communication? I hope I have demonstrated here that they can—and that we as the people commissioned to take the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people have a solemn, inescapable responsibility to keep searching for the right words, to improve our translations and enhance our abilities to explain saving truth in terms that communicate as well as is humanly possible.

The ultimate, simple, and highly unoriginal—but true—conclusion to which I can come is that *after all we can do* to come up with the best possible language to teach the gospel, it is by the grace of God (see 2 Ne. 25:23) that our language is saved. That is, with the convincing power of his Spirit in the teaching process, we can and will succeed in our imperfect but imperative attempts. I turn again to the Apostle Paul:

> But as it is written, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,* the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
>
> But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
>
> For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.
>
> Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; *that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*.
>
> Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but *which the Holy Ghost teacheth*; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
>
> But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2:9–14, emphasis added)

And, again, in Doctrine and Covenants 50:21–2: "He that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of

47. Ironically, this "delightful" word does not come directly from Ortega (who used "transustanciación"), but from his capable translator, Elizabeth Gamble Miller.

truth. . . . Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together."

The Spirit *will* give utterance, and will, in yet another of the endless manifestations of the tender mercies that always accompany the fruits of the Atonement, fill in all the linguistic gaps that are left once we have done the very best we can to put into words the unspeakable gifts that are ours through the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Of that I am, and not through words alone, absolutely certain.

Van C. Gessel is Humanities Professor of Japanese at BYU. He received his BA at the University of Utah, and his MA and PhD degrees in Japanese at Columbia University. He has worked on the faculty at Columbia, Notre Dame, and the University of California at Berkeley. After coming to BYU in 1990, he served as chair of the Department of Asian and Near Eastern Languages and as the dean of the College of Humanities. He has written two scholarly books on modern Japanese literature, co-edited two anthologies of twentieth-century Japanese fiction, and translated seven literary works by the Japanese Christian novelist Endō Shūsaku. He expresses appreciation to Daryl Hague for his insights into translation theory and for making materials available that have improved this article.

"Neat" as a Word of Approbation

The languor of the word "neat" settled like sun
In a meadow, warming the green and the shimmer
Of water along the depressions that were dimmer
Under the gloss of spring. But the word was a sin,
According to Cambridge or Windsor and Opinion
Outstanding and honorific, like the height of summer
Under Apollo. But Dionysus, as a western minion,
Came off and down the wall, diagnosing that comer
Like Freud. And he talked with a drawl like kin
Of scalawag Billy or Jesse and rounded opinion in,
In a blind black as a mourner for exiles
Either east or west, Confederate or Union,
But certainly harsh with his weapon of smiles,
Oh, howdy.

—Clinton F. Larson

Religious Metaphor and Cross-Cultural Communication

Transforming National and International Identities

Joseph E. Richardson

In studies of the rapid rise of Christianity in non-Western cultures, Philip Jenkins and others[1] have noted serious and immediate challenges to communication related to language, intercultural difference, and regional and global identities. The growth of Christianity and Islam in Africa, Asia, and South America and the immigration of individuals and groups have placed culturally and linguistically diverse individuals and organizations in close contact, increasing the possibility of conflict and signaling an urgent need for effective communication. This need is particularly urgent for Latter-day Saints, considering the global nature of the message of the Restoration; the growth of the Church in non-Western cultures and in countries, such as India and Nigeria, that include hundreds of languages and cultures; and immigration patterns that affect congregations and communities.

The challenges of intercultural communication multiply in religious discourse, with its objective of translating abstract ideas into cultures and languages with sufficient power to transform individual, ethnic, and regional identities and to build cohesive communities of faith. Metaphor plays a primary role in this transformative communication. A powerful tool to abbreviate and facilitate communication, metaphor enables individuals to transmit abstract ideas quickly, efficiently, and memorably. Metaphor is not just a tool for efficient communication; it also guides thought, extends ideas, and influences behavior.[2]

Through its structure, metaphor signals a connection—often a grammatical equivalence—between language and identity in a process through which associative networks[3] related to a target idea, or domain, are transformed by their collocation in selected characteristics to one or more source concepts, or domains. When metaphor is created, certain characteristics of

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the source domain are used to illuminate or illustrate aspects of the target domain. This relational structure can make an abstract idea concrete in a way that resonates in the hearer's imagination and begins a process of transformation in perception and behavior.

Metaphor presents particular challenges for effective intercultural communication. Selected denotations and connotations of source concepts may not be present in other languages, even when those languages have similar source concepts. In addition, seemingly equivalent sources may include additional connotations that complicate the structure of the metaphor. Consequently, linguistic and cultural variables can make metaphor difficult to translate. Added difficulties in translating religious discourse are the need for forming a cohesive and unified body of believers and the constraint of sacred text—the requirement that the sacred word be transmitted with as little change as possible. In spite of these difficulties, metaphor helps enable the essential ontological function of transforming both ideas and individuals.

The effect of metaphor on cross-cultural communication is a subject not just for translators or for political, religious, and community leaders. It is a subject for each of us, not only because we are exposed daily to ideas and metaphors through which others seek to direct and influence our behavior or construct our identities, but also because each of us is, or at least has the potential to become, a global speaker and actor through the Internet and other means. Each one of us engages in cross-cultural communication, even within our own families and communities. The frequency of cross-cultural contact is rapidly increasing. In November 2007, a stake president in northern Italy revealed that the membership of his stake included fifty-seven nationalities.[4] This recent phenomenon—of strangers from many cultures seeking to build unity and create community—affects more than just metropolitan Europe. A survey of a ward in downtown Provo revealed fifteen nationalities among the membership of the ward, and more if others in the community were counted who did not worship with that congregation.[5] The subject of immigration, so hotly and often divisively debated today, suggests how frequently we come into contact with others from different cultures and languages and how urgently we need to find practicable solutions.

Cultural discourse involving such issues as immigration and politics is full of metaphor that unites groups into cooperative communities or divides them into competitive factions. Even daily language is full of metaphor. Metaphor affects us to the very core of our identities; the use of metaphor affects our beliefs and faith and, consequently, our actions. As we become aware of the complexity of metaphor—its structure, function, and power—we can act more thoughtfully, live more peaceably, and seek to unify the communities in which we live and work.

The Structure and Function of Metaphor

Metaphor is a means of representing and understanding one thing (perhaps a concept, an object, or an event) in terms of another. It involves linguistic and symbolic representation and imaginative and analogical reasoning. The structure of metaphor has been represented as including the *tenor (*the subject) of the metaphor and the *vehicle* (the presentation) of the metaphor.[6] The vehicle involves "networks of associations"[7] in which at least one network, or source domain, is mapped onto a target domain.[8]

When someone says (to use metaphor in a very simple form) that John is an ox, the speaker does not usually mean that John has four hooves, horns, and a tail; more often something like "John is strong or big like an ox" is intended. So the characteristics of size and strength are selected from the source domain and mapped onto the target domain, and the characteristics of hooves, horn, and tail are suppressed. Depending on the constraints of different contexts and uses of a metaphor, a variety of characteristics might be emphasized.

When a metaphor is new, it can evoke a powerful imaginative response in hearers, transforming belief, knowledge, and understanding and motivating individuals to action. As the metaphor becomes more familiar, the structure of the vehicle blurs and the target can seem to assume a new identity. Its figurative or analogical relation to the selected characteristics of the source can be functionally forgotten, as illustrated in the examples below.

The structure and function of metaphor, both familiar and unfamiliar, can ignite a *culminating energy,* an energy that fuels imaginative discovery in self-perpetuating novelty or creative variation.[9] It can recruit followers to a particular ideology or political belief. It can energize a scientific idea and enable the formation of the cultural alliances[10] necessary to promote a scientific movement. Or it can effect a religious conversion, a radical transformation or turning of a soul to a newness of life.

Because metaphor is constructed on networks of associations in which characteristics are selected or suppressed, it is both relational and taxonomic. It organizes ideas, and it reveals or creates the relation between them. A metaphor is a way to organize or construct understanding of the world in particular ways. If understanding based on a particular metaphor is believed or given consent, consciously or unconsciously, the metaphor can guide or constrain behavior.

Examples of how metaphor can guide or constrain behavior are readily available. For instance, Darwin's metaphor of natural selection organizes scientific perception and social policy around associative networks of the agentic selection of characteristics, competition over scarce resources, and

the ideology of progress. The strength of the metaphor has guided scientific research for more than a century and marginalized other scientific perspectives. The strength of the metaphor and associated networks encouraged eugenics and governmental and social policies of population and reproduction control.[11] It also helps create a language that "cast[s] a blanket of invisibility, or rather, of unspeakability, over certain distinctions, categories, and questions."[12] As the original structure and function behind the metaphor of natural selection are forgotten, claims and policies based on that metaphor begin to take on an aura of inevitability. Phenomena or events, such as cooperative behavior, that fall outside the associative network of the metaphor are forgotten or ignored.

Another example is the metaphor that represents DNA as a genetic blueprint. This metaphor organizes human perception of the function of DNA. The associative network of a blueprint fills lexical gaps. It has given rise to new understanding and has extended research programs. It helps illuminate the function of DNA. But the *blueprint* source domain also includes associative networks that, for better or worse, encourage and are taken to justify scientific and social endeavors to modify the blueprint and the living organisms that arise from it.

Propaganda is built on metaphor. Political slogans are built on metaphor. Factions arise on the basis of metaphor. But nothing disrupts propaganda, slogans, and factionalism more quickly than the destruction of the metaphors behind them. A soldier may be willing to shoot an enemy who has been characterized as worse than a vicious animal. An otherwise decent human being may be willing to persecute his neighbor for the same reasons. But if a soldier sees clutched in the hand of a dead enemy the photograph of a father playing with a child, he may no longer believe the metaphor that has enabled his warlike behavior.

Metaphor presents particular problems for intercultural communications. Some philosophers have spoken of the necessary and impossible task of translation.[13] It has been suggested that a metaphor's "tenor and vehicle are inseparable and without the sense of the particular metaphor one may not have the same sense at all."[14] Because of cultural differences, characteristics of source domains often vary from one language or culture to another. This variation is sometimes quite radical. In one culture, the metaphor "John is an ox" might quite clearly map the characteristics of size and strength onto the target domain. But in another culture, where the primary emphasized characteristic of ox may be *food* or *tool for labor,* the meaning of the metaphor may shift and have a radical effect on John's well-being. John's status might shift yet again in a culture where oxen are objects of religious adoration.

If a metaphor's tenor and vehicle are inseparable and if metaphor guides or constrains or enables behavior, then the question is how translation, even intralingual and intracultural translation, is ever possible. Is cross-cultural communication possible? How can community—or, more important yet, the unity required in Zion—form across cultures and across languages in spite of the difficulties of translation, particularly the difficulties of translating metaphor?

Metaphor in Religious Discourse

A foundational story of Christianity, as of many other religious traditions, is the story of Babel. This story details the confounding of language, which occurred perhaps, as Derrida notes, because of the desire of one people to impose by force their name or "their tongue on the universe."[15] The confounding of language requires, in the Christian tradition, the necessity of translation until a prophesied return of a pure language (see Zeph. 3:9). It suggests that no single language currently available is adequate, that sacred text in any language can be translated—perhaps *must* be translated—because by itself it does not communicate fully or adequately the name and the words and the knowledge of God.

The New Testament story of Pentecostal speaking in tongues (see Acts 2) further legitimizes for Christians the speaking of sacred words in any and in all languages.[16] Thus Christians have a dual and perhaps paradoxical charge: to preach the gospel to all nations (see Matt. 28:19)—to teach each individual in a language that he or she understands—and at the same time to create a community in which there are "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens" (Eph. 2:19). The Christian task is to bring all to a "unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:13), not through violent hegemony[17] or the imposition of a single language, but through tolerating differences in language and culture enough that through effective translation the transformative power of the sacred word can be discovered or revealed. This community building through translation is not only the responsibility of priest and prophet and professional translator; it is the responsibility of each person seeking truth. In a world where distances between people have diminished dramatically through immigration, easy transportation, and the Internet, the urgency for clear, accurate, and truthful communication becomes the responsibility of each individual.

Achieving this type of communication is not an easy task. The transformative power of language rests in part on the principle or function of metaphor. One common religious metaphor maps characteristics of a source domain relating to sight or blindness onto a target domain that relates to belief, knowledge, or conversion. The conversion story of Paul, a

story that involves renaming and transforming identity, enacts this metaphor. The metaphoric blindness that results in Saul's intolerance and persecution of Christians becomes a physical blindness after his revelatory experience on the road to Damascus. His blindness is healed only as his conversion becomes complete (see Acts 9). Paul himself, in subsequent missionary efforts, uses a metaphor of blindness in his teaching as he works to transform the identity of his audiences through religious conversion (see Eph. 4:17–18; other occurrences of this metaphor include Deut. 16:19; 28:29; 1 Sam. 12:3; Ps. 146:8; Isa. 29:18; Matt. 15:14; 23:16–26; and John 9:39). In the effort to build Zion-like unity, each person must be aware enough to see beyond metaphors that blind, so to speak, and to use language, including metaphor, in a translational way that accurately shows relation.

The use of metaphor in scripture resembles the use of parables. Parable and metaphor both involve an analogical process that involves transference. In this process, concepts are placed parallel to each other, so to speak, and thus illuminate each other. They are set side by side, as implied by the word *parable*, and concepts and networks of association are mapped between them, transferring meaning from one network to the other. Thus, our understanding of one enriches our understanding of the other.[18]

The purpose of parable and metaphor in Christ's teaching was to help hearers *see,* but only if they were prepared to do so (see Matt. 13:13–16). New understanding would then enable the transformation of behavior. The hearing of the word increases faith, which leads to repentance. For example, the parable of the good Samaritan reconstructs the content of the source domain of the traditional neighbor metaphor and, in its new mapping, outlines the moral responsibility of one individual toward another, regardless of the social relation of those two individuals. Of course, there is more to the parable than the reconstruction of the neighbor metaphor.[19] The meaningful depth and richness of parables and their enabling metaphors was partly the point of the Savior's statement recorded in Matthew 13:11–13, where he explained why he spoke in parables. But the lawyer who questioned the Savior understood the parable and its extended metaphor, at least as it illustrated an immediate answer to the question, "Who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:29).[20] Whether the lawyer allowed the metaphor to shift his way of seeing others and interacting with them is not addressed in the Bible.

The richness of biblical metaphors enables a resonance in readers in radically different times and places than those in which the metaphors were composed. Centuries removed from the cultural conflict between Samaritans and Jews, we may need a little explanation to fully understand the associative mappings in the neighbor metaphor. But the parable is easy

enough to understand, at least on its most immediate level, and to adapt cross-culturally. Even without a knowledge of the ancient conflicts between Samaritans and Jews or an understanding of the wider resonance of the journey and affliction and other metaphors in the parable, we understand what it means to be a neighbor in the sense the Lord intended. Even across temporal and geographical distance, scripture continues to stir the imagination of readers in many languages and cultures, moving these readers to ponder and act in new ways, transforming patterns of living. Brown remarks, "The power of the metaphor . . . lies in its ability . . . to inspire new theological vision."[21] It inspires both vision and revision in many ways as we return to and reflect on the associative networks that make up the structure of metaphor.

Powerful metaphors illuminate the relation between humans and God. In Christian theology, this group of metaphors draws on family source domains to illuminate the father-child relationship between God and those who follow him and the brotherhood and sisterhood relationship between individuals. These metaphors fill lexical gaps; without metaphor it is difficult or even impossible to talk about or even think about certain relationships. The metaphors also organize behavior. If we truly consider strangers our brothers or sisters, then we are more likely to treat them in ethical ways, regardless of whether they have similar religious beliefs or similar cultural backgrounds.

Religious Metaphor in Intercultural Communications

Family metaphors—those relating to fatherhood and motherhood, sisterhood and brotherhood—generally have positive connotations. From associative networks related to these metaphors, individuals can gain insight into godhood and into the proper relations between the children of God. In an introduction to an anthology of nineteenth-century writer and theologian George McDonald, C. S. Lewis commented: "An almost perfect relationship with his father was the earthly root of all [McDonald's] wisdom. From his own father, he said, he first learned that Fatherhood must be at the core of the universe. He was thus prepared in an unusual way to teach that religion in which the relationship of Father and Son is of all relations the most central."[22] Some people, however, may not have had positive family experiences. For these people, family metaphors may not resonate as readily as for others or be as potent a force for transformation. To teach such a person using this metaphor, a careful explication is required, in which the characteristics of source and target domains are carefully explained. Other metaphors may be more suitable and may be found or created, or these

people may require the reconstruction, through narrative, of suitable networks of association.

Other examples of intercultural variation are not difficult to find. The metaphor in Hebrews 6:19 that compares hope in Christ to an "anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast" has a different signification in cultures that have no familiarity with seas, ships, and anchors. In these cultures, since the source domain is either unfamiliar or nonexistent, a translator faces a challenging dilemma. How does one represent the intention of the author and still ensure meaningful communication to the audience? A solution in the Mossi culture in West Africa, in which people are more familiar with deserts, animals, and the need for a reliable way to keep lifesaving animals from straying, has been to translate *anchor* in the biblical passage as a "picketting-peg for the soul."[23] This variation communicates accurate the ideas of steadiness, consistency, and reliability.

The associative networks in the metaphorical phrase "I stand at the door, and knock" (Rev. 3:20) are difficult to translate into the Zanaki culture in Africa, where, apparently, thieves knock on a doorpost of a house to see if anyone is home. (If someone responds to the knock, they flee.) Rather than knocking, friends stand at the door and call. The resident of the house, hearing a recognized and friendly voice, responds with an invitation to enter. Although similar words for *knock* exist in source and target languages, a straightforward or unexplained translation of the Bible into the Zanaki culture would be problematic. A solution, in lieu of an explanation that may be intrusive or infeasible, would be to translate the phrase as "I stand at the door and call."[24]

Is something lost, something changed, in these translations? Yes, perhaps. Calling and knocking, an anchor and a picketting-peg are not referentially equivalent. Associative networks change in translation. If one language were truly the original sacred language, by itself fully potent and comprehensible, and the other merely a translation, this variation in meaning would perhaps be a problem. But the Babel story suggests that no original language is available to speak the full truth about God. Perhaps speaking of God in many languages adds aspects of truth that enrich human understanding and enhance the possibility of community. Perhaps we need the comprehensiveness of languages together to more fully comprehend God. This possibility suggests that we may jeopardize our own fullness of understanding if we insist solely on communicating in our native tongue. We may find that learning to speak to our neighbors and to hear their wisdom in their language will amplify our understanding and increase our wisdom.

Some non-Western cultures are closer than Western cultures to the metaphorical mappings of the Bible. Without the trappings of modern

convenience and with the daily requirements of obtaining food and water and the frequent occurrence of death, people in these cultures understand more readily the biblical metaphors of living bread and living water and life renewed.[25] The same biblical metaphors may not resonate as readily for people who live with more modern conveniences or who are spared the daily struggle for survival.

Other meanings are hidden as associative networks change over time. For example, in modern English, even in religious cultures in which the metaphor has frequent use, the word *sealed* relates more readily to a canning process for preserving food than to a confirmation of ownership, a sign of royal approbation, or a mark of setting apart, as would be signaled by a wax seal confirmed with a signet ring.[26] This meaning of *seal* works well as a metaphor for a mark of God's approbation, whereas the canning process does not. The concept of preservation can add to our understanding of an ordinance sealed by God, but that understanding is incomplete without the idea of authorization or royal approbation. We benefit from the perspective gained from cross-cultural translation of scripture.

In his study of global Christianity, Jenkins, speaking of translation and the cultural adaptation process, notes, "Minor changes can have complex effects. While the Bible has Jesus declare, 'I am the true Vine,' some African translators prefer to replace vine with fig. This botanical change introduces a whole new theological meaning, since 'this African tree represents the ancestors, and is sometimes planted on tombs.' Jesus now speaks as the voice of death and resurrection."[27] In sharing this insight, Jenkins partly misses the point. In response to his analysis, a Christian might reply, "Of course Jesus speaks as the voice of death and resurrection. He always has." Jesus has spoken with the voice of death and resurrection and continues to do so, but we can begin to hear and understand that voice more fully when we become willing to hear it through the experience and languages of others.

Variation in the source domain networks can be a problem or a resource. It can impede communication and divide a religious community, or it can enrich understanding and unite a community. The parable of the seven blind men and the elephant applies to this linguistic and community challenge. Just as the blind men feeling different parts of the elephant reveal different aspects of elephant physiology, all of them true, variations in metaphor may provide a more comprehensive understanding of a religious truth, of the reality suggested by the metaphor. As we encounter truth through many languages and cultures, we understand it more completely. The structure of metaphor illuminates relation; it becomes revelatory. *Grace* or *community* or *family* or other similar concepts are more completely revealed as various aspects of each concept are emphasized in multiple

source domains from multiple cultures. In this way, not only is translation possible, but for a more complete understanding of truth we must always be engaged in such translation, willing to hear religious utterance in other languages and cultures and willing to share religious utterance in our own unique way. The Christian task thus involves not just tolerating linguistic and cultural difference, but seeking truth in translation. It involves the day of Pentecost and the city of Enoch, both of which relied on the power of language.[28]

Metaphor in a Narrative Context

Often the object of communication is not a fresh stream of new ideas, but the communication of a particular idea. This need is often urgent when a speaker or writer intends to encourage unified action among all members of a community. When an idea is accurately transferred from speaker to hearer and when both give assent to the validity of the metaphorical mapping, both speaker and hearer come together in a community of understanding.

One way to communicate the energy of a particular metaphor across cultures in an effort to create a unity of faith is to embed the metaphor in a narrative and explanatory context. In narrative, the speaker maps characteristics important to the metaphor and makes the metaphor the common domain of people from different cultures. The speaker outlines selected characteristics of the source domains and then maps those characteristics onto the target domain. With this sort of narrative context, the metaphor of "an anchor of the soul" can resonate even for listeners who have never seen the sea and have never needed an anchor. This method is often used in elucidating ancient concepts for modern readers.

Unfortunately, speakers to intercultural audiences sometimes fail to realize that, without proper explanation, variations in languages and cultures will make their metaphor difficult to comprehend, in varying degrees, to members of their audience. Thus their message is not adequately communicated. In such situations, audience members can be distracted by cultural details they don't understand. For example, a Latter-day Saint in metropolitan London complained about the frequency of farming stories and metaphors in talks and Church magazines. "We don't understand farms," he said. "Large groups of Church members have always lived in cities. They don't know anything about farms."[29]

A Church member from Germany but living in Provo, Utah, commented that she did not relate well to stories about pioneers. "The whole pioneer thing is still a mystery to me," she said. "The pioneer story is not

just a Mormon story; it's also an American Western story. . . . I don't think we see it as our story. . . . We know these stories, but we don't own these stories."[30] She understood the stories, of course, on a basic level, but the intended metaphors relating to journey, survival, progression, and trust in God weren't communicated well to her. She didn't see a cultural connection to those stories. The metaphorical content of pioneering and farming stories can be made understandable to Church members who don't have experiences with pioneer treks or ancestors who were nineteenth-century pioneers. But more explicit mappings of the metaphor may be needed to make its cross-cultural application more apparent.[31]

In a general conference address, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles used the pickling process to illuminate the purifying, preserving, and transforming process of religious conversion.[32] Because he explained the pickling process in detail, the metaphor communicated effectively cross-culturally. The metaphor was lighthearted, interesting, and instructive. But while the metaphor illustrated the purifying and transforming process of conversion, it was perhaps less effective in resonating in the lives of individuals and motivating action. Its diminished effectiveness was due in part to the lack of familiarity with the pickling process in many languages and cultures. The associated networks in some cultures were perhaps too mundane or even comic to inspire a sublime vision of conversion. In French, for example, the equivalent of *pickle* is *cornichon,* which is used familiarly as a name for a stupid person. While speakers of French in the audience understood the metaphor because of its narrative explication, the connotations of *cornichon* may have undermined the effectiveness of the metaphor for them.

In a different general conference address, President Thomas S. Monson drew on Tongan culture to construct a metaphor, even though only a small percentage of his audience was Tongan or from any related Polynesian culture.[33] To make his metaphor effective, he provided a narrative context that created a source domain in the minds of his hearers. He told of a lure made of a round stone and seashells called a *maka-feke*. Tongan fishermen drop these lures from the sides of their boats and wait until an octopus latches onto the lure. Because the octopus refuses to let go, the fishermen easily haul in their catch.

Having outlined the relevant characteristics of the source domain, President Monson created an effective metaphor to discuss behaviors people grab onto and refuse to let go of until their lives are destroyed. Although the concept of a lure exists in all or in most cultures, very few listeners had ever heard of a maka-feke. Possibly President Monson or those who interpreted his speech could have found a similar metaphor in each target culture. But

culture-specific adaptation was unnecessary. Because the speaker had outlined the parameters of the source domain and because the source domain did not have existing associative networks in other cultures, the metaphor was meaningful across cultures in more or less the same way. The audience could then be unified into a culture of people who understood this particular metaphor and who were likely to be moved to action by it. They could come together, no more strangers and foreigners, into a unity of faith.

The effective translation and globalization of metaphor holds a key to communicating ideas and building cooperative relationships between individuals and communities. But it is not just a tool for religious leaders, politicians, and social activists. The rest of us also communicate cross-culturally every day. Through the Internet and mobile communication devices, we continually are exposed to ideas and language from people all around the globe, and we frequently have the opportunity to share our own views in contributing to these global discourses. In addition, immigration patterns and political decisions have made neighbors of people from different cultures and languages.

Peaceful coexistence depends on our ability to speak, listen, and understand. Even intimate relationships, such as the relationship between husband and wife or parent and teenager, involve cross-cultural communication, and community can be either strengthened or diminished through metaphor. Metaphor is a neutral tool that can be used in positive and negative ways. We can each benefit by learning to see through metaphors that may mislead or manipulate and to use metaphors effectively that strengthen both community and interpersonal relationships.

Joseph E. Richardson (jer@jmlt.us), a freelance writer and editor, holds a PhD in English and has taught literature, ESL, and professional and academic writing classes in colleges and universities in the United States and Hungary. He has expertise in digital and print production, with an interest in cross-cultural communication, and has worked as a senior editor for the Curriculum Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He has given corporate and academic presentations on cross-cultural communication and other topics in the United States, Hungary, Italy, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

1. Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Eugene A. Nida, *God's Word in Man's Language* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952); Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003); Lamin Sanneh and Joel A. Carpenter, eds., *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1996).

2. See discussions in George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

3. Or an "entire realm." See Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multidisciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language,* trans. Robert Czerny (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 236. See also Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968), 71–74.

4. Alfredo L. Gessati, serving at the time as president of the Milan Italy Stake, in an interview with the author, November 2007, notes in author's possession.

5. An informal survey of the Provo Sixth Ward, taken by the author in 2005. Nationalities included Russian, German, Mexican, Salvadoran, Peruvian, Ghanaian, Tongan, Cook Islander, Brazilian, Dutch, Korean, Armenian, Mauritian, English, and, of course, American. Others in the neighborhood included Chinese and Greek. Notes in author's possession.

6. See I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936), 96–97; Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 39, 44–51.

7. Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language,* 49, see also p. 51.

8. See Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things;* Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By;* and Turner, *Literary Mind,* for discussions of source and target domains.

9. John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice,* vols. 9–11 of *The Works of John Ruskin,* Library Edition, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen; New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1911), 10:208–209.

10. See Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), especially pp. 108 and 121.

11. Joseph E. Richardson, "John Ruskin and the Scientific Imagination" (PhD diss., University of Utah, 2002), 37–71.

12. Evelyn Fox Keller, *Secrets of Life, Secrets of Death: Essays on Language, Gender, and Science* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 119.

13. Jacques Derrida, *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation,* ed. Claude Lévesque and Christie V. McDonald, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Schocken Books, 1985), 98; see also Paul Ricoeur, *On Translation: Thinking in Action,* trans. Eileen Brennan (New York: Routledge, 2006), 13–14.

14. Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language,* 48.

15. Derrida, *Ear of the Other,* 99.

16. See Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture,* 2d ed. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2009), 51, 53; see also *Whose Religion Is Christianity?* 97–98.

17. Derrida, *Ear of the Other,* 101.

18. On parables, see Turner, *Literary Mind,* 5–7.

19. For an extended discussion of this richness of meaning in this parable, see John W. Welch, "The Good Samaritan: A Type and Shadow of the Plan of Salvation,"

BYU Studies 38, no. 2 (1999): 51–115; and John W. Welch, "The Good Samaritan: Forgotten Symbols," *Ensign* 37 (February 2007): 40–47.

20. The lawyer indicated his understanding in his response, recorded in Luke 10:37.

21. William P. Brown, *Seeing the Psalms: A Theology of Metaphor* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 214.

22. C. S. Lewis, "Introduction," reprinted in George MacDonald, *Phantastes* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1981), v.

23. Nida, *God's Word in Man's Language,* 46.

24. Nida, *God's Word in Man's Language,* 46.

25. Nida, *God's Word in Man's Language,* 35; Jenkins, *Next Christendom,* 127–29; 217–18.

26. Nida, *God's Word in Man's Language,* 54.

27. Jenkins, *Next Christendom,* 113; see also F. Kabasele Lumbala, *Celebrating Jesus Christ in Africa* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1998), 113.

28. When God called Enoch to preach the gospel, one of Enoch's primary concerns was that he was "slow of speech" (Moses 6:31, see also vv. 27–30). The Lord responded to this concern by promising to fill Enoch's mouth and give him "utterance" (v. 32). The power that Enoch subsequently had was in part a power in language (see v. 47 and Moses 7:13). The result of Enoch's ministry was Zion, a place where the people of God were of "one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness" (Moses 7:18).

29. Interview with the author, November 11, 2007, notes in author's possession.

30. Interview with the author, March 9, 2009, Provo, Utah, notes in author's possession.

31. Nearly one month after my interview with this German sister, President Thomas S. Monson told a memorable story in general conference of a German woman's pioneer journey of over one thousand miles, from East Prussia to western Germany, burying four children along the way. See "Be of Good Cheer," *Ensign* 39 (May 2009): 91–92.

32. David A. Bednar, "Ye Must Be Born Again," *Ensign* 37 (May 2007): 19–22.

33. Thomas S. Monson, "True to the Faith," *Ensign* 36 (May 2006): 18–21.

The Spirit and the Intellect

Lessons in Humility

Duane Boyce

> *"The only wisdom we can hope to acquire is the wisdom of humility: humility is endless."*
>
> —*T. S. Eliot*[1]

Whence Such Confidence?

I have friends who see themselves as having intellectual problems with the gospel—with some spiritual matter or other. Interestingly, these friends all share the same twofold characteristic: they are confident they know a lot about spiritual topics, and they are confident they know a lot about various intellectual matters.

This always interests me, because my experience is very different. I am quite struck by how much I *don't* know about spiritual things and by how much I *don't* know about anything else. The overwhelming feeling I get, both from thoroughly examining a scriptural subject (say, faith[2]) and from carefully studying an academic topic (for example, John Bell's inequality theorem in physics), is the same—a profound recognition of how little I really know, and how significantly, on many topics, scholars who are more knowledgeable than I am disagree among themselves: in other words, I am surprised by how little they really know, too.

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1. T. S. Eliot, from "East Coker," in *T. S. Eliot: The Complete Poems and Plays* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1952), 126.

2. Serious study of *faith* reveals multiple meanings of the term in scripture. Identifying them, and then noting the implications of these different meanings for related scriptural concepts, is not an easy task. For a step in this direction, see my "'Χριστῷ Συνεσταύρωμαι': Faith as a Holy Embrace," *Religious Educator* (BYU Religious Studies Center, forthcoming).

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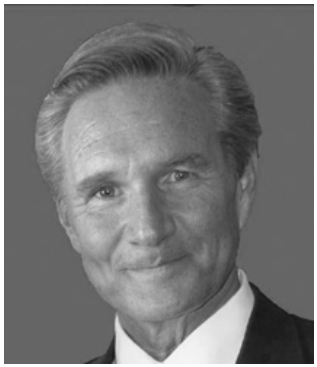
Duane Boyce



Years ago, I sat in a class while Thomas Kuhn asked the following question: "What reasons do you have for accepting the Copernican view of the solar system rather than the Ptolemaic? All of you accept the Copernican system, of course; the question is, Why?"

The assignment seemed too easy: everyone knows that the Copernican view of planetary motion is true and that the ancient geocentric view is false. One would therefore expect this MIT class, certainly including some of the best math and science students in the country, to dispatch the question with ease. But they didn't. Against every item of evidence they advanced to prove the Copernican system correct, Kuhn demonstrated that such evidence was not in fact decisive. He demonstrated this repeatedly until the class fell silent. Kuhn then explained that the proper evidence for the Copernican system exists but that its technicality renders it unfamiliar to most, including those studying science.

Kuhn conducted this exercise because he wanted to demonstrate how fully even scholars rely on the authority of other scholars and textbooks in accepting and believing what they do. Even the best, he was eager to show, hold comparatively few beliefs rooted in direct familiarity with the scientific evidence, relying mostly on unexamined assumptions and the authority of others.

Although it is understandable that we would do this (no one can be expert in very many subjects), this was still a sobering realization, and humbling. But it was not the only example. Over months, Kuhn provided additional compelling reasons for holding intellectual conclusions with a more tentative spirit than I had been accustomed to holding them.

Written in a personal voice, this essay, more than anything else, is a set of notes to myself—a reminder of the disposition I originally learned from Kuhn years ago.

All who have developed expertise in a specific intellectual subject are aware of this second point. Familiar with the cutting-edge literature in their field, they recognize how many disagreements exist on various matters even though those disagreements may, for reasons of space, be either lightly treated or omitted altogether in textbooks and other general introductions. As a result, even trained scholars, if they had no special expertise in a particular area, could easily be mistaken about the subject—in ways both numerous and deep—if they developed opinions based primarily on such secondary sources of information. How could they *not* overestimate the degree to which matters are settled and certain when all they are reading is a general treatment?[3]

Knowing this about intellectual life, and knowing the equal difficulty of fully grasping a scriptural subject even as fundamental as faith, I am at a loss to explain others' confidence. I certainly do not share it. I have come to believe, after many a false start, that if I am honest and thorough in my approach to the gospel, and if I am honest and thorough in my approach to intellectual disciplines, there resides in each the imperative for a profound sense of humility. I discover in both of them that what we don't know far outstrips what we do.

Matters of the Spirit

Think first of the gospel. The scriptures require the most exacting study; they simply do not yield to superficial and occasional glances. For generations, for example, it was common to read "narrow neck of land"—the one geographical marker in the Book of Mormon that stands out even on a thin reading—and to draw the natural inference that the phrase referred to the Isthmus of Panama, and that familiar Book of Mormon events thus spread over two continents. Only recently has it become widely known that the Book of Mormon itself decisively disproves this inference, but it required careful, thorough reading.[4]

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3. For example, regarding textbook treatments of elementary particles in physics at the time, Murray Gell-Mann called them "nonsense" and reported simply that "textbooks as usual are out of date." Murray Gell-Mann, "What Are the Building Blocks of Matter?" in *The Nature of the Physical Universe: 1976 Nobel Conference*, ed. Douglas Huff and Omer Prewett (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1979), 31.

4. See John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985) and *Mormon's Map* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2000); Matthew Roper, "Limited Geography and the Book of Mormon: Historical Antecedents and Early Interpretations," *FARMS Review* 16, no. 2 (2004): 225–75, and the following three papers by John E. Clark: "A Key for Evaluating Nephite Geographies," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 1, no. 1 (1989): 20–70; "Searching for Book of Mormon Lands in Middle America," *FARMS Review* 16, no. 2 (2004):

Similarly, some have seen the Ammonites as pacifists and wonder if the Book of Mormon doesn't therefore—despite its litany of wars—actually contain a pacifist message. But this too is based on an underreading of the account.[5]

Multiplying Questions

Although careful study is crucial in reaching gospel conclusions, the scriptures rarely if ever give full answers, even when read with care. Questions always linger and even multiply. Consider the topic of agency and accountability. The scriptures teach clearly that agency was given to man and that we are held accountable and judged (see, for example, Moses 7:32; 6:56; D&C 29:35; 1 Ne. 10:20; 15:33; and Alma 5:15), but the topic is more complicated than it appears at first glance. Recall, for example, Lehi's blessing to the children of Laman that "if ye are cursed, behold, I leave my blessing upon you, that the cursing may be taken from you and be answered upon the heads of your parents" (2 Ne. 4:6)—a blessing he extended to the children of Lemuel as well (2 Ne. 4:9). And note Jacob's reminder to the Nephites that the Lamanites' filthiness at that time "came because of their fathers" (Jacob 3:9), and also his warning to the Nephites that "ye may, because of your filthiness, bring your children unto destruction, and their sins be heaped upon your heads at the last day" (Jacob 3:10). Also recall the Lord's pronouncement that, though the people at the time of the flood were the most wicked of all his creations, "their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers" (Moses 7:36–37), and his declaration in our day that if parents are not diligent in teaching their children, "the sin be upon the heads of the parents" (D&C 68:25).

These passages raise certain questions. For instance, who, then, is actually accountable? Do those whose sins are answered on their parents' heads have *no* accountability? And if so, does that mean they have no agency? Or are they still responsible for part of their sinfulness and therefore have partial agency? If so, is it fifty percent? Seventy percent? Ten percent? It seems there must be degrees of agency and accountability, but how exactly are those degrees apportioned? And how many people fall in the category of having their sins answered on their parents in the first place? Surely there are countless parents who have been worse than Laman and Lemuel. Do the children of those parents all fall in that category too? Am *I* fully accountable? Are my children? Surely it is relevant, for example, that while

1–54; and "Revisiting 'A Key for Evaluating Nephite Geographies,'" *Mormon Studies Review* 23, no. 1 (2011): 13–43.

5. See my discussion in "Were the Ammonites Pacifists?" *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* 18, no. 1 (2009): 32–47.

scripture clearly declares that there is no forgiveness for murder "in this world nor in the world to come" (D&C 42:18), the Ammonites committed acts of murder and yet obtained forgiveness. Isn't some notion of an attenuated accountability required to explain this? If not, why not? And if so, how must that work?[6]

These are deep questions, and they deserve careful thought. But notice that however we answer them, our conclusions will be based on our own judgment and on our own weighing of various considerations. This means that even though agency and accountability are fundamental concepts of the gospel, much of what we believe about these concepts will necessarily be uncertain. Whatever we conclude, they are *our* conclusions, not the declarations of the Lord, and we must hold them tentatively.

Lessons in Humility

This uncertainty should not surprise us. Spiritual history is full of lessons in humility—of occasions in which individuals supposed a conception of reality to be the truth and then were startled by what they subsequently learned. In his transcendent transfiguration experience, for example, Moses saw not only God but also "the world and the ends thereof, and all the children of men which are, and which were created." The record reports that Moses "greatly marveled and wondered" at these experiences and observed to himself, "Now, for this cause I know that man is nothing, which thing I had never supposed" (Moses 1:8, 10).

The brother of Jared's experience was similar. The account tells us that "the veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord; . . . and the brother of Jared fell down before the Lord, for he was struck with fear." Asked by the Lord why he had fallen, he answered, "I saw the finger of the Lord, and I feared lest he should smite me; for I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood" (Ether 3:6–8).

Both Moses and the brother of Jared were preeminent spiritual figures prior to these experiences, and both had highly advanced spiritual capacity.[7] Yet both were amazed at what they discovered once the Lord removed the veil from their understanding.

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6. Sometimes we read the reports of the Ammonites' murders and consider them metaphorical—as ordinary acts of killing by ordinary soldiers in the course of conventional war—but this is inaccurate. See my "Were the Ammonites Pacifists?" 32–47.

7. For example, Moses's transfiguration experience occurred following his encounter with the burning bush (see Moses 1:17, where Moses refers to that incident in the past tense), and the brother of Jared's experience occurred following frequent extraordinary conversations with the Lord (see Ether 1:33–43; 2:4–5, 14–16, 18–25).

Doctrine and Covenants 76 and 19. The experiences of Moses and the brother of Jared are far from the only such instances. I think the most dramatic example in this dispensation, at least since the First Vision, is the revelation given in Doctrine and Covenants section 76. Recall that by the time this revelation was given the Prophet had seen the Father and the Son; he had been visited multiple times by the resurrected Moroni; he had seen in vision many of the events that transpired in the Book of Mormon (*before* translating it, incidentally);[8] he had translated the Book of Mormon by revelation; he had been ordained by resurrected beings; he had received dozens of recorded revelations; and he had experienced visions too numerous to list.[9] And after all that, he received the vision recorded in D&C 76.

Keep in mind that up until this time (1832) the combined record of the New Testament and the Book of Mormon had fashioned an image of an afterlife that was neatly divided into two simple classifications, heaven and hell. But in a single stroke, the vision of the degrees of glory changed all that, and did so radically. Everything that had been supposed on this large and central topic, both by the Saints and by the Prophet himself, had been either wrong or at least incomplete.

The same was true of the idea of "eternal" punishment. Until 1830 there was little reason for anyone to question scriptural statements about the everlasting/eternal/unending nature of the punishment that the wicked would suffer in the next life (see, for example, Matt. 25:41, 46, and Mark 3:29). Such terms were naturally understood to be making pronouncements about time, and they effectively defined hell as something that would never end.

Then, in a remarkable scriptural surprise, the Lord informed the Prophet in Doctrine and Covenants section 19 that he did not use the terms

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8. This was reported by the Prophet and by Oliver Cowdery. Joseph Smith Jr., *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), 4:537; *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (April 1835), 112. Both of these sources are cited in Hyrum L. Andrus, *Joseph Smith: The Man and the Seer* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1960), 70–71. Joseph Smith shared details about Book of Mormon peoples with his family long before beginning the translation of the record. See Lucy Mack Smith's report in Scot F. and Maurine Jensen Proctor, eds., *The Revised and Enhanced History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 112.

9. After reporting one such vision, the Prophet remarked: "It is my meditation all the day, and more than my meat and drink, to know how I shall make the Saints of God comprehend the visions that roll like an overflowing surge before my mind." Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 296. This was recorded by Willard Richards for the Prophet's diary; see Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, *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), 196.

endless and *eternal* in the way that mortals were accustomed to using them. Rather than designating a length of time, the terms designate instead a certain *quality*: Endless punishment, we learn, is simply God's punishment and is not defined by length of time (D&C 19:5–12).[10] So again, in a single stroke, the Saints' understanding was transformed. Practically everything that had been supposed on this topic up to that time had been mistaken.[11]

Abundant surprises. The history of the gospel on the earth is, in one way, the history of just such surprises. Adam learned something completely unknown to him when taught the purpose of baptism (Moses 6:53–63); Enoch was surprised at the Lord's tears, and gained fresh—and surprising—understanding when told the reason for them (Moses 7:28–41); Christ's appearance as the promised Messiah violated the expectations harbored by the ancient Jews about that prophetic figure, and, as a result, those who accepted him embraced not only the actual Messiah, but, simultaneously, a new *conception* of the Messiah (see Matt. 16:13–16; Luke 24:21, 26–27; John 4:25–26); the Lord's disciples were subsequently shocked at how he could be taken from them in death—and equally shocked at his resurrection three days later (see Mark 16:10–14; Luke 24:10–11; John 20:24–25). And so on. To write the history of God's revelations is to write the history of man's surprises. They are profound lessons in humility.

To appreciate this reality even more fully, consider the series of shocks that investigators and new members of the Church encounter, in one sequence or another, in rapid succession, as they study the gospel.[12] The

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10. In the Bible and Book of Mormon there are fifty references that state directly, or at least clearly imply, that punishment is "eternal," "endless," "everlasting," or endures "forever" in the usual sense of the passage of time (the majority of these, by far, are found in the Book of Mormon). Still, a handful of verses do use these terms in a way completely unrelated to time, but instead to a certain characteristic or quality; they are thus consistent with, and even anticipatory of, the Lord's announcement in Doctrine and Covenants 19. See, for example, Jude 1:6; 2 Ne. 28:19; Mosiah 27:28–29; Alma 26:20; 36:12, 18; 41:7; and Hel. 3:29.

11. Although Doctrine and Covenants 19 and the Book of Mormon both appeared in 1830 (the revelation in March and the Book of Mormon in June), the revelation was not readily available until the Book of Commandments was published three years later, in 1833. Thus it is likely that many of the early Saints were familiar with the Book of Mormon's repeated implication that punishment for the wicked lasts forever before learning of (and being surprised by) the Lord's further explanation in section 19. Certainly it is a huge surprise today for Catholic and Protestant converts who are accustomed to reading the relevant New Testament passages about punishment strictly in terms of time.

12. For example: a new dispensation of revelation in modern times; the universal apostasy that lasted for centuries; a Church genuinely established by the Lord and personally led by him; the nature of the Godhead (separate beings, two of them having

list is quite overwhelming, but a moment's reflection will persuade us that this level of investigation is just the beginning. We are *all* investigators, and most of what we eventually learn will be taught to us after this life is finished. Even with all we know, from an eternal perspective we still know virtually nothing. As much as we have learned about degrees of glory in eternity, for example, it is sobering to contemplate the Prophet's observation that he revealed only a hundredth of what he himself had learned in the vision.[13]

And ponder again the implications of Doctrine and Covenants 19. If the Lord can announce at any moment that he simply doesn't use certain scriptural words the way we customarily use them, then we might expect that other conclusions we have reached might also undergo revision as the Lord pours out future revelations of his mind and will.

Of course, none of this changes what we do know with certainty. For example, I know that we do indeed have a Father in Heaven, that we have a Savior who is Jesus Christ, that the fullness of the gospel was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith, that the Book of Mormon is true, and that the Lord directs his Church today through living prophets. These are certain, and I know them.

All I have suggested is that the scriptures actually touch on a lot more topics than these fundamental certainties. On such matters there is very little that I can pretend to comprehend—certainly not in any degree of fullness. On many topics, devoted people can see issues differently and reach a variety of conclusions. Indeed, it would not be wrong to expect that every spiritual concept I currently hold will be enriched, and in many cases thoroughly transformed, by things I learn in the future—particularly following mortality. Given the incomplete nature of the revealed word, that is to be expected—even embraced. Who am I to insist that my understanding of current revelation is anywhere close to the truth in the depth, detail, and expanse in which God knows it and which he will eventually be able to reveal? What right do I have to think that all surprises are behind me and to be defensive, insistent, or smug in any way? The truth is, I have none.[14]

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physical bodies); the existence of scripture in addition to the Bible (and not just one book, but *three*); the existence of God's people—with prophets—in lands other than ancient Israel; the recorded visit of Christ to those people; the discovery that Jesus Christ was the Jehovah of the Old Testament and that he gave the Law of Moses to ancient Israel; the realization of how Christ is both the Father and the Son and of how he speaks freely as both; the reality of living apostles and prophets, literally called by the Lord today; the work of salvation for the dead; a family unit that is joined forever; and so on—each revelation of new information monumental, and each thoroughly unexpected.

13. Smith, *Teachings*, 305.

14. Obviously, this hardly means that the scriptures—or the teachings and official declarations of the prophets—give *no* direction on various topics. Certainly

I believe the same must be true for all of us. Because our knowledge is so fragmentary, we will surely encounter an endless train of spiritual surprises once we pass through the veil. At least by then, if not before, we will appreciate just how little of the Lord and his works we have actually comprehended in this life. I believe we are to honor the Lord in every aspect of our lives, and I think that entails recognizing just how little we know of what he knows, and then living, thinking, and studying accordingly. It means pondering the living word diligently and with a bright sense of tentativeness, humility, and wonder.

Matters of the Intellect

It is not only in gospel study that we should tread humbly; humility pertains equally to matters of the intellect. For example, in a very enlightening and engaging Nobel Conference years ago, MIT professor Victor Weisskopf reported that the scientists of the 1930s, despite their brilliance and dedication, nevertheless lived in "a fool's paradise." Physicists at the time, he observed, "thought they had found all the elementary particles. . . . Why was it a fool's paradise? Well, it was a fool's paradise because it turned out it was not so."[15]

Regarding science generally, Stanley Jaki remarked, "What I suggest is that even science, to say nothing of the broader cultural outlook, might benefit by a modest measure of caution about the presumed absolute validity of some propositions particularly dear to the scientific and philosophical spirit of the age."[16]

Similarly, years ago Robert Nozick characterized, in an unforgettable way, the nature of theoretical explanation generally. He said that such activity

> feels like pushing and shoving things to fit into some fixed perimeter of specified shape. All those things are lying out there, and they must be fit in. You push and shove the material into the rigid area getting it into the boundary on one side, and it bulges out on another. You run around and press in the protruding bulge, producing yet another in another place. So you push and shove and clip off corners from the things so they'll fit and you press in until finally almost everything sits unstably more or less in there; what doesn't gets heaved *far* away so that it won't be noticed. . . .

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they do. It's just that official, comprehensive doctrinal teachings are far from the norm, and the scriptures are open to interpretation on countless issues. When all is said and done, disputants about doctrinal matters are likely to discover that none of them really knew very much.

15. Victor F. Wiesskopf, "What Is an Elementary Particle?" in Huff and Prewett, *Nature of the Physical Universe*, 15–16.

16. Stanley L. Jaki, "The Chaos of Scientific Cosmology," in Huff and Prewett, *Nature of the Physical Universe,* 89–90.

> *Quickly*, you find an angle from which it looks like an exact fit and take a snapshot; at a fast shutter speed before something else bulges out too noticeably. Then, back to the darkroom to touch up the rents, rips, and tears in the fabric of the perimeter. All that remains is to publish the photograph as a representation of exactly how things are, and to note how nothing fits properly into any other shape.[17]

So, even intellectual topics are slippery and resist ultimate explanation. Achieving understanding of the world is *hard*. To further illustrate, let me draw at least cursory attention to three episodes in recent intellectual history.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

One of the towering intellectual figures of the twentieth century was the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951). Wittgenstein began his studies in engineering at the University of Manchester in 1908 but, at Gottlob Frege's suggestion, went to Cambridge in 1911 to study logic under Bertrand Russell. He there became engulfed in the problems of logic and philosophy, and his reputation for intensity became legendary—many thought him at least somewhat mad. Indeed, certain that he needed a more pristine environment in which to work on the intellectual problems that consumed him, Wittgenstein left Cambridge after two years to live in a remote village in Norway. There he stayed and worked until enlisting in the Austrian army at the outbreak of World War I. He continued his philosophical work during the war and actually wrote much of his immensely famous and influential work *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* while in an Italian prisoner-of-war camp.[18]

The *Tractatus* first appeared in English in 1922. A treatment of the problems that had so long absorbed him, the slight, tightly written volume made important advances in logic, proposed a striking theory of how language is related to the world, and drew conclusions about various philosophical topics, including "the mystical." So certain was Wittgenstein of his thinking that he said in the preface, "The *truth* of the thoughts that are here set forth seems to me unassailable and definitive. I therefore believe myself to have found, on all essential points, the final solution of the problems."[19] Convinced of this, Wittgenstein determined there was nothing more to do in philosophy; he therefore abandoned the field and the academic life altogether and became an elementary school teacher in rural Austria.

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17. Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), xiii.

18. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961).

19. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 5.

Despite his retirement from the intellectual community, Wittgenstein's reputation soared. When, in 1929, Wittgenstein finally returned to Cambridge with a reawakened interest in philosophy, John Maynard Keynes wrote in a letter: "Well, God has arrived. I met him on the 5.15 train."[20]

To achieve a PhD and secure an academic position at Cambridge, Wittgenstein submitted the *Tractatus* as his PhD thesis. By this time, his reputation was so immense that Russell and G. E. Moore (also a famous philosopher) conducted Wittgenstein's oral examination with embarrassment; indeed, Russell called the examination the most absurd thing he had known in his life. Nothing better illustrates the irony of the situation than this: During the exam, Russell raised objections to some parts of the *Tractatus*, whereupon Wittgenstein brought the meeting to a close by slapping his two examiners on the back and saying, "Don't worry, I know you'll never understand it."[21]

From this point on, however, Wittgenstein's confidence waned. Although the *Tractatus* decisively influenced a whole generation of philosophers and other scholars, Wittgenstein himself came to recognize what he called "grave mistakes" in the book and dramatically transformed his approach to the issues it addressed. His later work, captured in a number of sources—but perhaps best in his *Philosophical Investigations*, published posthumously[22]—is also concerned with the nature of language and the problems of philosophy, but it repudiates altogether the theory of language of the *Tractatus* and its approach to philosophical issues.[23] In a dramatic display of intellectual

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20. Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1990), 255.

21. Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein*, 271.

22. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953).

23. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein sought to explicate the nature of the world by examining the structure of language. He thought that for language to represent the world, it must in some sense mirror it: the structure of language (the way names are related to one another in sentences) must correspond to the way objects are related to one another in the world. We are able to speak intelligently about the world because language itself—in its structure, its logical form—*pictures* the world. Logic is critical because it reveals the structure of language and thus the structure of the world to which language corresponds. Tracing this connection between logic, language, and the world led Wittgenstein into many philosophical issues, the most profound of which was his distinction between that which can be said and that which cannot be said but can only be "shown."

Wittgenstein's later work, best captured in his *Philosophical Investigations*, is also concerned with the nature of language and the problems of philosophy, but it abandons altogether the picture theory of language and with it the attempt to understand the world *a priori*—through logical analysis alone. Here Wittgenstein sees language not as a picture, but as a tool; the meaning of a word is its use in a particular context or "language game" as he called it. In this later point of view,

impact, this work too became widely considered a work of genius and decisively influenced *another* generation of philosophers.

Logical Positivism

The widely influential movement known as "logical positivism" followed a similar trajectory. Although it developed distinctive doctrines of its own, logical positivism was inspired in large part by the early Wittgenstein. Centered in a group of scholars in Vienna, beginning in the mid-1920s, the movement came to be known as the work of the "Vienna Circle." Leading members of the Circle were physicist Moritz Schlick, philosopher Rudolf Carnap, and sociologist Otto Neurath.[24] The young British philosopher, A. J. Ayer, was a member of the Circle for a time. He spoke little German and simply listened as members of the Circle debated each other. But he learned quickly and, at age twenty-five, published a very confident and influential book explicating logical positivism and the answers it provided to various intellectual problems, including those of science, ethics, and religion. First published in 1936, Ayer's work became a classic expression of the Circle's point of view and made him justly famous.[25]

Wittgenstein believed that philosophical problems arise when we misuse language—when we transport words willy-nilly from one language game to another, as if the meaning of a word had some kind of permanent essence that *could* be transported in such a random way. "Philosophy," Wittgenstein said, is "a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language," and philosophical problems are solved "by looking into the workings of our language"—"not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known." Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 47 (section 109).

24. Kurt Gödel attended meetings of the Circle regularly, but he cannot be classified as a logical positivist. Wittgenstein was invited to join, as he was highly influential in its members' thinking (he even accused Carnap of using some of his ideas without proper attribution), but he declined and refused even to attend its official meetings. He did, however, talk with individual members, notably Schlick, and also met with some of them in small groups. The verification principle is at least partly traceable to Wittgenstein (although it is not an explicit feature of the *Tractatus*), but he later deplored the way the logical positivists dogmatized it. The classification of statements into (roughly) three categories is also largely due to Wittgenstein, although the logical positivists badly misread Wittgenstein's own attitude toward metaphysics. Whereas they rejected all metaphysics, Wittgenstein claimed only that metaphysics is beyond the reach of language—it is what cannot be said and therefore can only be "shown." His attitude, in contrast to theirs, was profoundly sympathetic.

25. Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic,* 2d ed. (New York: Dover, 1946).

Speaking generally,[26] the central feature of logical positivism was the "verification principle"—the view that any meaningful statement about the world must be verifiable through experience. Indeed, the meaning of any statement is its *method* of verification. According to this principle, the claims of science are meaningful because they are empirical statements that can in principle be verified through observation. Statements about the circumference of the earth, the height of Mount Everest, and the effect of heat on gases are examples. The verification principle also allowed a place for statements that are not about the world but that are necessarily true due to the laws of logic or to the meanings of their terms. Examples would include the statement "All bachelors are unmarried" and the mathematical equation 5+4=9. Statements that do not fall into one of these two categories—empirically verifiable statements about the world or statements that are necessarily true—are simply meaningless. A claim like "the absolute is pure oneness of being" is an example. This statement appears to be about the world, but how would one go about verifying it? Since it eludes verification, it must be understood to make no claim at all; it is neither true nor false, but meaningless. The logical positivists saw the great metaphysical systems of philosophy as riddled with just such nonverifiable and thus meaningless statements, and it was against these intellectual systems that they were largely reacting. All metaphysical claims, including those of religion, were rejected as nonsense.

Despite the early confidence of its many adherents, however, the doctrines of logical positivism ultimately unraveled. Most importantly, the movement could never successfully formulate the verification principle itself: the principle is not verifiable, and yet neither is it a necessary truth. Is it therefore, by its own standards, a meaningless and nonsensical claim? W. V. Quine's influential assault on the logical positivists' distinction between analytic and synthetic (or empirical) truths also contributed significantly to the decline of the movement.[27] Indeed, the crumbling of its doctrines was eventually so complete that Ayer himself—when asked years later about the

26. I am referring in this section to the more or less public face of the Circle (likely best represented in the work of Carnap, Schlick, and Ayer). But within the Circle, the members debated and disagreed with each other on various matters, and it is probably fair to say that there were different wings of the Circle. Though the Circle was pluralistic in various ways, I am here focusing briefly on the most influential and best-known core of the movement.

27. See W. V. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," in *From a Logical Point of View: Nine Logico-Philosophical Essays,* 2d ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1961), 20–46.

main defects of logical positivism—simply remarked, "Well, I suppose the most important of the defects was that nearly all of it was false."[28]

This episode is fascinating, not only because logical positivism's influence was immense, but because that influence continued in other intellectual fields long past the recognition of serious problems by its own central figures. Harvard philosopher of science Hilary Putnam remarks wryly—in reference specifically to the enduring effects of logical positivism—that "scientists tend to know the philosophy of science of fifty years ago" and adds that "it is annoying to a philosopher to encounter a scientist who is sure that he needn't listen to any philosophy of science and who then produces verbatim [logical positivist] ideas which you can recognize as coming from what was popular in 1928."[29]

Einstein and Bohr

Another interesting example of ongoing surprise is found in the theoretical debate in physics between Albert Einstein and Niels Bohr. The story begins early in the twentieth century, when developments in physics led to the general field of quantum mechanics—a discipline that developed an impressive but bizarre array of experimental results. Scientists found, for example, that light exhibits both particle-like and wavelike properties, a phenomenon completely unknown in our ordinary world of bowling balls, oceans, and burritos. Some studies are able to display both of these characteristics as they accumulate data over time, but in the early days of quantum mechanics a given experiment would exhibit either one of these properties or the other, but not both. It thus appeared that the type of measurement itself determined what kind of properties would be observed while, at the same time, obscuring observation of its other set of properties.

Related to this was an odd discovery regarding the position and momentum of elementary particles: As experimenters increased the certainty with which they measured one of these properties, they *decreased* the certainty with which they could measure the other—and this was due not to a limitation in measurement, but to a reality about the particle itself.

Such results led in short order to two disparate ways of looking at the world. One of these concluded that the quantum world is radically different from our ordinary world of familiar objects. According to this view, everything at the quantum level exists in something of a cloudy, indeterminate state,

28. Bryan Magee, "Logical Positivism and Its Legacy: Dialogue with A. J. Ayer," *Men of Ideas* (New York: Viking, 1979), 131.

29. Magee, "The Philosophy of Science: Dialogue with Hilary Putnam," *Men of Ideas*, 235.

possessing only probabilities of being in one particular condition or another; the act of measurement disturbs this state and then (but only then) the state becomes determinate. Thus, a particle at the quantum level does not actually possess any precise physical position or momentum; instead, a more definite location or momentum is created only as part of the act of observation itself.[30] One implication of this is that reality is not just "out there" for us to discover; instead, our attempts at discovery themselves importantly influence what the world is. Contemplating all this, Niels Bohr once remarked that "if someone says that he can think about quantum physics without becoming dizzy, that shows only that he has not understood anything whatever about it."[31]

A second view was that, at the deepest level of explanation, the quantum world is actually the same as our ordinary world of experience, but that our current methods of measurement are too coarse to discern this. Small particles do possess actual, physical locations and momenta, for example—whatever our difficulty in discerning them—and this means that there truly is a reality "out there" that exists independently of our observations.[32]

These differences in theory led to a friendly ongoing debate in the late 1920s and 1930s between Bohr, who, along with the large majority of scientists, held the first view, and Einstein and a few others, who held the second.[33]

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30. In the school of thought that formed around Niels Bohr of Copenhagen, the probability state of quantum particles came to be generally described as a "wave function"—a term that denotes a mathematical means of calculating the probabilities (which is the most that can be known) of the particle being in one region of space among all of its possibilities. Upon measurement, however, the issue of probabilities changes, because at that point the quantum particle reduces to a single region. This occurrence, caused by the act of measurement, has been referred to in this tradition as a "wave function collapse." We simply can't observe the particle without fundamentally changing the wave function, and this ineluctably changes what we know about things.

31. Quoted in Murray Gell-Mann, *The Quark and the Jaguar: Adventures in the Simple and the Complex* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1994), 165.

32. A third approach would be to eschew any attempt at explanation at all and to be content simply to describe the results of experiments without presuming—as a matter of principle—to make *any* theoretical statement regarding them. (This is a version of positivism.) I think it is fair to say that Bohr approached this stance at times even though he also, at other times, certainly entertained theoretical conclusions. Fine emphasizes the first of these stances (Arthur Fine, *The Shaky Game: Einstein, Realism, and the Quantum Theory* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986]), while Clifton and Halvorson emphasize the second (Rob Clifton and Hans Halvorson, "Reconsidering Bohr's Reply to EPR," in *Quantum Entanglements: Selected Papers of Rob Clifton,* ed. Jeremy Butterfield and Hans Halvorson [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004], 369–93).

33. Louis De Broglie in the early days and David Bohm two decades later both developed theories—in the general spirit of Einstein—that explained quantum

The most important of Einstein's challenges to Bohr appeared in a paper published in 1935 with collaborators Podolsky and Rosen (the paper is thus widely referred to as EPR). The paper created an ingenious thought experiment that showed how, using indirect means, to measure both the position and the momentum of a particle so that the particle itself is not disturbed or affected in any way in making the measurement.[34]

This development was theoretically groundbreaking. The thought experiment demonstrated that elementary particles must have precise features such as position and momentum after all: if exact position and momentum can be determined, even indirectly, then—contra Bohr—they must exist, and they must exist whether we happen to measure them or not.

In response to Einstein, Bohr altered to some degree his manner of characterizing quantum mechanics,[35] but it was not possible to say that Einstein had actually "won." He had created a thought experiment that raised questions

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phenomena in terms of classical physical laws. As for Einstein, Segré reports that because of his departure from quantum orthodoxy, early on many younger-generation scientists "simply ignored Einstein's continuing contributions to physics. Though they revered him, they felt no need to pay attention to his work, since it did not seem to have any impact on theirs." Gino Segrè, *Faust in Copenhagen: A Struggle for the Soul of Physics* (New York: Viking, 2007), 164. Although van Fraassen draws a helpful distinction between competing theories and competing interpretations of a single theory, for brevity's sake I will overlook the distinction here. See Bas C. van Fraassen, *Quantum Mechanics: An Empiricist View* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), esp. 242–44.

34. For more information on the EPR strategy and the Einstein-Bohr debate in general, see "Einstein's Challenge to Bohr" on the BYU Studies website at https://byustudies.byu.edu/showTitle.aspx?title=8814. Perhaps the most complete treatment of the general debate is Andrew Whitaker, *Einstein, Bohr and the Quantum Dilemma*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For the EPR paper itself, see A. Einstein, B. Podolsky, and N. Rosen, "Can Quantum-Mechanical Description of Physical Reality be Considered Complete?" *Physical Review* 47 (1935): 777; available at http://www.drchinese.com/David/EPR.pdf.

35. Different writers have different views about Bohr's answer to EPR. For Bohr's immediate published response, see N. Bohr, "Can Quantum-Mechanic Description of Physical Reality Be Considered Complete?" *Physical Review* 48 (1935): 696–702; available at http://www-f1.ijs.si/~ramsak/teaching/eprbohr.pdf. John Bell, for one, thought Bohr's overall response to EPR inadequate. See the appendix in J. S. Bell, "Bertlmann's Socks and the Nature of Reality," a presentation given in 1980, and a typescript of which is available online at http://cdsweb.cern.ch/record/142461/files/198009299.pdf. Clifton and Halvorson believe that criticisms of Bohr's response have not always been fair, and they provide a reconstruction of Bohr's reply. See Rob Clifton and Hans Halvorson, "Reconsidering Bohr's Reply to EPR," in *Quantum Entanglements*, 369–93. Whitaker believes, however, that Clifton and Halvorson are ultimately unsuccessful and emphasizes the power of the original EPR argument.

about the adequacy of the orthodox view, but his view did not make predictions that were any different from Bohr's. As a result, no one could see how to conduct an experimental test of the dispute, and the issue was largely set aside by practicing scientists. Einstein and Bohr were locked in a theoretical stalemate.

The landscape shifted dramatically in 1964. In what has been praised as "the most important recent advance in physics," "the most profound discovery of science," and "one of the profound scientific discoveries of the [twentieth] century,"[36] the Irish physicist John Bell (1928–1990)—referred to in later years as the Oracle of CERN[37]—developed a mathematical theorem that finally showed the way to an experimental test of the Einstein-Bohr divide by showing that the two views do in fact result in competing predictions.[38]

Eventually, Bell's theorem was used to perform just such experimental tests, the most famous of which was conducted by Alain Aspect and his colleagues in 1982. Their tests yielded results that differed significantly from those required by Einstein's view, while, in regard to the orthodox interpretation of quantum phenomena, "the agreement," they report, "is excellent."[39]

See M. A. B. Whitaker, "The EPR Paper and Bohr's Response: A Re-Assessment," *Foundations of Physics* 34, no. 9 (2004): 1329–33.

36. The first quote is attributed to Brian Josephson, a Nobel laureate in physics, and the second to Berkeley physicist, Henry Stapp. See P. C. W. Davies and J. R. Brown, *The Ghost in the Atom: A Discussion of the Mysteries of Quantum Physics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 45. The third quote is from Alain Aspect. See Alain Aspect, "Bell's Inequality Test: More Ideal Than Ever," *Nature* 398 (March 1999): 189.

37. Reported in Reinhold A. Bertlmann, "Magic Moments: A Collaboration with John Bell," in *Quantum [Un]speakables: From Bell to Quantum Information,* ed. R. A. Bertlmann and A. Zeilinger (Berlin: Springer, 2002), 87.

38. For more on Bell's method, see "John Bell's Approach to the Einstein-Bohr Debate" on the BYU Studies website at https://byustudies.byu.edu/showTitle.aspx?title=8814. In his famous paper, Bell stated the issue succinctly: "The paradox of Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen was advanced as an argument that quantum mechanics could not be a complete theory but should be supplemented by additional variables. . . . In this note that idea will be formulated mathematically and shown to be incompatible with the statistical predictions of quantum mechanics." John S. Bell, "On the Einstein Podolsky Rosen Paradox," *Physics* 1 (1964): 195; available online at http://www.drchinese.com/David/Bell_Compact.pdf. In other words, Bell showed that the orthodox view of quantum mechanics, as supplemented by Einstein, does not yield the same predictions that the orthodox view yields without those additions. As a result, the views turn out to be not only philosophically divergent, but empirically divergent as well, and this is what permits an experimental test.

39. Alain Aspect, Jean Dalibard, and Gérard Roger, "Experimental Test of Bell's Inequalities Using Time-Varying Analyzers," *Physical Review Letters* 49, no. 25 (1982): 1807, available at http://www.drchinese.com/David/Aspect.pdf. R. Steven

In a sophisticated experimental test, Einstein's view of the quantum world stood refuted (at least on the face of it). Since then, other important studies (generally referred to as EPR experiments) have been performed, all of them supporting Aspect's results.[40]

I find this long controversy fascinating in two ways. First, it is instructive that the debate about the foundations of physics occupied two of the best minds of the twentieth century, and that decades—not to mention a third great mind—were required to reach anything close to a resolution. This is worth pondering in itself. But second, and even more significantly, it turns out that the theoretical issues have actually not abated. Despite his apparent support from experiments like Aspect's, Bohr's view of the quantum world is far from universally accepted among those who specialize in the theoretical foundations of quantum mechanics. Indeed, John Bell himself held to Einstein's basic position about quantum particles until his death in 1990, despite the results of experiments based on his own theorem. In doing so, Bell surprisingly reinvoked the idea of an ether—long a theoretical heresy in physics—and even entertained the possibility of travel at faster than the speed of light, despite the explicit repudiation of this in special relativity and

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Turley, professor of physics at Brigham Young University, gave an excellent discussion of the outlines of Bell's work and Aspect's experiment in a forum address at BYU on July 27, 2004. Entitled "Was Einstein Wrong? The Difference between Things We Don't Know and Things We Can't Know," it can be accessed at http://speeches.byu.edu/?act=viewitem&id=1343&tid=2. A more technical treatment is found in Tim Maudlin, *Quantum Non-Locality and Relativity: Metaphysical Intimations of Modern Physics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994).

40. Because this controversy existed primarily between Einstein's view of things and Bohr's, it is natural to think that since such experimental results fail to support Einstein, they must vindicate Bohr. Technically, however, this is not accurate. The experiments suggest only that something *other* than Einstein's view has to be correct, not that Bohr's view in particular is right. One argument, for example, is that these results are not sufficient to establish that particles must be considered nonindividual in nature, despite this characterization of them based on the orthodox view. Some have argued that, at least given certain conditions, a theoretical view of particles-as-individuals is still equally satisfactory. See Steven French and Décio Krause, *Identity in Physics: A Historical, Philosophical, and Formal Analysis* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2006). Also see the discussion of Bell's response to the EPR experiments in the appendix to this article. I should note that some physicists identify loopholes of one sort or another in all of the EPR experiments that have been conducted over the years and argue that these constitute sufficient reason to resist the theoretical conclusions drawn from them. It is true that successive EPR experiments have all attempted to close one loophole or another, but one point of view is that this is insufficient: no experiment is satisfactory unless it closes *every* loophole. So even regarding EPR experiments, debate continues.

by the scientific community generally.[41] So Bell himself considered Bohr far from vindicated; he believed only that the experimental results "require a substantial change in the way we look at things."[42]

Another physicist also reports that, at least in the philosophical explication of fundamental matters, Bohr's star has fallen and some have questioned whether his philosophy of physics "could be given a coherent interpretation at all."[43] Indeed, Murray Gell-Mann, well-known Nobel laureate in physics, also resists the Bohr view, remarking once that "the fact that an adequate philosophical presentation has been so long delayed is no doubt caused by the fact that Niels Bohr brainwashed a whole generation of theorists into thinking that the job was done 50 years ago."[44] On another occasion (in 1994) he said that "physicists are only now approaching a really satisfactory interpretation" of quantum mechanics.[45]

Others think we are not that close at all. One specialist believes that both Einstein and Bohr were focused on the wrong problem all along,[46] and in a recent book, the authors report that there is no longer an established or dominant interpretation of quantum theory at all—which is why, they say, it is important to keep the interpretation debate open by looking back at the history of quantum theory.[47]

In short, it is an understatement to say that on these and many related matters the debate continues.

Lessons in Humility

These incidents from recent intellectual history suggest that significant intellectual matters are often less settled than the current orthodoxy implies, whatever that orthodoxy happens to be and in whatever field. The best

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41. For more on Bell's revolutionary response, see Appendix (pages 101–7 below).

42. In Davies and Brown, *Ghost in the Atom*, 48.

43. See Whitaker, "EPR Paper and Bohr's Response," 1306.

44. Gell-Mann, "What Are the Building Blocks of Matter?" 29. He said this prior to the Aspect and other EPR experiments, but Gell-Mann's skepticism about Bohr's view was deep and continued unabated after those results appeared. See Gell-Mann, *The Quark and the Jaguar*, and George Johnson's biography of Gell-Mann, *Strange Beauty: Murray Gell-Mann and the Revolution in Twentieth-Century Physics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999).

45. Gell-Mann, *The Quark and the Jaguar*, 136.

46. Nicholas Maxwell, *The Comprehensibility of the Universe: A New Conception of Science* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998).

47. See Guido Bacciagaluppi and Antony Valentini, *Quantum Theory at the Crossroads: Reconsidering the 1927 Solvay Conference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2009.

experts can always have penetrating and fundamental questions—including of themselves—even if others do not.

Scholars under the spell of the early Wittgenstein, for example, had to be shocked when the great master abruptly reversed field on their cherished doctrines and left them eating intellectual dust. And what of all the steadfast adherents of logical positivism, who had to face Ayer's own verdict that "nearly all of it was false"? Consider also the decades-long debate between Einstein and Bohr in which neither could be shown to prevail; the apparent vindication, finally, of Bohr in experimental tests; and the more recent questioning of Bohr's fundamental views despite these experimental results. What are we to make of all that? Further, what does it imply that all high school juniors "know," for example, that there is no such thing as an ether, just as they "know" that nothing can travel faster than the speed of light—especially in view of the fact that the great John Bell didn't "know" either of these things?

Again, just as with scriptural topics, it seems to me that the mandate in intellectual matters is inescapable: it is the mandate of humility.

Some Convictions about Academic and Gospel Study

The lesson for me from all of the surprises in both spiritual and intellectual matters is how little I know. Indeed, I have learned to assume that if I find myself thinking I know a lot about some subject it is only because I am not thinking very deeply about it: in any *deep* effort to understand either spiritual or intellectual issues, questions outstrip answers quickly, and without end, and at such times nothing is more apparent to me than how little I genuinely know.

Based on these observations, and even though my scholarly attainments are modest, I have developed a number of personal convictions about academic and gospel study. Here are just four of them.

1. Both Are Pursuits of the Truth

At this level of abstraction, gospel and academic study are identical. The first focuses fundamentally on the things of eternity and relies heavily on the role of our spiritual sensibility in responding to the confirmation of the Spirit of God; the second focuses primarily on the things of the world and relies on the physical senses in leading to truth. Despite these differences, in aim they are one: the search for truth.[48] Where these areas of focus overlap

48. Whether discovery of absolute truth is actually possible (again, aside from fundamental spiritual certainties) is a different question, but truth should be our aim, even if we believe it will always exceed our reach.

they will ultimately yield identical conclusions. If they seem to disagree at present, it is only because we understand too little of one or the other, or, most likely, of both.

2. Pursue Both Secular and Spiritual Learning as a Way of Honoring God

It is instructive that Bach added the phrase *Soli Deo Gloria* ("To God alone be glory") to the end of most of his scores. It is little wonder that a biographer could report of Bach's art that it was "one great hymn of praise to God."[49] Shouldn't my intellectual studies, too, be one great hymn of praise to God? Doesn't that follow from the command that we are to sanctify ourselves so that our minds "become single to God" (D&C 88:68)? I also can't help thinking of the title Beethoven gave to the third movement of his late string quartet, Opus 132, "Holy Song of Thanksgiving to the Godhead, from One Recovering,"[50] where the beauty and holiness of the music sublimely express that title. Although Beethoven is nothing like Bach in the union of his art with worship, he is still instructive here: Shouldn't my intellectual studies, too, be a holy song of thanksgiving to the Godhead?

3. Examine Evidence Carefully and Follow Wherever It Leads, Rather Than Jumping on Intellectual Bandwagons

Although the discussion below deals exclusively with intellectual matters, with suitable qualifications the same principles would apply to spiritual matters.

Evidence. It might seem like a truism to say that we must be careful in examining evidence, but determining the "evidence," even in empirical disciplines, is often not as straightforward as we might think. It is natural to suppose, for example, that the world is populated with straightforward facts and that the scientific process consists simply in observing those facts and then developing the best explanation we can of what we all observe. While this seems sensible on the surface (the logical positivists assumed this view, for example), the matter actually turns out to be more complicated. Norwood Russell Hanson, among others, argued long ago that what we see and how we see it are influenced by some body of information we already hold; our observations, so to speak, are to some degree

49. See Martin Geck, *Johann Sebastian Bach: Life and Work*, trans. John Hargraves (New York: Harcourt, 2000), 658.

50. "Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit."

"theory-laden."[51] Emphasizing the same point, Thomas Kuhn records numerous historical examples of scientific facts that were observed only after one theory replaced another: the theory paved the way for the observations, rather than the observations for the theory.[52]

Determining the evidence, then, is not always a simple matter; indeed, as just mentioned regarding Kuhn, sometimes our theory precludes us from even *seeing* certain evidence. So I must always wonder: How much of my view of the evidence is actually formed by a theory I already hold? And how much is this true of others as well, including those I admire? And if my view of the evidence is influenced by a theory I already hold, what are the chances that I could ever see evidence that would *dis*confirm that theory?[53]

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51. Sometimes this point is argued too strongly, but as a statement of caution about the nature of observation, it is important indeed. See Norwood Russell Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery: An Inquiry into the Conceptual Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958); Norwood Russell Hanson, *Perception and Discovery: An Introduction to Scientific Inquiry* (San Francisco: Freeman, Cooper, 1969); and Matthew D. Lund's biography of Hanson, *N. R. Hanson: Observation, Discovery, and Scientific Change* (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2010).

52. See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* 3d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). See also Thomas S. Kuhn, *Philosophy of Science,* Robert and Maurine Rothschild Distinguished Lecture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992) and *The Road Since Structure* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). Although literature on the topic of observation continues, a classic statement is Karl R. Popper's *Realism and the Aim of Science,* 2d ed. (Totowa, N. J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1983). The general point about theory-laden observation illustrates why it is a mistake to think of the scientific method of discovery as an instance of simple induction. Indeed, it was in recognition of this error that the term *hypothetico-deductive* was coined—to capture the role played by theoretical influences in guiding scientific observations. Kuhn was one of my teachers, and in his classes he emphasized that neither view captures the full truth and that science is actually far more dynamic than either one alone implies. The relationship between observation and theory is reciprocal, each influencing the other continually and in ways that are not easy to trace.

53. On this topic, Stephen Jay Gould speaks of the "broad worldviews" that scientists develop about their subjects. Although such intellectual contexts guide fruitful scientific work, they also—without conscious deliberation—preclude various subjects and avenues of exploration from even being considered. And he observes that such subjects and avenues often include "the very classes of data best suited to act as potential refutations" of the very worldview that has precluded them. He adds that "such self-referential affirmations are not promoted cynically, or (for the most part) even consciously, but they do, nonetheless, operate as strong impediments to scientific change." Stephen Jay Gould, *The Structure of Evolutionary Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 1309.

"Tribe" mentality. But related to this, I must also be true to the evidence, at least so far as I understand it, and resist jumping on intellectual, or other, bandwagons for the sake of acceptance, popularity, or praise. This includes refusing to acquiesce—in whatever discipline—to the intellectual consensus of the time just because it is the consensus of the time or, even unwittingly, to adopt a point of view just because it is the view of high-profile academic figures, or even of my colleagues. To behave in any of these ways is to adopt a tribe mentality—an exaggerated sense of academic correctness and a resultant defensiveness about my beliefs. My concern in that case is less with pursuing the truth than with maintaining membership in the tribe and preserving its intellectual purity.[54]

To give just one example, surely something like a tribe mentality must have been at work in what John Bell considers the "disgraceful" treatment Louis de Broglie received at the hands of the physics community in advancing an explanation of quantum phenomena in terms of classical physical laws rather than within Bohr's widely accepted theoretical framework. Instead of considering de Broglie's work dispassionately and with scientific inquisitiveness, Bell tells us that it "was laughed out of court" by the intellectual coterie of the time and that "his arguments were not refuted, they were simply trampled on."[55] Bell's observation suggests that the concern seems to have been less with pursuing the truth than with maintaining group loyalty and defending an already-agreed-upon point of view. After all, it was a point of view shared by virtually all of the luminaries of the time and that therefore *defined* what was and was not intellectually respectable, and thus what could and could not be taken seriously. This dismissive treatment occurred even though the dissenting voice came from the intellectually distinguished and formidable Louis de Broglie.

Whither loyalty? If I am to pursue the truth aright, it seems that my loyalty cannot be to a particular intellectual system just because people I admire accept it, or because I want to be associated with such figures on the academic landscape. My loyalty must instead be to the most subtle and critical understanding that I can muster of the evidence itself.

Few attitudes are more risky than supposing that the scholarly icons of the day have reached some final, indubitable intellectual peak on fundamental matters, and that we can shallowly follow them, since all that remains is the adumbration of various details here and there. That was not true in the case of Wittgenstein; it was not true in the case of Carnap and

54. This can easily happen in any intellectual dispute. I've seen it most closely in my field of psychology, where theories compete on many topics.

55. Davies and Brown, *Ghost in the Atom*, 56.

Ayer; and it was not true in the case of either Einstein's *or* Bohr's view of the quantum world.[56] According to John Bell, it was not true even in the case of the scientific community's universal rejection both of the ether *and* of the possibility of travel at faster than the speed of light.

Thus, before hitching my wagon to some luminary's star—or even to some intellectual movement's star—I had better try to make sure that, among other things, my understanding of the evidence is both subtle and comprehensive; I recognize the anomalies of evidence that the theory does not explain well; I comprehend all the conceptual connections between the observations comprising the evidence and the components of theory claiming to explain that evidence; I have carefully considered ways the evidence itself might be seen differently from alternate theoretical points of view—indeed, the myriad ways, unavoidably, that unexamined assumptions, preconceptions, and presuppositions infiltrate and condition the theory; I have thoroughly and subtly examined rival theoretical explanations and have been able to dismiss them on the basis of my own careful examination of the evidence and of the logic of those rival positions; and I recognize that even the most robust and productive theories face huge hurdles in claiming anything like "truth," even if preferable to current theoretical rivals.

In short, while developing loyalty to one intellectual position or another is possible, it is not a decision to be undertaken lightly.[57] Nor, once I have

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56. In this connection, Bernard d'Espagnat remarks regarding physicists: "It is true, I believe, that on the whole most contemporary physicists are much too busy to really think, and that consequently they tend to consider genuine thinking as quite an obsolete activity. . . . [Bell and Nauenberg] mentioned [in their paper in the same volume] the burning question of the foundations of quantum mechanics and wrote 'The typical physicist feels that these questions have long been answered and that he will fully understand just how if ever he can spare twenty minutes to think about it.'" Bernard d'Espagnat, "My Interaction with John Bell," in Bertlmann and Zeilinger, *Quantum [Un]speakables*, 23.

57. This is why courses in the history and philosophy of science are so valuable. Studying the nature and history of scholarly enterprises over the centuries and learning to recognize the hazards that are common in evaluating evidence and formulating theoretical explanations can't help but result in budding scholars' greater appreciation of the subtleties involved in these tasks. It also can't help but yield a healthy skepticism about the truth of whatever orthodoxy happens to prevail in one's own discipline and supply increased tools for assessing that orthodoxy. An outstanding reference guide to the philosophy of science, with brief but excellent papers on all the major topics and figures, is W. H. Newton-Smith, ed., *A Companion to the Philosophy of Science* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000). A different approach that uses historical examples and focuses briefly on a few central questions is John Losee, *Theories on the Scrap Heap: Scientists and Philosophers on the Falsification, Rejection, and Replacement of Theories* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).

developed a responsible conviction about a theory, can I have loyalty to that point of view just because *I* hold it. To the degree that my concern is with the truth, I will continue to be aware of the anomalies and intellectual debilities of my favored position, even as I am aware of its virtues. I will continue to have in mind equally well the pros and cons of rival theoretical views. If I do not, this may signify that, at heart, I am less concerned with the truth than with simply defending what I have already concluded, not to mention defending my hard-won membership in whatever tribe I use to define my intellectual identity and status.

The great American philosopher W. V. Quine had something to say about such matters near the end of his autobiography: "I have had neither the aptitude nor the temperament for debate, public or private, when confronted with motives recognizably other than the pursuit of truth. If in discussing with a student I sensed that he was animated rather by some ideological preconception, or by a wish to have been right for the sake of high marks or self-esteem, I made short work of the dialogue."[58] A vast gulf, Quine goes on to say, separates those who are thinking primarily of themselves in their scholarship and those who are thinking primarily of the truth. He remarks, "The latter, I like to think, will inherit the earth."[59]

4. Pursue the Truth with Humility

As must be clear by now, I believe that nothing impedes our understanding of the world, or of the gospel, quite as thoroughly as a dogmatic insistence on whatever understanding we think we possess at the moment. On the contrary, in both scientific and gospel scholarship, there is profound reason for a lingering tentativeness about many of the ideas we hold at any one time. Expressing this very humility, Gell-Mann once spoke of the difficulty of making theoretical headway in physics, remarking that "perhaps some now unknown brilliant young scientist will find a new set of questions to ask, the answers to which will clarify today's problems and make what I have been saying here obsolete."[60]

This appears to be a perfect statement of the humility that should characterize my explorations in both gospel and academic topics. To the degree I pursue the truth with such humility, it seems I will exhibit a number of characteristics. Here are a few (although stated specifically in terms of intellectual matters, they should also apply with certain qualifications to a broad range of scriptural issues):

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58. W. V. Quine, *The Time of My Life: An Autobiography* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), 478.

59. Quine, *Time of My Life*, 478.

60. Gell-Mann, "What Are the Building Blocks of Matter?" 45.

- I will not claim to know more than I do. I will appreciate that my intellectual convictions, whatever they are, are beholden to a complex, intricate, and hidden web of assumptions, preconceptions, and predispositions that I probably do not even recognize, much less comprehend.
- I will be neither defensive nor rigid about the conclusions I reach. I will be able to catalog the evidence that weighs against the positions I favor as easily as I can expound the evidence that weighs for them. And I will neither minimize the former nor exaggerate the latter.[61]
- I will live with the explicit recognition that: (1) knowledge of the truth—in any kind of complete form—is not possible; (2) because of this, there is no possibility that I have achieved it; and (3) in favoring one explanation over another I am simply making judgments about what I find to be the most perspicacious explanation, for the time being, of the facts as I imperfectly understand them.
- I will embrace the expectation that, in the end, I will turn out to be wrong on an endless host of matters. This is inevitable, and it is both futile and unwise to imagine otherwise.[62]

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61. As an example of this, Robert Nozick prefaced his famous work on political theory in this way: "I propose to give it all to you: the doubts and worries and uncertainties as well as the beliefs, convictions, and arguments. At those particular points in my arguments, transitions, assumptions, and so forth, where I feel the strain, I try to comment or at least to draw the reader's attention to what makes me uneasy." Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, xiii–xiv. Nozick followed this practice both in his teaching—even to undergraduates—and in everything he published right up to his premature death in 2002.

62. A case might be made that such humility is all well and good for the vast majority, but that there is also a place for "true believers" who lack humility and push their ideas with a tenacity that is unlikely to coexist with the tentative attitude I am recommending. I appreciate this point of view, but for two reasons I do not share it. First, recognizing that I might be incorrect in the theoretical view I am accepting and exploring at any given time seems to me precisely the attitude that keeps me open to possibilities that I would otherwise overlook or dismiss prematurely. I am no less tenacious in that case, but it is a tenacity born of a dogged search for the truth rather than of defensiveness and pride. After all, if I am defensive and prideful in the views I hold, how can I be open to new possibilities—however promising—if they imply my mistakenness? The truth is, I can't be, and I will be resistant to those possibilities against all reason. What then are the chances that I will continue contributing to the advance of my discipline? I believe that defensive scholars, no matter how brilliant, in the end accomplish less than they would have if only they had been less defensive. The second reason I do not share this view is my experience with certain very high-profile scholars—Lawrence Kohlberg, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Thomas Kuhn—all of whom seemed high on the scale of

Humility writ large. It seems that if I pursue the truth with humility, I will live in welcome anticipation of *surprise*. If I am honest and thorough—both in gospel study and in my intellectual discipline—I will discover soon enough that what I know is far outweighed by what I don't. Since that is the case, I might as well start out humble, since, once I face the Lord and begin to glimpse eternity, that is certainly how I will end up.

This is humility writ large, and I see no way around it. I discern in this stance the teaching of the redoubtable Mormon that "none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly in heart" (Moro. 7:44) and of Benjamin that "man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend" (Mosiah 4:9).

I hear echoes of these ancient prophetic sentiments in the twentieth century's T. S. Eliot, and everything I have learned about both the Spirit and the intellect convinces me he was correct. Beyond the certainties of the gospel, the only wisdom we can hope to acquire is the wisdom of humility. Humility is endless.

Duane Boyce (duane@plumh.com) received his academic training in psychology, philosophy, and the clinical treatment of families. He received a PhD from Brigham Young University and conducted his postdoctoral study in developmental psychology at Harvard University. He is the coauthor of four books and is part-owner of a worldwide management consulting/training and educational firm headquartered in Salt Lake City. He expresses deep appreciation to Jim Faulconer and Steve Turley for their help in completing the final stages of this essay.

Appendix

John Bell's Revolutionary Response

As mentioned in the text, John Bell did not accept Bohr's apparent vindication at the hands of experiments based on his theorem. Instead, he considered highly unorthodox ideas in his approach to the results—invoking both

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intellectual humility to me, and all of whom made exceptional (not to mention famous) intellectual contributions, a conjunction of characteristics that I think is not pure coincidence. Each exhibited a wonderful intellectual humility, and I believe each of them was tenacious *and* productive partly for that very reason. At least according to Quine's standards (see page 99), they are certainly among those who will inherit the earth. Brett Sharffs examines humility in another context and reaches the same general conclusions. See Brett Sharffs, "The Role of Humility in Exercising Practical Wisdom," *UC Davis Law Review* 32, no. 1 (1998): 161, 164.

the idea of an ether and of communication at faster than the speed of light. To appreciate just how revolutionary Bell's thinking was, a little history is in order.

The Ether

While the ancient Greeks originated the idea of an ether, it was thoroughly at home in the physics of the nineteenth century. Before the end of that century, the great James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879) had determined that light consists of electromagnetic waves, and for this reason (among others), he and others concluded that there must be some physical medium through which such light waves were propagated.[63] This point of view added support to the centuries-old notion of the ether and contributed to the wide acceptance of it in the scientific circles of the time.

In 1887, Albert Michelson and Edward Morley conducted the first experimental test of the ether. The study was designed to test the motion of the earth through this element (which, since the earth was moving relative to it, constituted a sort of ether "wind").[64]

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63. This was thought true partly by analogy to sound waves. Sound waves are oscillations that reach our ears by being transmitted through air. It is natural to think that something similar must be true of light: light waves must pass through some material medium, just as sound waves pass through air. Air itself cannot be the medium for the propagation of light, however, since light reaches us from distant bodies both inside and outside our solar system, and air does not extend that far. This suggested that there must be *some* medium, however unclear its properties, which serves the same function for light waves that air serves for sound.

64. The experiment began by directing a steady beam of light, of a single color, toward a specially treated mirror. As the beam struck the mirror, it was split in two: (1) one set of waves was reflected to go downstream with the hypothesized direction of the ether wind and then, by a second mirror, reflected back upstream against that wind (which meant that the speed-enhancing effects of the ether on the downstream leg of the trip would be canceled out by the equal speed-*inhibiting* effects of the ether on the return, upstream, leg of the trip), while (2) the other set of waves was reflected in a similar way to go the identical distance back and forth *across* the direction of the ether wind (which meant that the speed of this light wave would be inhibited on both legs of its journey). After their roundtrips, as the two waves were finally reflected back to the telescope and the experimenter's eye, they were rejoined.

At this point, the experimenters could determine if one of the waves had traveled more slowly than the other because of the well-known properties of light waves. They knew, for example, that if one of the waves took longer for its roundtrip—if it arrived half a wavelength behind the other, for instance—then the troughs of its waves would actually be located on top of the crests of the first, faster, wave. As a result, the waves of the two would cancel each other out and no light at all would be seen. If the delay was less than half a wavelength, then the troughs and crests of

Fully expecting to detect the ether and to identify at least some of its effects, Michelson and Morley were surprised when their experiment failed to show this result. There seemed to be two possible explanations: Either there was in fact an ether, and the experiment had simply failed to detect it, or there was no ether after all—which meant that there was no medium through which light waves were propagated. Because this outcome violated the best theoretical understanding of the time, Michelson and Morley were reluctant to accept it and repeated the experiment a number of times to account for one variable or another. But the result was always the same.

Although some were glad to see the ether eradicated from scientific discussion because of the strange properties it would have to possess, other important physicists resisted abandoning the idea. Brilliant thinkers such as Hendrik Lorentz, Henri Poincaré, Joseph Larmor, and George Fitzgerald continued to embrace the ether and published important works motivated by the Michelson-Morley experiment. One argument was that the instruments designed to identify the ether were themselves distorted by motion and thus could not be expected to detect the movement of the earth through this element, even if it did exist. In that case, the failure to detect the ether by Michelson and Morley was not due to its absence, but to the failure of the experimental situation to account for this variable.

Special Relativity

The deathblow to the acceptability of the ether, however, was finally dealt by Einstein's special theory of relativity in 1905. Here is why. Beginning with Galileo, scientists had recognized that the laws of motion in a room traveling at a constant rate of speed (and in a straight line) were the same as those in a room completely at rest. The ways that objects in the moving room would behave were identical to the ways that objects in a stationary

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the two waves would still interfere with each other, and the light observed would at least be dimmed, though not canceled out altogether.

In order to account for as many variables as possible, the experimental apparatus for directing the light beam was rotated so that the upstream-downstream light waves and the cross-stream waves reversed places. When this was done, the two light beams changed directions, reversing which of the beams would be slower and which faster. In this experimental design, if there were an ether, the two light waves would be expected to travel at different speeds after being split, and their troughs and crests—because they were not matched up—would necessarily interfere with each other once the light waves were rejoined. As a result, someone watching through the telescope as the apparatus rotated would see variations in the brightness of the incoming light. This would mean that the two waves were interfering with each other: they would be traveling at different speeds because of the effects of the ether.

room would behave. (Each room constitutes its own frame of reference, so to speak, and since each is in a steady state of motion—the stationary room's state of motion is simply zero—it is said that they are both "inertial" frames of reference.)

What Einstein did in the special theory of relativity was to postulate that light, too, operates identically in the two rooms. By this time, Maxwell's famous equations regarding electric and magnetic fields had demonstrated the speed of light in a vacuum to be 300,000,000 meters per second (186,300 miles per second), or *c*. Einstein postulated that, just as the other laws of physics would be unchanged in the two frames of reference, the speed of light would be unchanged as well. Observers inhabiting a room that was traveling even at great speed would not be able to tell that they were doing so, even by measuring the speed of light. Any observer, in any frame, will measure the speed of light to be *c*.[65]

An important consequence of this invariance of the speed of light was that the concept of being "at rest," or stationary, turned out to be meaningless. Even if we inhabited a frame of reference that was at rest, we could not know it, because there is no independent, fixed frame of reference that is at rest and that can therefore tell us whether or not *we* are. Scientists in the late nineteenth century considered the ether to be stationary in this way, and, if true, the ether's stationary character would naturally open up the possibility of determining whether or not any other frame was at rest by comparing it to the ether. In this sense the ether constituted a preferred frame of reference. But experiments of the Michelson-Morley type could not detect the presence of an ether, and this obviously precluded any kind of comparison *to* it. This is where the notion of the ether suffered ultimate rejection: it was precisely this concept—that of a stationary medium that filled space—that had been thought to provide a universal fixed frame relative to which we could define the speed of any object traveling through space. But once the whole notion of an at-rest frame of reference was abandoned in special relativity, the ether—as an expression of such a frame—was rendered superfluous. The idea of an ether subsequently became a theoretical anathema in physics.[66]

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65. This was a reasonable postulate since it was a logical consequence of Maxwell and the invariance of mechanical laws. Indeed, if it were not the case that the speed of light is invariant in the way Einstein proposed, the laws of electrical and magnetic interactions would be different.

66. Einstein himself talked of the ether as late as 1920, but the properties he was willing to ascribe to an ether were so foreign to the properties ascribed to it by earlier scientists that his conception could not be considered similar except in name—which is perhaps why he eventually discontinued using the term. See Albert Einstein, "Ether and the Theory of Relativity," an address delivered on May 5,

Bell's Departure from Orthodoxy

John Bell's departure from the scientific consensus on these ideas is demonstrated in the course of an interview conducted in 1986 by fellow physicist Paul Davies. Davies identified the two crucial aspects at issue in the experiments based on Bell's theorem, both of which were advanced by Einstein: (1) the reality of features of the external quantum world, independent of our observations of them, and (2) the idea that particles at a distance cannot instantly influence each other because there is no such thing as faster-than-light interaction. The interviewer observed that the correlations shown in Aspect's experiment meant that only one of these ideas could be maintained. If the particles are "real" and possess a fixed state prior to observation, then the experimental correlations must have been achieved by a communication of information between the two particles that traveled faster than the speed of light. According to Einstein's own special theory of relativity, as we have seen, such communication is not possible. Therefore, if Einstein was right about the "real" or "fixed" nature of quantum particles, then he was wrong about nothing traveling faster than the speed of light. On the other hand, if he was right about nothing traveling faster than the speed of light, then he was wrong about the "real" or "fixed" nature of quantum particles—which meant that such particles had to be more like the orthodox conception (that is, two entities that comprise a single quantum state, so that both are affected by measurement of either one). Davies asked Bell, "Which of the two [the fixed state of particles, or the impossibility of interaction at faster than the speed of light] would you like to hang on to?" Here is Bell's reply:

> For me it's a dilemma. I think it's a deep dilemma, and the resolution of it will not be trivial; it will require a substantial change in the way we look at things. But I would say that the cheapest resolution is something like going back to relativity as it was before Einstein, when people like Lorentz and Poincaré thought that there was an ether—a preferred frame of reference—but that our measuring instruments were distorted by motion in such a way that we could not detect motion through the ether.[67]

Bell's mention of the ether in this context is significant. As we have seen, in 1887, against their own expectations, Michelson and Morley had failed to

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1920, at the University of Leyden, available at http://www.tu-harburg.de/rzt/rzt/it/Ether.html.

67. In Davies and Brown, *Ghost in the Atom*, 48–49. By "cheapest resolution," Bell means the resolution that would cause the least amount of disruption to the theoretical system as a whole. He does not mean the "least worthwhile" resolution or the resolution achieved by the "laziest shortcut."

detect an ether in experimental tests, and Einstein's special theory of relativity, published in 1905, had on further grounds eliminated any notion of a fixed or preferred frame of reference such as the ether was thought to be. As a result of these developments, the notion of an ether had been practically laughable in physics for the better part of a century. But here Bell reintroduces the idea. He does so, he says, because if there is an ether "you can imagine that there is a preferred frame of reference, and in this preferred frame of reference things do go faster than light." He adds, "The reason I want to go back to the idea of an ether here is because in these EPR experiments there is the suggestion that behind the scenes something is going faster than light."[68] In further defense of the ether, Bell added:

> What is not sufficiently emphasized in textbooks, in my opinion, is that the pre-Einstein position of Lorentz and Poincaré, Larmor and Fitzgerald was perfectly coherent, and is not inconsistent with relativity theory. The idea that there is an ether, and these Fitzgerald contractions and Larmor dilations occur, and that as a result the instruments do not detect motion through the ether—that is a perfectly coherent point of view.[69]

Davies then remarked, "To sum up then, you would prefer to retain the notion of objective reality and throw away one of the tenets of relativity: that signals cannot travel faster than the speed of light [which an ether would make possible]?" The answer: "Yes. One wants to be able to take a realistic view of the world, to talk about the world as if it is really there, even when it is not being observed."[70]

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68. Davies and Brown, *Ghost in the Atom*, 49. Again, the logic is that there would have to be communication between the particles to account for the correlations between them, and, given the distance, this communication would have to occur at faster than the speed of light.

69. Davies and Brown, *Ghost in the Atom*, 49.

70. Davies and Brown, *Ghost in the Atom*, 50. Recent research suggests that if a preferred frame of reference (such as an ether) existed, and if it held a particular relationship to the earth's rotational speed, the velocity of any communication or influence between two particles would have to be greater than the speed of light by four orders of magnitude—that is, it would have to be 10,000 times faster. See Daniel Salart and others, "Testing the Speed of 'Spooky Action at a Distance,'" *Nature,* August 14, 2008, 861–64; available at http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v454/n7206/full/nature07121.html.

Speaking historically, Bell says: "One of the things that I specifically wanted to do was to see whether there was any real objection to this idea put forward long ago by de Broglie and Bohm that you could give a completely realistic account of all quantum phenomena. De Broglie had done that in 1927, and was laughed out of court in a way that I now regard as disgraceful, because his arguments were not refuted, they were simply trampled on. Bohm resurrected that theory in 1952, and was rather ignored. I thought that the theory of Bohm and de Broglie was in all

This episode demonstrates the inherent interrelatedness of intellectual ideas: Bell was able to hold onto one idea (that quantum particles possess fixed properties prior to measurement) because he was willing to question others (that there is no ether and that signaling cannot occur at faster than the speed of light).[71] And he questioned these ideas despite the century-long contrary consensus of the scientific community.[72]

Whether he turns out in the final analysis to be right or wrong (either about an ether or about travel at faster than the speed of light), at a minimum Bell demonstrates that, as I suggested earlier, the best experts can always have penetrating and fundamental questions, even if others do not.[73]

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ways equivalent to quantum mechanics for experimental purposes, but nevertheless was realistic and unambiguous." In Davies and Brown, *Ghost in the Atom*, 56.

71. This phenomenon illustrates what is called "holism" in the philosophy of science literature. First advanced by Pierre Duhem (1861–1916) and then extended by W. V. Quine (1908–2000), it is the view that no statement is tested in isolation because of its embeddedness in a larger theoretical structure. Any particular hypothesis can be maintained, despite evidence disconfirming it, if we are willing to modify other parts of the theory instead. Bell's approach shows just how far this can be taken: in reasoning about the experiments based on his theorem, he was willing to swim against the tide and question ideas others consider virtually sacrosanct.

72. For example, reflecting the scientific consensus regarding the EPR experiments, Murray Gell-Mann considers any conjectures about interaction happening at faster than the speed of light to be thoroughly misplaced, if not absurd. See Gell-Mann, *The Quark and the Jaguar*. Whether he knew of Bell's own speculations in this regard, I do not know.

73. Interestingly, a recent experiment raised the possibility that some particles actually can travel faster than the speed of light. Reported by CERN on September 23, 2011, the findings were immediately studied by others and challenged. The caution and surprise with which CERN announced the data in the first place and the energy with which others examined them underscores the central importance of the matter to physics. This importance emphasizes just how revolutionary Bell was in his willingness to consider the possibility of travel at faster than the speed of light in his response to the EPR experiments. For the CERN announcement see http://public.web.cern.ch/press/pressreleases/Releases2011/PR19.11E.html. For one of the responses that appeared almost immediately, see http://www.technologyreview.com/blog/arxiv/27260/?ref=rss.

Figure 1. The Philippine Islands and locations of prison camps, cities, and villages important for the story of the LDS POWs. Courtesy Bart J. Kowallis.

The Fate of the Davao Penal Colony #502 "Branch" of the LDS Church, 1944

David L. Clark and Bart J. Kowallis

The Sinking of the *Shinyo Maru*

At 4:37 p.m. on September 7, 1944, the USS *Paddle*, a submarine on its fifth war patrol, reached N 08° 11′, E 122° 40′, just off Sindangan Point on the southwest coast of the Philippine island of Mindanao in the Sulu Sea, having sailed from Fremantle, Western Australia, on August 22; its mission was to attack Japanese shipping in the east Sulu Sea. On the morning of September 7, a Japanese convoy had left Zamboanga on the westernmost tip of Mindanao, sailing into the east Sulu Sea with Cebu as its destination[1] (fig. 1). Fourteen hours after the Japanese convoy left Zamboanga, it was seen by the *Paddle*.[2] After sighting smoke from the Japanese convoy

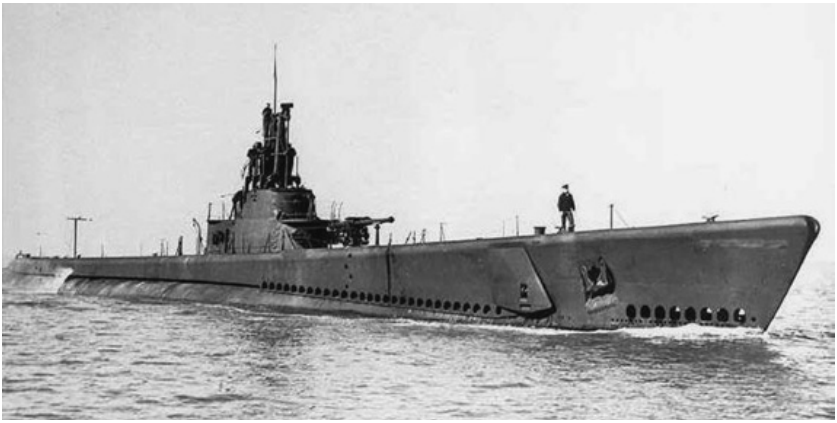

Figure 2. The USS *Paddle*, the submarine responsible for sinking the *Shinyo Maru*. Courtesy U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II.

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David L. Clark and Bart J. Kowallis

David L. Clark

Bart J. Kowallis

My interest in the Latter-day Saint POWs in the Davao penal colony began as a kid at the beginning of World War II. My family and the family of Lieutenant Bobby Brown were friends. We knew Bobby and considered him special because he was one of the first members of our ward to enter the military.

On Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, we came out of church and noticed a small crowd of members listening to a radio broadcast coming from a ward member's car. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was being described, and at the beginning of the war in the Pacific the safety of Bobby Brown, who had just arrived in the Philippines, was on everyone's mind. While nothing was learned concerning Bobby at that time, a year later, after my family had moved to Houston, we learned from Bobby's mother, Ruby, that Bobby was a prisoner of the Japanese. During the entire course of the war, the Japanese permitted the prisoners to send only a few postcards home, so little was known of their condition.

Late in 1944, Ruby Brown contacted my mother, asking for help in learning something more about her son. Ruby learned that Major Morris Shoss, of Houston, had just returned home after being rescued from the same Japanese penal colony where Bobby was held. Ruby asked my family to contact Shoss to see if he knew anything about Bobby. The information we learned from interviewing Shoss was then communicated in letters to the Browns. The letters, supplemented by publications and information from the Church's new FamilySearch website obtained by my coauthor, are the basis of our article.

—David L. Clark

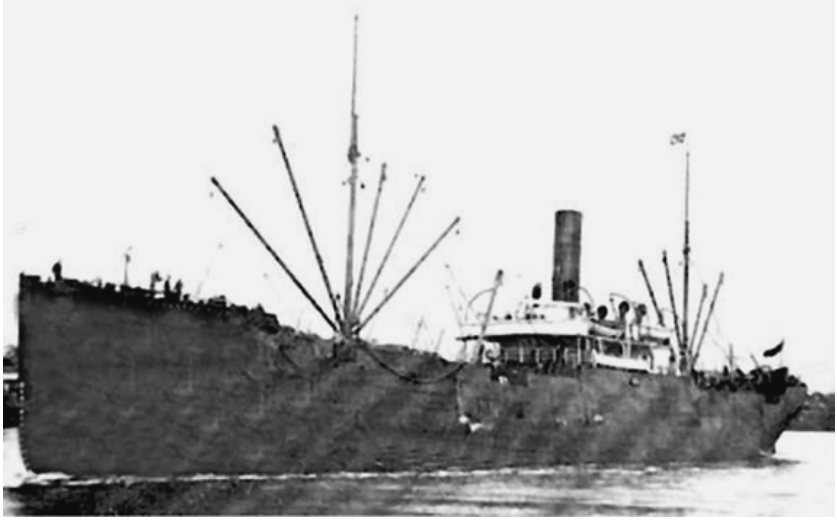

Figure 3. The *Shinyo Maru,* death ship for 668 POWs, including many of the LDS POWs of the Davao Penal Colony #502 "branch" of the Church. Courtesy Capt. John Bax.

at some distance, the *Paddle* (fig. 2), under the command of Lieutenant Commander B. H. Nowell, gained a favorable position and fired two torpedoes at the Japanese frigate *Shinyo Maru*[3] (fig. 3), one of the lead ships.[4] Moments after firing, the crew on the *Paddle* heard breaking-up noises and it was assumed that the *Shinyo Maru* was either damaged or sunk. Another ship in the convoy, the *Eiyo Maru* was also torpedoed and confirmed sunk by the *Paddle*,[5] although it actually became grounded near Sindangan Point (fig. 4). Following the attack, the *Paddle* dove deep to avoid forty-five depth charges dropped by the Japanese. The crew of the *Paddle* did not witness the fate of the two ships they had fired upon, nor were they aware that the cargo aboard the *Shinyo Maru* was a group of American POWs.

This mission concluded the fifth war patrol for the USS *Paddle,* but it was the ultimate tragedy for 668 of approximately 750 American POWs on board the unmarked *Shinyo Maru* who died when the ship sank. Those who died in the sinking included at least seventeen of the twenty-five Latter-day Saint POWs and friends who were members of an unofficial "branch" of the Church that held services regularly in a Mindanaoan prison camp before they were put aboard the *Shinyo Maru*.[6]

Unfortunately, American deaths because of friendly fire were not unusual in the turbulent Pacific sector of World War II. Between January 1942 and December 1944, at least fourteen Japanese ships, unmarked and carrying no indication of their cargo of American POWs, were sunk by U.S.

Figure 4. Details of Sindangan Point and Bay where the *Shinyo Maru* (box) was sunk by the USS *Paddle* (star). Location is also indicated for ships in convoy (circles) as well as the village of Liloy and the city of Sindangan, home of many of the Filipinos who helped the survivors. Courtesy Bart J. Kowallis.

submarines.[7] It is assumed that between 18,000 and 19,000 Allied POWs died in these sinkings.[8] This is almost the same number of casualties the U.S. Marines suffered during the entire war in the Pacific.[9] However, one of the major objectives of the American war effort was the destruction of Japanese shipping. From the beginning of the war in December 1941 to the war's end in August 1945, more than 1,000 Japanese "merchant ships" with a total tonnage of about 5 million were sunk by U.S. submarines.[10] Sinking of Japanese merchant ships peaked in the fall of 1944, the same time that the *Shinyo Maru* became a target. While the tragic sinking of some POW ships might have been prevented, the Japanese military provided no identification for these ships, and the death of POWs by the U.S. submarines might be identified, in more current terminology, as "collateral damage."

There were undoubtedly other LDS servicemen who lost their lives on sunken ships, but the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* may have been unique because it resulted in the death of a close-knit group of LDS servicemen and possible non-LDS friends who had been holding religious services and functioning like a branch of the Church in the Davao Penal Colony #502 on the southwest coast of Mindanao. The evidence of LDS religious services being

held in a Japanese prison camp has not been documented previously, although similar services are known to have been held in German prison camps.[11]

The complete personal story of the capture and imprisonment of each member of the small group of LDS POWs at Davao and their subsequent deaths in the Sulu Sea may never be known, but from both published and unpublished accounts, the general history shared by many of the POWs is well established.

War in the Pacific

The story of the deaths of the LDS servicemen on the *Shinyo Maru* had its origins with the beginning of World War II. Poorly equipped and supplied, U.S. troops stationed in various parts of the Philippines were not prepared for war with Japan, which began on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked the Hawaiian Islands. Within nine hours of the Pearl Harbor disaster, the Philippines were also attacked. An assortment of 12,000 U.S. National Guard, regular Army, Air Force, and Marine personnel were stationed in the Philippines and included LDS members with roots in Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Texas, Oregon, and Canada. Together with Filipino soldiers, Allied forces numbered close to 80,000 and were deployed in several parts of the Philippines. These troops fought the Japanese with determination and even limited success from December 1941 to April 1942, but the outcome of this first battle for the Philippines was never in doubt. Hoped-for U.S. reinforcements never arrived, and the meager supply of food and supplies on hand was largely exhausted in the first few weeks of battle. Allied troops continued to fight until April 9, when 76,000 exhausted and weakened American and Filipino troops in the northern Philippines surrendered to the Japanese. On Corregidor and on the southern islands, fighting continued until May, when all troops were ordered to surrender. Even with almost nothing to fight with and in a weakened condition, the troops may still not have surrendered if the forthcoming treatment by their Japanese captors had been anticipated.[12] Because of inhumane treatment by the captors, within a few months more than 2,000 of those captured on Corregidor died.[13]

The large number of troops surrendering was not anticipated by the Japanese, who had expected fewer than half this number, and within a few days large numbers of the POWs, without food or water or any care for the sick and injured, died or were killed. Unfortunately, this was only the beginning of Allied deaths. The prisoners were rounded up and forced to march toward several prison camps; two to three hundred died nearly every day.[14] The brutal treatment of Allied troops is attributed to the Japanese idea that

surrender was a dishonorable act and those who surrendered were not eligible for humane consideration.[15] The largest contingent of surrendering troops were on the Island of Luzon, many on the Bataan Peninsula. There, Allied troops were taken prisoner and herded together for a march to hastily assembled prison camps, most located north of Manila.

The Bataan Death March and Prison Camps

From survivors of the Bataan Death March, Americans learned of the atrocities committed by the Japanese military following the surrender of Allied troops in April 1942. Most of those on the forced march were captured in various parts of Luzon. Depending on the geography of their capture, the POWs walked from five to twelve days in the tropical sun for approximately sixty miles, from south of Manila to different camps north of the city of Luzon.[16] Beheadings, bayonetings, shootings, and beatings were the order of the day for many of the Allied POWs, who marched with little or no water or food during the ordeal. For their entertainment, the Japanese soldiers even forced the live burial of some Filipinos.[17] Fortunately, a large number of the future LDS "branch" were stationed on Mindanao and were not involved in the Bataan ordeal.

While precise figures may never be available, at least 500 American soldiers of the 12,000 thought to have been captured, and several times that number of Filipinos, died before the end of the march.[18] Survivors were placed in several prison camps north of Manila, where survival continued to be difficult.

Most of the Bataan POWs were interned in two general locations—Camp O'Donnell at Capas and three camps around Cabanatuan. At Camp O'Donnell, in the weeks after internment began, it is reported that fifty or more Americans died daily.[19] At Camp Cabanatuan, more than 1,200 died in the first two months.[20] Burying the dead became a daily problem for the survivors, who were existing with little or no food or water. In their sick and weakened condition, Allied POWs were required to dig trenches for the mass burials, carry the corpses to the burial site, and work at a variety of other tasks.

Approximately 2,000 of the 7,000 Americans who entered O'Donnell died in the first six weeks.[21] During the same time, almost 28,000 Filipino soldiers died—members of both the Philippine Army and the Philippine Scouts, a military organization under command of the U.S. Army.[22] Conditions were no better at the several Cabanatuan camps that held approximately the same number of Americans. Murray Sneddon, a survivor, described conditions at the camps:

> O'Donnell and Cabanatuan were both the same. After two months at O'Donnell many of us were moved to Cabanatuan. It made no difference; each was a dying place.—There were only two types of work—to carry the dead away and to bury them. In the graveyard, men were packed into holes until they were almost to the surface and then a covering of dirt was heaped on. In the rainy season, with the ground saturated, blood seeped to the surface and it seemed as if the ground itself was bleeding.—At Cabanatuan there were 6,000 of us, and at the rate we were dying, I often felt there wouldn't be any of us left by the time the war ended. Every day long lines of men were taken from the hospital out to the burial sites.[23]

There were three camps within a few miles of the town of Cabanatuan, approximately 100 miles north of Manila, although most of the survivors of both the Death March and the Corregidor surrender were eventually held in Cabanatuan Camp #1.[24]

During the fall of 1942, prisoners began to be moved to other localities, such as Formosa, Japan, and other places in the Philippines, where, as slave laborers, they were forced to work in rice fields or Japanese factories or were used to repair and build airfields, all to support the Japanese war effort. On October 26, 1942, 1,000 of the 6,000 prisoners still alive at the main Cabanatuan camp were removed and sailed eleven days from Manila to the south end of Mindanao to a camp near the city of Davao. This transfer included a number of the LDS serviceman who would later be organized into the Davao LDS POW "branch." The ship was filthy and vermin-infested, but only two men died during the trip. After unloading at Davao, the Japanese soldiers enforced a two-hour "sun treatment," a common form of torture in which prisoners were exposed the tropical sun, and then the POWs were marched fifteen miles north to the prison camp.[25]

The transfer of prisoners from Cabanatuan to other places in the Japanese Empire to work as slave laborers continued throughout the war. As Japanese military deaths increased during the more intense fighting after 1942, more young men were pressed into service by Japan, and the POWs were forced to do work that had previously been done by Japanese soldiers and civilians. By January 1945, only 500 prisoners remained in the Cabanatuan camp, when they were rescued in a daring raid by a combined force of Filipinos and Americans.[26]

LDS "Branch" at Davao Penal Colony #502

The 1,000 prisoners transferred from Cabanatuan spent the next year and a half at the Davao Penal Colony #502 (fig. 5), which was already filled with Americans. Unless the LDS POWs were able to organize at Cabanatuan,[27] it was probably during this time that the LDS "branch" was formed.

Figure 5. Part of the Davao Penal Colony as it looked ten years after the end of World War II. According to a typed roster found hidden at the camp after the war, more than 2,000 POWs were there in April 1944. Courtesy Al R. Young.

Information concerning this LDS group was first obtained from an interview with Major Morris L. Shoss in December 1944, in Houston, Texas. Additional information was given by survivors of the war who were associated with the LDS "branch" members at the Davao camp but were not on the *Shinyo Maru*. Shoss, a West Point graduate and one of the eighty-three survivors of the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru,* had a distinguished record and was one of the last defenders of Corregidor. After Corregidor was captured by the Japanese, Shoss became a prisoner in Cabanatuan and along with others was shipped to Davao in late 1942. After the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru,* he was one of the fortunate POWs who were able to make it to safety with the help of friendly Filipinos from the village of Liloy and the city of Sindangan. He returned to the United States only a few weeks following his rescue. In November and December of 1944, he was interviewed in Houston by Sadie O. Clark on behalf of the parents of First Lieutenant George Robin (Bobby) Brown of El Paso, Texas. Brown's parents were anxious to learn any details concerning the fate of their son, who eventually was listed as one of those on the *Shinyo Maru* at the time of its sinking, but whose status was still uncertain at the time of the interview. Shoss reported that he knew Brown very well and identified him as a Mormon and one of the leaders of a group of approximately twenty-five LDS prisoners in the Davao Penal Colony #502.[28]

The LDS group held services regularly, and Shoss, of Jewish faith, often participated in the services. The LDS prisoners sang songs and discussed gospel principles. In fact, Shoss reported that he and Brown had many discussions on different points of religion. Shoss praised the quality of the

character of the LDS group and reported that in spite of the horrible conditions in the prison camp, the LDS POWs were remarkable because they tried to live according to the principles of their religion. Shoss revealed that the LDS group had a set of scriptures (a triple combination) and a songbook that had been given to Brown by his parents prior to his departure for the Philippines. Brown's mother learned from survivors of the war who were not on the *Shinyo Maru* that many of the LDS POWs took turns reading the Book of Mormon during their imprisonment.

The only high priest among the LDS POWs was Sergeant Nels Hansen, who was not aboard the *Shinyo Maru* and survived the war. Although it was reported that Hansen assumed the ecclesiastical leadership, after the war he told Brown's mother that the leadership was actually shared with Brown. When Hansen was shipped to Japan in June 1944, Brown evidently became the leader of the "branch."[29] Brown, among other things, always led the singing during the services. Evidently, the services were spiritual, and testimony meeting was particularly moving for the LDS POWs.

Major Shoss reported that on one occasion he was asked by a non-LDS American superior officer to see that one of the ailing prisoners receive some help. When Shoss learned that the ill prisoner was one of the LDS group, he contacted Brown. As co-leader of the LDS group, Brown then contacted another of the group, Staff Sergeant Ernest R. Parry, and together they assumed care for the ill serviceman. Shoss was not certain of the nature of the care, since they did not have access to medicine of any kind, but his description suggests that they gave the serviceman a priesthood blessing. Shoss recalled that the ill LDS serviceman was soon feeling better.

Another member of the LDS group who was not on the *Shinyo Maru* was Captain Robert G. Davey. Davey survived the war and reported to Brown's mother that when he arrived at the camp, he was sick and starved. Lying down on his first day in camp, a Sunday, he heard singing. The song "An Angel from on High" rang a bell with Davey, and he immediately tried to find the source of the singing. When he found the LDS group, Bobby Brown was leading the singing. Davey was welcomed and became a member of the Davao "branch."[30]

Under the conditions of imprisonment, the possession of scriptures and a songbook was unusual. In fact, the Japanese had demanded that all Bibles in possession of the POWs were to be given to the captors.[31] The reason the scriptures and songbook were not confiscated is that Brown was driving a truck when he was captured and had the books with him. The Japanese wanted the truck, and evidently finding no drivers among their own soldiers, they forced Brown to drive (with the scriptures and songbook) to the Cabanatuan camp. Brown thus avoided the Death March

and was able to secure the books for the next two years. This proved to be a significant event and became a spiritual blessing for the LDS POWs after they organized at Davao.

Thus, this little group of LDS members and friends functioned as an unofficial "branch" of the Church during an unknown period of time in the Davao Penal Colony #502 on the south end of the Philippine Island of Mindanao. But who were the other members of this small LDS group? In addition to Brown, Ernest Parry, Davey, and Hansen, identified by Major Shoss and by survivors who contacted Brown's mother after the war, we have been able to identify other probable members of the group, many of whom perished in the sinking of the POW ship. We were able to identify several LDS POWs through the LDS Church's new FamilySearch website. Searching for names from the official list of *Shinyo Maru* POWs, we then confirmed their identity using the date of their death (September 7, 1944), which was the same for all of the men. We then checked to see which of these had been baptized as children.

LDS POWs Who Died in the Sinking of the *Shinyo Maru*

PFC William Murle Allred	born in Artesia, Arizona, October 31, 1916
PVT David Weston Balfour	born in Salt Lake City, Utah, November 17, 1920
PVT Jack Wells Bradley	born in Moroni, Utah, January 3, 1919
1LT George Robin (Bobby) Brown	born in Colonia Juarez, Mexico, August 16, 1915
CAPT Robert G. Davey	born in Salt Lake City, Utah, date unknown
PVT Mack King Davis	born in Lehi, Utah, April 2, 1916
PFC Woodrow Lowe Dunkley	born in Franklin, Idaho, June 27, 1918
SGT Nels Hansen	born in Weiser, Idaho, date unknown
2LT Richard Elmer Harris	born in Logan, Utah, May 10, 1912
PFC Theodore Jackson Hippler	born in Bloomfield, New Mexico, February 26, 1918
PFC Ferrin Carl Holjeson	born in Smithfield, Utah, September 21, 1917
PVT Russell Seymore Jensen	born in Centerfield, Utah, October 17, 1917
PFC Ronald Mortensen Landon	born in Kimball, Idaho, April 7, 1921
PVT Harry Orval Miller Jr.	born in Magrath, Alberta, Canada, November 29, 1915
S SGT Ernest Reynolds Parry	born in Provo, Utah, July 3, 1922
PFC Lamar Vincent Polve	born in Kenilworth, Utah, April 5, 1922

PVT Jesse Gordon Smurthwaite	born in Baker, Oregon, November 27, 1918
1LT Gerald Clifton Stillman	born in Salt Lake City, Utah, May 6, 1920
PVT Frederick (Fred) David Thomas	born in St. John, Idaho, December 29, 1918

Because Major Shoss remembered that there were at least twenty-five members of the LDS group, others prisoners who might have taken part in the religious services still need to be identified. An interview with a sibling of one of the prisoners who died revealed at least one other possible LDS POW who was not on board the fateful ship and survived the war, but we have not been able to confirm his identity.[32]

In the list of those who perished when the ship was sunk, it is possible to identify at least eight other men who might have been part of the LDS group. These are men for whom no record exists that they were LDS at the time of their captivity, but who were born in the western United States or likely had a previous acquaintance with LDS culture. Some connection to LDS members is further suggested by the fact that sometime after the war, all of these men had proxy temple ordinances performed on their behalf. However, we have no evidence that any of these men were involved with the LDS "branch" at Davao. In fact, a sister of one of these men, Private First Class Rosenvall, does not think that her brother would have been part of the LDS group.[33]

POWs Who Died in the Sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* Who May Have Met with the LDS "Branch"

PFC Leroy Emil Christensen	born in Ogden, Utah, October 26, 1915 (grandparents were LDS)
PVT Cleve G. Clucas	born in Arco, Idaho, 1918 (grandparents lived in Rexburg, Idaho)
PFC Harold Dietzgen Dalton	born in Salt Lake City, Utah, August 28, 1921 (mother was LDS)
1LT Paul William Deason	born in Salt Lake City, Utah, November 2, 1918
PFC Lawrence L. Lamb	born in Salt Lake City, Utah, November 8, 1912
2LT James Emil Mackey	born in Belt, Montana, April 26, 1917 (mother joined the Church in 1958)
PFC Clay Lenno Rosenvall	born in Gunnison, Utah, July 26, 1920 (parents were LDS)
PFC Lawrence Edward West	born in Bingham Canyon, Utah, July 21, 1919

In the miserable conditions of the prison camp, it is possible that some of those on this list joined the LDS group because they sought companionship among those whose beliefs and culture stirred memories of home. The

number of known LDS members and these possible associates is approximately the size of the LDS group remembered by Major Shoss. There were likely other LDS POWs who met with the Davao group, such as Captain Robert Davey, Sergeant Nels Hansen, and Private First Class Lloyd Parry, but who did not sail to their death aboard the *Shinyo Maru*. Only 750 prisoners of several thousand at Davao left the camp to board the *Shinyo Maru*.

The LDS POWs had different stories related to their meeting at the Davao Camp. Brown and others were taken prisoner on Luzon and later transported to Mindanao. At least eleven of the LDS POWs (Bradley, Davis, Dunkley, Holjeson, Jensen, Landon, Miller, Lloyd Parry, Smurthwaite, Thomas), and four of those who may have been part of the LDS group (Christensen, Clucas, Rosenvall, West) were spared the horrors of the Bataan Death March and became prisoners on Mindanao. These men, part of the Fifth Airbase Group, were shipped out of Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City on October 20, 1941, arriving by train in San Francisco on October 23. After spending a few days at Fort McDowell on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay, they were loaded onto the USS *Hugh L. Scott* on October 27, 1941, and headed out to sea. At this point, the men of the Fifth Airbase Group still did not know where they were going. After about four days at sea, the secret orders were opened and they learned that their destination was the Philippines.[34]

After a brief stay in Hawaii, the men continued on across the Pacific and arrived in Manila on November 20, 1941, Thanksgiving Day. However, they did not stay long in Manila. On November 29, most of the squadron left Manila on the MS *Legaspi* and traveled to Mindanao, where they arrived at Bugo, Misamis Oriental, on December 1, 1941. They were joined there by the 440th and 701st Ordnance Companies of the 19th Bombardment Group that included at least one additional LDS soldier (Hippler). Because the area was used by Del Monte to grow pineapples, the airfield built at this location on Mindanao was called Del Monte field. General Douglas MacArthur was a brief visitor to the field on his way to Australia before the surrender.[35]

On December 20, 1941, the Japanese landed forces at Davao, south of Del Monte, and on the December 21 the field suffered its first bombing raid. Two men were killed. The Japanese progressively tightened their grip on the area, and by the next spring Del Monte was abandoned and the remaining troops moved south into Maramag Forest. By May, the end was inevitable, and on May 10, 1942, the Allied troops on Mindanao surrendered to the Japanese. Those soldiers from Del Monte who had been hiding in Maramag Forest were told to surrender at Camp Casising outside of Malabalay, which

had been a training camp for the Philippine Constabulary. Within a week, there were approximately 1,100 American POWs in the camp.

Compared to other POW camps in the Philippines, Camp Casising was an improvement. Survivor Hayes Bolitho said of Camp Casising:

> This was an easygoing camp so to speak and was by no means a maximum-security compound. Getting through the fence was not that difficult. It so happened that two of the Filipino prisoners had been caught sneaking into the camp early one morning. Their wives evidently lived close by and these two men would sneak out, spend most of the night with them, and sneak back in towards morning in time for roll call. They were summarily tried by the Japanese and sentenced to death. The accused men had to dig their own graves and the holes for the execution posts to be set in. In the late afternoon we were marched down to the execution site. The Filipino men were already lashed to the posts alongside their respective graves. The firing squad commander gave the order and the first volley was fired into the men causing them to slouch down. Immediately a strong voice from [the] Filipino compound, which was also forced to watch, shouted, "You are in the American Army—die like Americans. Attn-Hut." With that they jerked their heads up in an attempt to come to attention, just as the second volley hit them. There was no more movement. They were cut loose, rolled into the graves and covered with dirt. . . . The Japanese had made a point; any POW trying to leave the camp, if caught the penalty would be death. The atmosphere in the camp was more subdued after the execution.[36]

Toward the middle of October 1942, Camp Casising was closed and the men were trucked back to Bugo. They were then transported by ship to Davao, arriving there on October 20, 1942. According to Bolitho:

> At high noon we disembarked and found ourselves faced with new guards. They were occupation troops composed of Japanese and Formosans, quite young and mean. They lined us up four abreast and we began to walk through the hot streets of Davao and on up the road to Davao Penal Colony, 20 miles or so in the hot sun.[37]

These men settled into their new quarters and were joined on November 14, 1942, by about a thousand POWs from Camp Cabanatuan. It is probable that this group included most of the rest of the LDS POWs.

At one point, ten American POWs escaped from the compound.[38] The other soldiers in their barracks were put into a disciplinary compound and meetings were banned throughout the entire camp. This undoubtedly affected the unofficial LDS branch and may have prevented them from meeting for some time. Eventually, the men who had been separated for discipline rejoined the rest of the group. Bolitho described life in the prison camp:

> We were soon assigned to the rice detail to again plant the seedlings. At noon we received a healthy helping of rice, fish and two radishes. Things were looking up—then in the late afternoon the rains came. It was not a downpour but a steady cold rain with a slight cool breeze. Our only covering was a G-string and a woven hat and we were chilled almost immediately. We headed back to the assembly area in time to board the 5:00 p.m. train but it was late. Mechanical problems had developed and it was dark when the train arrived. Surprisingly there was no grumbling—we didn't have anything special to look forward to back at the compound. We were hungry but we had become used to that. The problem was with the guards who were trying to watch everyone. They were edgy and mean.
>
> The return to the compound was a gradual uphill grade and because of the rain the wheels on the locomotive were slipping. Progress was practically nil so the guards began kicking us off the car to push. They were shouting and swearing at us, but we could have cared less. Walking barefooted on slippery wood railroad ties or alongside in the weeds and brush was miserable. We were no longer riding but certainly not pushing very much, so we weren't getting home very fast. It really became comical—the guards were screaming their heads off but beyond that they didn't know what to do. Over an hour passed and we were still at least two miles from camp. Someone started singing "God Bless America." It soon caught on and became louder and louder. It completely drowned out the screaming guards. The train was moving slowly, but with practically no help from us. By the time we were probably a mile from camp, men in their barracks could hear singing. Bear in mind that life in a prison camp was anything but boisterous. There were no radios, no record players, etc. so the sound of our "choir" was coming through loud and clear. As we finally approached the entrance gate all able-bodied men were standing and cheering wildly. The guards were horrified as we filed into the cheering group. Word quickly spread to gather near the assembly area. Completely hidden and surrounded by men, two of [the] fellows were holding a rolled up GI blanket. As it suddenly unfolded there sewn to the blanket was our American Flag. There was dead silence, tears streamed down everyone['s] cheeks and then in choked voices we softly sang "GOD BLESS AMERICA."[39]

In his excellent account of many of the same events, Carl Nordin reported that he had repeated contacts with several of the LDS group. Evidently, he was particularly friendly with Mack Davis and Ernest Parry.[40]

On March 2, 1944, 650 of the men at Davao were sent to a new camp near the village of Lasang, a few miles from their Davao camp. These were supposedly the healthiest men at Davao and were to be laborers building a new Japanese airfield.[41] All of these men would eventually be sent on the fateful *Shinyo Maru* sailing. It seems possible that regular religious services continued at the Lasang Camp. This would be the final prison camp for many of the LDS group and their fellow POWs.

Under only slightly better conditions than those at the other prison camps, the POWs worked on construction and repair of an airfield for the Japanese. Some details of the trials and tribulations of the prisoners at the Lasang Camp have been recorded by M. M. Sneddon in his book *Zero Ward*, published in 2000. During the next six months, all of the POWs worked on the Japanese airfield. Then on August 17, 1944, things changed. That night, the airfield was attacked by an American bombing mission. The prisoners were delighted. Without any information on the conduct of the war for more than two years, they now sensed that the tide of war had changed and help was getting close. For the next two days the Japanese, without any explanation, gave the POWs a "holiday" with no work on what probably was a damaged or destroyed airfield. Although the men were anxious to see the damage to the airfield, they accepted the holiday without complaint. However, on the third day following the American attack, all 650 of the prisoners were told to pick up whatever belongings they had; they were roped together and marched a short distance to the Tabunco pier on the Davao Gulf. What the POWs didn't know was that the return of the Americans to the Philippines was imminent and the Japanese didn't want their prisoners to be part of the coming struggle. Activity on the Tabunco pier was the beginning of what one survivor called the "Journey to Oblivion."[42]

The Final Trip

The 650 POWs who had walked a few miles to the dock were joined by 100 POWs who had worked on another airfield south of Davao. These 100 men were transported by truck and, together with the Lansang group, composed the full complement of 750 men who would face the next three weeks living in the most miserable conditions humans could endure. While the final plans for the 750 men remain ambiguous, it is known that they were to be shipped first to Cebu and then to Manila. Most likely, Japan was the ultimate objective of transfer, but this destination was never realized. The 750 POWs included many of the LDS group who had been holding weekly services in the prison camps. On August 20, the men were loaded aboard an old freighter, the 3,801-ton Japanese Army Transport #86, *Tateishi Maru*, and sailed first for Zamboanga on the southwest tip of Mindanao on the Moro Gulf.[43]

> They put us down in the hull of the ship. Packed like sardines down there. They had the guards fix bayonets, and they'd send a bunch down the hull, and they would lunge at us—packing until they got as many as they could get down in there. Then—they pulled the stairway up. They put timbers across the hull and rolled some canvas tarp over top of that. They just left one little hole open on the one end of it, one corner of it, where a guard

> sat down [and] was looking down there laughing at us. It was like a furnace down there, no water no facilities at all, nothing—Guards used a rope to lower a five-gallon can of water and peeling of rotten tropical vegetables to the starving prisoners. Fights for the food and water followed.—They'd send a tin can down there for waste, and I believe it was the same can they put the food and water in. There was a lot of crying and praying going on. I thought it wouldn't have been but a matter of days before we would all be dead.[44]

While the Japanese claimed that the POWs were treated in the same way that they treated their own soldiers when being transported, this argument is difficult to believe. The POWs were "disgraced individuals, miserable objects," and even if given the same one square yard per person in the deep hold of the ship as they gave their own troops, the food, sanitary conditions, and inhumane treatment differed from what their troops received.[45]

Confined to the bowels of the ship and wallowing in human filth, the POWs arrived on August 24 in Zamboanga, four days after leaving Davao. The POWs remained for ten days in Zamboanga Harbor, sweltering in the hot, filthy hold of the ship. Evidently, on two occasions the men were permitted on deck to run through a hose sprinkling ocean water, the first semi-bath in years for some of the men. Although the men didn't know it, they were waiting for a transfer to their final ship for their "journey to oblivion."[46]

The disaster ship was the *Shinyo Maru*. The old freighter was having its cargo of rice and cement unloaded in Zamboanga. Once that was completed, the American POWs on the *Tateishi Maru* were transferred. The *Shinyo Maru* was built as the *Clan Mackay* in Glasgow in 1894. It was 312 feet long and 40.2 feet wide, displacing 2,600 tons. It had been captured by the Japanese at Shanghai in 1941.[47] Of interest is the fact that in Japanese naval history, there have been several ships named *Shinyo Maru,* including the ship that carried some of the Mormon missionaries home when the Japanese Mission was closed in 1924.[48] However, no other of the *Shinyo Maru* ships earned the title "Death Ship."

The 750 POWs were transferred to the *Shinyo Maru* on September 4, and three days later, at approximately 2:00 a.m., the ship sailed for Cebu.[49] Conditions below deck were even worse than those aboard the *Tateishi Maru,* but when the ship finally left the harbor, the POWs must have thought the worst was over. However, fourteen hours later on September 7, it was sunk by the USS *Paddle* off Sindangan Point in the Sulu Sea (figure 4). Only 83 of the 750 POWs survived the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru*, and 82 of them lived to tell their stories, although the details of some of the stories differ.

The few survivors of the sinking recorded incredible accounts. According to stories told to Ruby Brown, the mother of Lieutenant Bobby Brown,

her son and the company doctor, identity unknown, were able to make it to the ship's deck following the torpedo attack. At that time, the Japanese soldiers were turning their machine guns on the POWs who had escaped the sinking ship and were in the water. Using as much Japanese as he had learned during his two and one half years' imprisonment, Bobby pleaded with the Japanese not to shoot the swimming POWs. Ignoring Brown, the soldiers continued shooting at the swimming POWs. Finally, Brown and his companion jumped in the water to help some of the wounded POWs and yelled to the swimmers to dive under the water before they were shot. The POWs, including Brown, dived, but Bobby did not surface following the firing. We assume that the unnamed companion survived and related this story to Brown's mother, but we are unable to identify the person.[50]

Equally dramatic stories have been told by other survivors. First Lieutenant John Morrett recalled hearing the Japanese guards racing across the deck above him just as an explosion tore open the cargo area that was his home for five days. "Bloody men, men with broken backs and ribs and jaws, littered the cargo area. Morrett . . . clambered up some luggage being stored in the hold and, through pure adrenaline, threw open the hatch." Seconds later he threw himself off the ship and grabbed chunks of wood to keep himself afloat. Japanese soldiers who survived the initial shock fired at the few escaping prisoners before the ship sank, as did other Japanese from the decks of sister ships in the convoy.[51]

Second Lieutenant Edward Treski remembered that following the torpedo strikes the Japanese guards unleashed a slaughter. "A guard just stuck his rifle down into the hole there and emptied it, and the bullets were whizzing all over the place. After emptying his rifle, he took a hand grenade and threw it down there. And I was sitting there where I could see it coming. It exploded. Knocked me unconscious." When he recovered, Treski was sitting in the water of the sinking ship with bodies and parts of bodies all around him. He escaped through the opening in the ship where the torpedo hit. Once out of the ship, he encountered Japanese guards in life rafts, who—with swords, bayonets, and guns—were attacking any POW survivors they could find in the water. Treski swam away from the Japanese and started toward the shore of Mindanao which he guessed was about three miles away. At that time he had lost 90 pounds from his prewar weight of 185 and was so weak that he joined another survivor clinging to a piece of wood, and together they paddled toward land. However, the *Eiyo Maru,* one of the convoy's damaged ships, which the crew of the USS *Paddle* thought had been sunk, managed to become grounded near shore, and the Japanese soldiers on board were shooting at the POW survivors who were trying to reach shore. Treski remembers swimming and praying, swimming and

praying, until he was ashore. He was later helped by Filipino guerrillas who had been fighting the Japanese.[52]

Sergeant Onnie Clem of the U.S. Marines remembered hand grenades being tossed into the throng of prisoners below deck and machine-gun fire at about the time the torpedoes hit the ship. He was briefly knocked out, but when he recovered he spotted the now-open hatch where a number of his fellow prisoners were trying to free themselves. He joined them and emerged with two others at the same time. Machine-gun fire from a Japanese guard sitting on the sinking ship hit him in his jaw, but somehow the Japanese shooter was killed, probably by friendly fire, and Clem was able to drop safely into the ocean. He avoided the Japanese lifeboats that were collecting Japanese survivors and shooting Americans. Also, a Japanese patrol plane strafed him, but he was able to swim to shore, where he was rescued by a Filipino. Clem had gone without anything to drink for days, so the Filipino rescuer climbed a coconut tree for coconuts to provide a drink.[53]

Second Lieutenant Murray Sneddon was knocked unconscious by the force of the torpedo. When he recovered, water was rushing in the opening and giant packing cases stored in the hold collapsed on many prisoners, killing them. He saw the open hatch, and, grabbing a pipe to steady himself against the rushing water, he waited for the sinking ship to fill with enough water to lift him to where he could pull himself through the hatch onto the deck. His ultimate survival, like that of the other eighty-three survivors, is an unbelievable story of endurance, courage, and luck.[54]

One of the eighty-three survivors died of punctured lungs a few days after reaching the safety of the shore. The other eighty-two were brought together by the friendly Filipino guerrillas who lived in and around the village of Liloy, and together they survived with the Filipinos for several weeks. Eventually, contact was made with Americans working with the Filipino guerrillas in the Sindangan area of Mindanao, and the existence and condition of the rescued POWs was radioed to U.S. forces. One of the largest U.S. submarines, the USS *Narwhal*, under the command of J. C. Titus, was sent to rescue the survivors, and eighty-one were taken on board.[55] Five days later the submarine unloaded the survivors in New Guinea. Using PT boats and then small passenger planes, the group traveled to Brisbane, Australia. After six days in the hospital, those who were able sailed for the United States. The survivors reached San Francisco fourteen days later, arriving on a cold day in November, approximately two months following the sinking of their Hell Ship.[56]

But the story of the LDS Davao "branch" ended before this spectacular rescue and homecoming. As far as is known, none of those thought to be members of the LDS group on the *Shinyo Maru* survived the sinking. Along

with more than 600 who had been fellow prisoners for more than two and half years, the LDS POWs from the Davao camp met their fate in the warm tropical waters of the Sulu Sea on September 7, 1944.

The End

Major Morris Shoss, the survivor of the September sinking who provided much of the information concerning the LDS group's activities, was not aware of any members of the LDS "branch" who had survived the sinking. During his December 1944 interview, he commented that he did not see Lieutenant Brown after boarding the *Shinyo Maru*, but he assumed that Brown and other LDS POWs were on the ship, among the 750 packed in the ship's two holds. At the time of the interview in December 1944, the identity of the 668 POWs who died was still uncertain because the Japanese had not released the names of those aboard the sunken ship. It was not until February 14, 1945, that the official list of POWs on board the *Shinyo Maru* was received by the U.S. War Department from the Japanese. In a letter from the War Department to the Brown family, dated February 19, Lieutenant Brown, the leader of the LDS group, was officially declared dead. Similar letters were eventually sent to the families of all 688 men who perished in the sinking.

Because the Japanese reports were not always considered accurate, families of the LDS POWs held out hope that their sons were not on board the fateful ship. In the case of Lieutenant Brown, shortly after receiving the notice of his death, the Brown family received a post card from their son. The card, delivered by the Red Cross, had no date on it, but a greeting on the bottom of the card wished the family a Merry Christmas. Brown's mother's birthday was in November, and because Bobby always remembered her birthday and there was no mention of this on the card, only the Christmas greeting, the Browns supposed that it had been sent after November. If it had been sent after November 1944, then Lieutenant Brown could not have died on the *Shinyo Maru,* which sunk in September of that year. This interpretation was reinforced by the Red Cross, who told the Browns that it was unlikely that the card had taken more than a year to arrive and had been sent before the previous Christmas in 1943. Desperate to know if their son was still alive, the Browns contacted a number of men who had served in the Philippines, including Sergeant Calvin Graef, who had escaped from the Davao camp and who had known Brown. He told the family that he may have seen Brown in the prison camp in October 1944, giving the Browns renewed hope. When questioned further, Graef conceded that he could have been wrong about the date, but the Browns kept hoping, even though his fate along with others on

the *Shinyo Maru* was later confirmed.[57] Similar situations to that of the Brown family probably occurred with many of the families whose sons lost their lives in the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru*. The War Department's letter to the Browns was the final official news of their son. Posthumously, Lieutenant Brown was awarded the Bronze Star as well as the Purple Heart for an early injury.[58]

Theological Considerations

The faith of the families of the LDS POWs who died in the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* was severely tested. All 668 POWs who died had endured two and a half years of beatings, starvation, and brutal imprisonment. To survive all that they had been subjected to, and then to die because of an American torpedo, was an almost unbelievable tragedy. Certainly, viewed coldly, this is not the stuff of strong testimony building. Some parents expressed dismay that almost all of the members of the LDS Davao "branch" had died in the sinking. Writing before receiving official confirmation of the deaths, one parent commented, "If all of the boys were on this ship . . . it just does not seem possible that all of them would be killed, does it?"[59] "I believe that I have as much faith in my religion as any Latter Day Saint, but I will never be able to understand this. Certainly some of those boys were entitled to the blessings that are promised to those who obey the laws and keep the commandments of God. . . . I hope and pray that some of those boys are alive, otherwise I will have a hard time reconciling the fact they were all killed with what my faith has taught me to believe."[60]

A slightly different reaction was shown by Lieutenant Brown's mother, who wrote, "You know very well that there have been thousands of prayers offered for Bobby, both by his family and friends, and I feel that he was worthy of the protection of the Priesthood, but it must be that his work was finished . . . at least that is the most comforting thought to me and we had to have comfort from somewhere."[61]

While the siblings of the LDS POWs whom we interviewed reported that their parents probably never adjusted completely to the tragedy, the parents of Bobby Brown had a particularly difficult time. Brown's father was a U.S. Deputy Marshall who, among other duties, handled Japanese suspected of being spies. His feelings of hatred toward them were strong, and it took considerable time and effort to eliminate the hatred and bitterness that he held for the Japanese. However, he was finally able to embrace a spirit of forgiveness with the help of a wise stake president and other Church members.[62]

The loss of lives with the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* is a classic example of the larger problem of maintaining faith in an omnipotent, loving God in

the face of wickedness, tragedy, and evil that his children experience daily. The problem appears even larger in scope when the tragedy affects those who appear to be most deserving of help. This concept has been addressed by theologians, philosophers, and people of all religious as well as nonreligious beliefs. Perhaps the most understandable explanation for Latter-day Saints is related to our unique concept of the plan of salvation, the eternal existence of intelligence, and the sacred agency of humans. John S. Welch summarized it succinctly, "God cannot both grant us our free agency and control our lives. God cannot, in our current world, both feed the lion and protect the lamb."[63] David L. Paulsen explained Joseph Smith's understanding of the dilemma when he wrote: "Joseph's way out of the conceptual incoherency generated by the traditional theological premises is not to go in. His revelations circumvent the theoretical problem of evil by denying the trouble-making postulate of absolute creation and, consequently, the classical definition of divine omnipotence. Contrary to classical Christian thought, Joseph explicitly affirmed that there are entities and structures which are coeternal with God himself."[64]

And for the father whose faith depended on the survival of at least a few of the LDS POWs, we can only answer that while we are not aware of any who survived the sinking, there were members of the Davao "branch" who were not on board but who did survive the war to tell their stories. Nonetheless, those who died in the sinking constituted most members of the Davao "branch," a tragic ending for this WWII group of LDS POWs.

Epilogue

Survivors of the *Shinyo Maru* disaster held several reunions. They produced a plaque acknowledging, first, the crew of the USS *Paddle* for "liberating" them; second, the Filipinos in the Liloy-Sindangan area of Mindanao who rescued them; third, the American Brigadier General John H. McGee, who, working with the Filipino guerillas, arranged for their ultimate rescue; and, finally, the crew of the USS *Narwhal* for their final transportation to safety. At one of their reunions, the survivors were honored by Governor George W. Bush.[65] Some of those who did not survive have had proxy temple work done on their behalf.[66]

G. F. Michno succinctly summarized in his book *Death on the Hellships* what most Americans probably feel:

> After all is said and done, we can only hope that the surviving former POWs of the Japanese will be able to live out their remaining years somewhat content with the knowledge that they fought for a just cause. . . . They took everything the enemy could throw at them. They survived the war

> and they survived hell. We hope we will never have to face again what they went through, but should the need arise, we hope we will be blessed with another such generation of men.[67]

David L. Clark (dlclark15@gmail.com) is Emeritus Professor of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He has published extensively in his specialties of micropaleontology and Arctic Ocean geology. Also he has published on the history of the LDS Church in Wisconsin, LDS scientists, and early Church pioneer Joseph Bates Noble.

Bart J. Kowallis (bkowallis@byu.edu) is Professor of Geoscience and Associate Dean of the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences at Brigham Young University. He has published on Utah geologic themes as well as his specialty, Jurassic chronostratigraphy. He has also published in *BYU Studies* on geologic activities in the New World at the death of Christ ("In the Thirty and Fourth Year: A Geologist's View of the Great Destruction in 3 Nephi," *BYU Studies* 37, no. 3).

Correspondence between Sadie O. Clark and Ruby Brown, mother of Lieutenant George Robin (Bobby) Brown, plus letters from parents of other LDS soldiers who lost their lives on the *Shinyo Maru,* are in our possession and motivated this study. We have had help in assembling additional material from Robin Brown, nephew of Bobby Brown; James Polve, brother of Lamar Polve; and Gerry Rosenvall Larson, sister of Clay Rosenvall. As recorded in this paper, Bobby Brown, Lamar Polve, and Clay Rosenvall all died at the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru*. Karen Clark, Regina Brown, and Ken White also assisted in different ways.

1. John. D. Alden, *U.S. Submarine Attacks during World War II: Including Allied Submarine Attacks in the Pacific Theater* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1989), 130, includes both U.S. and Japanese data regarding the sinkings. For a more detailed description of the attack, see the USS *Paddle* logs, "WWII: 1935–1950, WWII Submarine Patrol Reports, USS *Paddle*, August-1944 to September-1944," 7–14, http://www.fold3.com/image/#29069298; Murray M. Sneddon, *Zero Ward: A Survivor's Nightmare* (New York: Writers Club Press, 2000), 97; Gregory F. Michno, *Death on the Hellships: Prisoners at Sea in the Pacific War* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 227–30; and the often cited account by Eugene A. Mazza, "The American Prisoners of War Rescued after the Sinking of the Japanese Transport, *Shinyo Maru*, by the USS *Paddle*, SS 263, on 7 September 1944," www.submarinesailor.com/history/pow/paddlesinksshinyomaru. According to these accounts, the number of ships in the convoy ranged from five to nine. For additional information on the USS *Paddle,* see "USS *PADDLE* (SS–263)," http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_PADDLE_(SS-263). The *Paddle* was honored with eight battle stars for eight war patrols and was decommissioned on January 18, 1957. The submarine was transferred to Brazil and sunk during target practice on June 30, 1968.

2. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 95.

3. The two names *Shinyo* and *Maru* can be translated as follows: *Shinyo* means "divine hawk" and is the immediate name for the ship. Most nonmilitary ships have a second name, *Maru. Maru* is translated as circle, round, or perfect and as a second name for a ship refers, according to one theory, to the hope that it can leave port,

travel, and return safely, thus completing a perfect circle or round of safety. Another theory is that a ship is a floating castle, and *Maru* refers to the defensive "circle" that protects a castle. See "Japanese Ship-naming Conventions," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_ship_naming_conventions.

4. Alden, *U.S. Submarine Attacks,* 130.

5. Alden, *U.S. Submarine Attacks,* 130, 253.

6. Information concerning the LDS POWs is based primarily on an interview with one of the survivors of the sinking, Major Morris L. Shoss, December 1944, in Houston, Texas. Details of the interview were documented in personal correspondence between Sadie O. Clark of Houston and George and Ruby Brown of El Paso, Texas, December 16, 1944, in the authors' possession.

7. Alden, *U.S. Submarine Attacks,* 12–146; see also "Japanese POW Transport Ships That Were Sunk in WWII," http://www.members.iinet.net.au/~vanderkp/Shipstorped.htm.

8. Donald L. Miller, *D-Days in the Pacific* (New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2005), 317; also see "List of Ships Sunk by Submarines with Death Toll Exceeding 300," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wike/List_by_death_toll_of_ships_sunk_by_submarines.

9. Miller, *D-Days in the Pacific,* 317.

10. Clay Blair Jr., *Silent Victory: The U.S. Submarine War against Japan* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 17, 878. This volume summarizes submarine warfare in the Pacific, including tables on top submarines in terms of number of ships sunk, tonnage of ships sunk, and top skippers of Pacific operation submarines. The USS *Paddle* and *Shinyo Maru* encounter is briefly mentioned (p. 737); also see "Monthly Totals of Ships and Tonnage Sunk," Valor at Sea; The U.S. Submarine War in the Pacific 1941–1945, http://www.valoratsea.com/month1.

11. Robert C. Freeman and Dennis A. Wright, *Saints at War: Experiences of Latter-day Saints in World War II* (American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2001), 46.

12. Miller, *D-Days in the Pacific,* 26.

13. Miller, *D-Days in the Pacific,* 25.

14. Miller, *D-Days in the Pacific,* 30.

15. "The ancient Japanese code of Bushido admonished warriors not to survive the 'dishonor of capture' but to fight to the last man." Miller, *D-Days in the Pacific,* 25. "The Japanese code of honor dictated that a soldier is honor-bound to fight to the death and that surrender was never an option—thus, we were not considered as prisoners but slaves to be abused in any way our masters saw fit." Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 23. "Although the Japanese were unprepared for the large number of prisoners in their care, the root of the brutality lay in the Japanese attitude that a soldier should die before surrender. A warrior's surrender meant the forfeiture of all rights to treatment as a human being." "The Bataan Death March, 1942," Eye Witness to History.com, http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/bataandeathmarch.htm.

16. There are a number of published accounts of the Bataan Death March. A few of the best are William E. Dyess, *Bataan Death March: A Survivor's Account* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 184; John D. Lukacs, *Escape from Davao* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 436; Gavan Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese: POWs of World War II in the Pacific* (New York: Quill, William Morrow, 1994), 73–83.

17. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 27.

18. Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese,* 80. Accounts differ as to exactly how many prisoners died on the Bataan Death March. Some estimate it as high as 650. Because those who participated in the march were already malnourished and were suffering from jungle diseases, thousands died after they arrived at the prison camps.

19. Lukacs, *Escape from Davao,* 79.

20. For the first several months at Camp Cabanatuan, food was scarce and dysentery was prevalent. Records kept by the prisoners at the camp indicate that 2,375 Americans were buried from June through November 1942. At this point, conditions seem to have improved somewhat. There were 136 deaths in December 1942, 73 in January 1943, and 10 in each of February and March 1943. On Memorial Day, May 30, 1944, prisoners in the camp prayed for the 2,645 Americans who had been buried there, so only 270 had died in the eighteen months between November 1942 and May 1944. John M. Wright Jr., *Captured on Corregidor: Diary of an American P.O.W. in World War II* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1988), 59. Wright also claims that 1,462 Americans died at Camp O'Donnell before prisoners were transferred to Cabanatuan and that 20,000 Filipinos died during that same time frame at O'Donnell. He had been captured on Corregidor and did not arrive at Camp Cabanatuan until June 30, 1943. He explains that the prisoners from Corregidor were in much better condition than those who had been subjected to the Bataan Death March.

21. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 33. Other accounts give different numbers. For instance, Col. John E. Olson, whose responsibility it was to prepare the strength report that Gen. Edward King had to give to the Japanese camp commander every day, reports that a total of 1,565 Americans died at Camp O'Donnell. His records also indicate that on May 5, 1842, there were 8,636 Americans being held at O'Donnell. John E. Olson, *O'Donnell: Andersonville of the Pacific* (n.p.: published by the author, 1985), excerpts available at http://www.us-japandialogueonpows.org/Olson.htm.

22. William B. Breuer, *The Great Raid on Cabanatuan: Rescuing the Doomed Ghosts of Bataan and Corregidor* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994), 56; see also Irving Alexander, "POW Camp O'Donnell and Camp Cabanatuan," http://www.lindavdahl.com/Front%20Pages/O%27Donnell%20&%20Cabanatuan.htm.

23. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 38.

24. Lukacs, *Escape from Davao,* 95.

25. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 49.

26. The rescue of the remaining prisoners at the Cabanatuan Camp has been described by a number of writers including Breuer, *The Great Raid on Cabanatuan*, and Hampton Sides, *Ghost Soldiers: The Epic Account of World War II's Greatest Rescue Mission* (New York: Anchor Books, 2002).

27. Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese,* 136. Daws reports that there were several religious "subtribes" that functioned in Cabanatuan: "Catholics and Protestants, and Mormons were particularly strong."

28. The interview of Major Shoss by Sadie O. Clark was initiated by Ruby Brown, mother of Lt. Bobby Brown. Ruby was anxious to learn whatever she could concerning her son a few months before she was notified that the "official" record was that Lt. Brown had died with the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru*. The Shoss interviews took place in November and early in December 1944, shortly after Shoss

returned to the U.S. following his rescue. Some details of the interview were published in *Church News*, January 20, 1945.

29. In June 1944, Hansen, along with approximately 1,000 others, were shipped from Mindanao to Japan. They eventually were imprisoned at the Nagoya Branch #5 Yokkaichi camp. Among other things, some of the POWs worked in a plant manufacturing sulfuric acid. Along with other survivors, Hansen was rescued in September 1945, just after the end of the war. Later, Hansen returned to Japan as a missionary. He "lost the use of his legs as a prisoner and, though rehabilitated before his mission, still struggled to walk." *Church News*, published by *Deseret News*, May 6, 2006, http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/48907/A-special-mission-softens-wars-blow.html. Hansen died in 1981 and is buried in Weiser, Idaho. For additional details of the imprisonment of those who were sent to Japan, see Raymond C. Heimbuch, *I'm One of the Lucky Ones: I Came Home Alive* (Crete, Nebraska: Dageforde Publishing, 2003), 82–87, 146.

30. Personal communication, February 21, 2011, with Robin Brown, a nephew of Lt. Bobby Brown, who was told the story by his grandmother, Bobby Brown's mother. The same story was told to Elder Spencer Kimball, who was the Browns' stake president before Kimball's call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The story is included in Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1969), 373–77. Additional details concerning the imprisonment of Bobby Brown are in papers in the possession of Robin Brown.

31. Carl S. Nordin, *We Were Next to Nothing: An American POW's Account of Japanese Prison Camps and Deliverance in World War II* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 1997), 79.

32. In an interview I conducted on June 22, 2011, with Clyde Polve, brother of Lamar Polve, one of the LDS POWs, Clyde expressed a recollection that a survivor of the sinking, a man he thought was named Peterson and was from Utah, gave him information concerning his brother. We have not been able to identify any survivor of the sinking who was named Peterson, but there were three men named Peterson or Petersen who were in the Davao camp with Lamar Polve. Most likely it was one of these who contacted the Polves. Clyde Polve was told that his brother was an excellent mechanic and the Japanese used him as a driver in the transportation of Japanese troops to various places in Mindanao. However, Lamar was a serious American POW, and on at least one occasion, Lamar Polve arranged a rendezvous with Filipino resistance fighters who eliminated the Japanese troops in the transport. Evidently, Polve grew a heavy beard, and with his "freedom" as a truck driver he was able to obtain and hide in the beard small contraband items, which he smuggled into camp for the benefit of his fellow POWs.

33. Personal communication with Gerry Rosenvall Larson, Clay Rosenvall's sister, June 23, 2011.

34. The story of the Fifth Airbase Group that left Salt Lake City for the Philippines has been told by a number of survivors of that group. One of the best accounts comes from Hayes Bolitho, "The Hayes Bolitho Japanese Story, Parts 1–6," *The Hawkins (Texas) Holly Lake Gazette*, a biweekly online newspaper, September 26, 2009–February 13, 2010), http://www.hlrgazette.com. Other excellent accounts include Nordin, *We Were Next to Nothing*, and Heimbuch, *I'm One of the Lucky Ones*.

35. Nordin, *We Were Next to Nothing*, 44.

36. Bolitho, "The Hayes Bolitho Japanese Story," part 3, October 24, 2009.

37. Bolitho, "The Hayes Bolitho Japanese Story," part 3, October 24, 2009.

38. Lukacs, *Escape from Davao,* ch. 13–17.

39. Bolitho, "The Hayes Bolitho Japanese Story," part 3, October 24, 2009.

40. According to Nordin, in *We Were Next to Nothing*, Mack Davis became an effective liaison with Japanese guards who secured items wanted by the POWs by trading the few valuables still in their possession. Davis also visited Nordin when he was hospitalized in March 1944 (112, 125). Ernest Parry also helped Nordin with documenting the imprisonment (64–65).

41. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 53.

42. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* ch. 9.

43. Of the various references that document the initial departure of the POWs from southern Mindanao, both Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 75–80, and Gregory F. Michno, *Death on the Hellships: Prisoners at Sea in the Pacific War* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2001), 226, indicate that the name of their transport ship is unknown. However, according to "Hellship Information and Photographs," http://www.west-point.org/family/japanese-pow/photos.htm, the ship is identified as the *Tateishi Maru.*

44. Edward L. Pitts, "To Hell and Back," *World Magazine* 24, no 10 (May 23, 2009), www.worldmag.com/articles/15395.

45. Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese,* 283–85.

46. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 71. An intriguing account is found in Lee A. Gladwin, "American POWs on Japanese Ships Take a Voyage into Hell," *Prologue Magazine* 35, no. 4 (winter 2003), http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2003/winter/hell-ships-1.html.

47. "Hellship Information and Photographs," http://www.west-point.org/family/japanese-pow/photos.htm.

48. R. Lanier Britsch, "The Closing of the Early Japan Mission," *BYU Studies* 15, no 2 (1975): 189.

49. Gladwin, "American POWs on Japanese Ships."

50. Personal communication with Robin Brown, a nephew of Lt. Bobby Brown, who was told the story by his grandmother, Bobby Brown's mother.

51. Lindsay Tozer, "POW Survivors Come Together," *(Jacksonville) Florida Times–Union,* September 7, 2000, http://www.jacksonville.com/tu-online/stories/090700/met_3997987.html.

52. Pitts, "To Hell and Back," 23.

53. Eugene A. Mazza, "The American Prisoners of War Rescued after the Sinking of the Japanese Transport, Shinyo Maru, by the USS Paddle, SS263, on 7 September 1944," http://www.submarinesailor.com/history. This is a brief summary of the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* and the subsequent rescue effort. The article also indicates that the survivors were honored by Governor George W. Bush of Texas in 1998.

54. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 99–107. Additional personal accounts of the sinking and final rescue of the survivors have been published in Michno, *Death on the Hellships,* 226–32. A few minor details in Michno's volume concerning the sinking and rescue of the *Shinyo Maru* differ from those reported here.

55. Brief accounts of the rescue by the USS *Narwhal* are found in Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 122; Daws, *Prisoners of the Japanese,* 296; and Michno, *Death on the Hellships,* 231. However, the best record is "USS *Narwhal* (SS–167)" in Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Narwhal_%28SS-167%29. While there were eighty-two survivors at the time of the arrival of the USS *Narwhal* for their final rescue, evidently only eighty-one were taken by the submarine because one man decided to remain on Mindanao with the Filipino fighters. The USS *Narwhal* had a distinguished record in WWII. It was one of five docked submarines when Pearl Harbor was attacked and was credited with shooting down two Japanese planes. It received fifteen battle stars for its service on fifteen war patrols and was decommissioned in April 1945.

56. Sneddon, *Zero Ward,* 140.

57. Personal correspondence between Sadie O. Clark and Ruby Brown, February 26, 1945, in the possession of the authors.

58. Freeman and Wright, *Saints at War,* 274.

59. Personal correspondence between the father of one of those who died in the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* and Sadie O. Clark, January 26, 1945, in possession of the authors.

60. Personal correspondence between the father of one of those who died in the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* and Sadie O. Clark, March 10, 1945, in possession of the authors.

61. Personal correspondence between Ruby Brown and Sadie O. Clark, March 31, 1945, in possession of the authors.

62. Kimball, *Miracle of Forgiveness*, 377.

63. John. S. Welch, "Why Bad Things Happen at All," *BYU Studies* 42, no. 2 (2003): 82.

64. David L. Paulsen, "Joseph Smith and the Problem of Evil," *BYU Studies* 39, no. 1 (2000): 58.

65. Pitts, "To Hell and Back," 23.

66. In addition to verified proxy work done for the known LDS members as well as the eight from the western U.S. who may have been part of the LDS POW "branch," it is of some interest that another 58 of the 668 who were lost in the sinking of the *Shinyo Maru* have had proxy temple ordinances performed for them since 1944.

67. Michno, *Death on the Hellships,* 307.

BOOK REVIEW PANEL

Terryl L. Givens. *When Souls Had Wings: Pre-mortal Existence in Western Thought.*

New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

On October 13, 2011, BYU Studies sponsored a program reviewing Terryl Givens's important Oxford book on the idea of the premortal existence of souls in various lines of Western philosophy and religion. Because this first volume of its kind covers literature from so many different civilizations, the editors of BYU Studies *saw no way to do this book justice without involving a panel of reviewers from several disciplines. After portions of Robert Fuller's forthcoming review in* Church History *were read, the program proceeded with reviews, responses, and open discussion. The following is based on that program.*

Review by James L. Siebach—Philo, Augustine, and Classical Varieties

When Souls Had Wings is an engaging, expansive survey of the idea of the premortal soul in the Western intellectual tradition. The book seeks to unfold the idea's "explanatory power" (5) in resolving certain problems in theology, in philosophy, and in human experience. In this review, I will rummage, by no means exhaustively, through the book's introduction and chapters 2 through 5, asking questions about the author's historiographic assumptions and about the potency of the explanatory power of preexistence.

In his introduction, Givens defines premortality very broadly. Versions of premortality range from a soul as "a fully self-aware moral agent" to merely "raw material" used in God's creation, yet Givens sets out to "encompass the entire range and variety of beliefs that trace the origins of individual identity to some kind of nonphysical state before birth" (4). Likewise, Givens attributes to the concept of the preexistent soul extraordinary philosophical and psychological power. "Such belief structures, like all enduring myths

and paradigms,[1] persist because of their explanatory power." And, like all successful paradigms, the concept of preexistence can "rationalize the incongruities and traumas of existence" or simply explain "why things are the way they are." It is clear that Givens endorses the view that the concept is enduring because it is "more effective than others in the interpretation of human experience." The concept of a preexistent soul has been used throughout history to explain other difficulties, such as "the human yearning for transcendence and the sublime," "the frequent sensation of alienation," "the moral sense common to humanity," "the human ability to recognize universals," "unevenly distributed pain and suffering," "the uncannily instantaneous bonds between friends and between lovers," and "the necessary precondition for a will that is genuinely free and independent" (5–6).

As if resolving so many existential crises were not sufficient—can the concept knit a sweater?—the explanatory power of the idea of preexistence also resolves certain theological conundra. Givens explains, for example, that traditional Christian explanations of the soul's origin at conception or birth are fraught with metaphysical and moral problems. "If the soul originates with the body . . . then why does it not perish with the body?" And, "If God creates the soul afresh in every human, how can it be imperfect, as a soul of fallen nature necessarily is? If it is created pure and innocent, how and when does it come to acquire the burden of Adam's sin and guilt? And what justice can there be in immediately consigning a purely created spirit to the incubus of guilt, sin, and fallenness?" (2).

True, traditional Catholic or Protestant theological explorations of the soul's origin are fraught with moral and metaphysical difficulties, yet the concept of a preexistence introduces other perplexities: Isn't it still a problem that preexistent spirits from the presence of God enter physical bodies, yet humans are still so inclined to sin and fallenness? If a preexistent soul enters a body, why should parents, with power to create a body only, assume responsibility for anything other than bodily development? Why does a human person require so long a time to mature, the preexistent soul seeming so passive during early physical and cognitive development? Of course, clarifying such difficult questions—along with a persuasive articulation of how a preexistent soul influences the moral deliberation of the person—would make any book a bestseller.

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1. Ordinarily, a single concept or belief cannot function as a paradigm. A paradigm is, most properly, a model of reality, and so implies a rich, structured network of beliefs. Givens doubtless intends, in calling the concept of preexistent souls a paradigm, to include the larger worldview logically associated with the concept, such as with Neoplatonic Christianity.

Chapter 2 is a useful review of early Greek views regarding the soul's always-existent, ungenerated, indestructible, and individuated "spirit entity." Givens's reading of Plato is subtle and sufficiently discriminating to note, for example, that Plato's own commitments to the various arguments he put forward for premortality are tenuous. He sometimes presented the idea in the context of a myth, and the doctrine was often merely instrumental in philosophical exercises. In Plato's *Meno, Phaedo, Republic,* and *Timaeus,* belief in the soul's preexistence is useful in order to motivate human beings to live by the assumption that philosophical knowledge is attainable and that the philosophical life is the best of all possible lives.

It is debatable whether Plato continued to hold the same views about the soul's immortality. (Aristotle never found the idea persuasive.) The *Parmenides* is a dialogue in which Plato subjects his own metaphysics to relentless criticism. After this dialogue, historically, Plato's allusions to the soul's immortality and preexistence are sparse. To say that Plato found his earlier views regarding immortality bereft of explanatory power is not supported by the evidence, though one may still reasonably wonder why such fundamental views did not find more discussion in his later works. Nevertheless, Plato's early views have had an extraordinary historical influence on the idea of premortality, as chapters 3 through 5 unfold.

In chapter 3, Givens rightly emphasizes the extraordinary influence of Philo, an observant Jew living in Hellenized Alexandria in the first century BC. Philo's importance arises from his considered synthesis of philosophical thought—specifically Platonism, Stoicism, Neopythagoreanism, and Aristotelianism—and the revelation of God inscribed in the Hebrew Bible. Philo's synthesis is complicated by incompatible assumptions in two very different cultures: ancient Semitic culture and that of classical Greek philosophy.

Philo was conscious of contemporary Greek philosophers' relentless criticism of the divine interaction with humanity as depicted in the Hebrew Bible: Does God really become enraged at Israelite disobedience? Is God really anthropomorphic, walking and talking in Eden? Would God really command the Israelites to destroy entire nations? Philo's explanations of such representations introduce an important exegetical method: allegorical interpretation of scripture. Philo recognized that scripture has four different categories of sense—literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical—and the deeper significations of scripture resolve problematic literal representations of divine action. First and foremost an observant Jew,[2] Philo also

2. Philo scholars would not accept Givens's assertion (40) that Philo was equally devoted to the revelation of the Lord represented in the Hebrew Bible and to the philosophical tradition represented in Hellenistic culture.

found ways to circumcise Athenian thought: he reasoned that Plato must have learned his metaphysics from Moses, else Platonism would not be so thoroughly discoverable at the allegorical level of interpretation. Although Philo "profoundly affected the development—and transmission—of the idea of pre-existence" (40), it is no longer clear what preexistence refers to in this section of the book—due partly to Philo's Hebrew and Greek synthesis.

The discussion of Philo is not without other disruptions, particularly concerning a contentious problem in ancient thought: Was the world created and generated, or did it always exist ungenerated? And if generated, was it generated from nothing or from eternally preexistent matter? At this point, readers may get confused because the question is no longer about the preexistence of the human soul but the preexistent status of the world and its elements. Philo gives deference to the Genesis narrative that implies a kind of temporal sequence to creation, as well as to the classical metaphysical "necessity" of God's eternally constant creative activity. Even Philo seems to recognize the apparent contradiction and regards his view as imperfect: the human mind, so removed from such a transcendent divine nature and activity, cannot understand or put into language such creative phenomena. Considering such complications, a longer summary and more judicious citations would have helped the reader contextualize the book's discussion on Philo and creation.[3]

Chapter 3 also quotes many passages from the apocrypha, pseudepigrapha, and early Christian writers. While it would go far afield to explore the extent to which second temple Judaism, Rabbinical Judaism, and Essene writings were influenced by Greek thought in their discussions of preexistence and immortality, this chapter's review of New Testament writers suggests that the influence is extensive. Chapter 4's discussion on Neoplatonism and the Church Fathers continues this theme, showing that the influence of Greek thought is not without criticism by those writing in the first few centuries after the death of Christ. Chapter 4 also suggests ways that

3. An expert on Philo, David Winston charitably seeks to maximize the cogency of Philo's argument, reasoning that Philo believed God created the world entirely outside of time, meaning the world, though created, was eternally so. Perhaps one of Givens's least judicious readings arises when he characterizes Winston's effort as "intellectual calisthenics" (334) to explain away preexistence. Far from denying preexistence, Winston seeks to prove that Philo undeniably asserts the preexistence of matter. Winston clearly has no agenda but to attempt to reconcile contradictory passages in Philo's own convoluted accounts. For more detail on the creation, David Winston has a useful introduction, as Givens notes on page 334, in *Philo of Alexandria: The Contemplative Life, the Giants, and Selections*, trans. David Winston, The Classics of Western Spirituality (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1981).

Christianity in turn transformed an understanding of Plato, Aristotle, and the Greek tradition.[4]

Chapter 5 surveys the crucial role of Saint Augustine in the waning theological status of the idea of preexistence. Givens rightly notes (112–14) that Augustine, as a younger Platonist, believed that the soul (*anima*) preexisted its incarnation in an individuated person. When precisely Augustine gave up this idea is disputed, and a few scholars argue that Augustine never surrendered the belief. As late as *The Confessions*, Augustine meditates on the soul and concludes that its creation is still an open question and certainly a mystery. In such works as *On Free Choice of the Will* and *On Christian Doctrine,* Augustine defines the highest of all wisdom as the aspiration to know God and one's own soul; knowing one's own self is on a par, almost, with knowing God. When Augustine was made Bishop in Hippo, he felt less liberty to speculate on philosophical matters and a greater obligation to defend the Magisterium. Thus, Augustine devoted considerable time to refutations of Pelagianism, and those refutations undermined the idea of premortality.

Givens's account of Augustine's rethinking is generally reliable. However, one might defend Augustine by noting that if explanatory power—solving theological and metaphysical problems—recommends the concept of a preexistent soul, by the same criterion the idea may lose persuasive force, for it can *create* theological and metaphysical problems as well. Augustine thought, with good reason, that premortality was nonbiblical and contradicted the doctrine of original sin, which doctrine was interpreted by the church in Augustine's day to have been taught by Paul. He also felt that an eternally existent soul impinged upon God's divine omnipotence and absolute sovereignty, because such a soul could by moral effort, theoretically, secure its own salvation and thus not be indebted to Christ's saving work; thus premortality diminishes, theologically, the scope of Christ's Atonement. Givens seems to suggest that Augustine's revisions are less persuasive because they are the result of problem solving. Yet Augustine ultimately decided the idea of premortality introduced more problems than it solved (119). Thoughtful reflection on theological problems should not discredit a theological discovery, as Givens's own tradition demostrates—with Joseph Smith, theological discord precipitated revelatory discovery.

As to the work in general, *When Souls Had Wings* will be well received by those who share Givens's metaphysical commitments. If readers already agree that the concept of preexistence has explanatory power, the book will

4. In accomplishing this, however, Givens should not rely, except when compelled, on translations over a century old. The work of Edwin Hatch and Adolph V. Harnack, being late nineteenth century, ought to be considered outdated.

fortify their commitments. Less sympathetic readers will require more suasive arguments to convince them. Likewise, an audience less familiar with the primary texts will be satisfied with fewer supporting citations and more general interpretations. When the audience is more familiar with the original sources, however, the interpretive burden upon the author increases proportionately.

For example, when Givens briefly discusses Homer's *Iliad*, it should be remembered that this epic is a weaving of different and older oral narratives by different authors. Within the *Illiad* are at least two words (*thumos* and *psyche*) translatable by the word *soul.* The concepts signified by these two words are not synonymous, and even the same word for soul may have different shades of meaning in the text. Thus, a scholarly discussion of the concept in the *Iliad* must carefully specify which word and meaning is under consideration so that readers may adjust their understanding accordingly. Givens forthrightly avers doing the philological work necessary to satisfy strict evidentiary demands.[5]

Professor Givens rightly notes that the concept of soul is "possessed of a long, complex history of meanings." He follows by clarifying that he "will use the terms soul and spirit interchangeably unless the original or present context requires differentiation" (328). Given the shifting ideas among the writers surveyed, contextual differentiation is required more often. For example, Augustine's concept of soul changes over time and differs significantly from Philo's concept of soul. Eliding these fundamental distinctions can potentially distort the understanding of their views. A broad definition of soul may also impede the author's purpose to establish the explanatory power of premortality. Can the concept have great explanatory power while tolerating the possible metaphysical varieties of preexistent souls? For example, it follows that the concept of a preexistent soul with moral intelligence has more explanatory power than a preexistent soul that does not. Least potent of the concepts would be a preexistent soul composed of some sort of inert metaphysical stuff out of which God forms souls before injecting them into bodies.

Another illustration of philological importance appears in the matter of translating ancient Hebrew words into Greek. In Psalm 16:10, the Hebrew word *nephesh* seems to refer to the entirety of a person's life. "Thou wilt not leave my life (*nephesh*) in Sheol." In the Septuagint, *nephesh* is

5. One notes for example, a number of fundamental grammatical errors in the discussions of Greek thought. The plural of *eidos*, meaning "form" or "essence," is *eidê*, not *eidoi* (72, 104). The concept of "becoming like God" should read as *homoiosis theōi*, not *homoiosis theoi* (37).

translated into the Greek word for soul, *psyche*. By the second century BC, those Greeks influenced by Platonism assumed that the *psyche* survives death. Thus the phrase "thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol" acquires a different theological dimension—that an immortal soul will be rescued—that is absent in the Hebrew.[6]

The Sadducees justified their denial of the resurrection, even into the first century AD, by noting that the Penteteuch nowhere teaches resurrection or even immortality. No text in the Hebrew Bible clearly asserts the immortality of the soul or its continued life after the death until much later in Daniel 12. These concepts often were read back into earlier books of the Hebrew Bible, particulary after Alexander the Great conquered the Near East and began the Hellenization of Hebrew culture.[7] Givens himself notes the indispensability of care in translation to avoid progressive excision—removing objectionable ideas by mistranslation (15). But, as Givens knows, one must also avoid progressive insertion—importing by mistranslation, because one finds them compelling, ideas clearly not in the original passage. Of course, Givens's survey intentionally includes influential readers who import the premortality of the soul into texts as well as those who would excise the concept. However, it is not always obvious that Givens observes the distinction between the sense of the original text and later interpreters.

Finally, I would have been delighted with some theological and philosophical explications of premortality's explanatory power with respect to the problems of innocent suffering and the many difficulties of human existence. To illustrate, in Numbers 31, the Israelites are commanded by God to slay every Midianite man and woman. "Keep alive for yourselves," says the Lord, only those women who "have not known a man by lying with him" (verse 18). The text taken as literally true presents the reader with an apparently insurmountable series of perplexities. In searching for a solution, one might affirm some version of the concept of a preexistent soul. Now suppose that preexistent soul has moral autonomy and foresight and agrees to enter into mortal life as a Midianite. Does a former agreement to suffer genocide effectively explain God's justice or assuage those who see genocide as evil? Ought a preexistent soul to make such an agreement? How can the concept of a preexistence console the surviving Midianite virgins?

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6. For many more examples of this phenomenon, see the helpful surveys of N. T. Wright, in *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), chapter 4, and *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), chapter 6, upon which this discussion relies.

7. N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God.* Of course, to say that a text does not exemplify an idea, is not to say that the author did not believe the idea. The claim made here is textual only.

Doesn't the concept of premortality intensify the guilt of perpetrators? Can the explanatory power of a prexistence paradigm resolve such problems?

Historically, Christian theologians and philosophers have not seen how to resolve these issues and have at the same time put forward compelling arguments for doubting the preexistence of souls. In faulting Augustine for following these doubts, does Givens think there are dispositive rebuttals? Can the presence of self-sustaining eternal beings that are coequal with God (at least in respect to necessary, noncontingent existence) be convincingly explained? Can Givens calm the doubts of suspicious Christian theologians? Asking for such an argument is a substantial demand, but Givens whets the readers' appetite by asserting the concept's explanatory power.

When Souls Had Wings is something of an impressionistic work, the story of an idea through millennia. Insofar as is it does not intend to demonstrate systematically the explanatory power of an idea, it should not be considered a formal philosophical exploration using the precision of specialized scholarly analysis. Nevertheless, readers sympathetic to the broad cluster of ideas regarding preexistence will find the reading illuminating and engaging.

Terryl L. Givens's Response to James L. Siebach

I appreciate the questions Professor Siebach has raised, and I appreciate his belief that I have "whet[ted] the readers' appetite." I think the principal issue he raises has to do with audience and the writer's purposes. Mormon scholars often negotiate a narrow channel between Scylla and Charybdis. On the one hand is the danger of injecting Mormon presuppositions into an academic discussion. On the other is the contrary danger, that in shying away from Scylla we careen on the rocks of Charybdis. In our zeal to protect against provincial assumptions and cultural insularity, we see them where they do not exist. We think a Mormon's use of Jeremiah or Job will surely be apologetic, or, as in the case of Siebach, we suspect that a book on preexistence written by a Mormon is going to be an argument for preexistence.

Siebach says that my book "will be well received by those persons who share [my] metaphysical commitments." I would respond that my metaphysical commitments are beside the point. Not a single non-Mormon reviewer of the text has presumed to know what those metaphysical commitments are or felt they were in any way relevant to the book's thesis. My point is not that *I* believe the preexistence resolves theological dilemmas, but that it was employed by myriad theologians because *they* felt it did.

Let's take the soul's origin as a case in point. In the early Christian church and to this day, three theological positions explain the soul's origin.

Creationism is the Catholic view that God creates the soul at the moment of conception, quickening, or birth. Traducianism is the Lutheran position that parents create the soul at the moment of procreation. Mormons alone persist in believing the soul has an eternal, indeterminate origin before birth. Siebach has taken me as criticizing both non-Mormon positions as "fraught with metaphysical and moral problems." Perhaps they are, but I did not intend (or need) to use Mormon theology to show it. This book is not an apologetics of preexistence any more than Arthur Lovejoy's *Great Chain of Being* is an apologetics of the great chain of being. Lovejoy's metaphysical commitments were irrelevant to his appreciation for how powerful that paradigm was for two thousand years of cultural history. It would be inappropriate to challenge him on how his concept of the chain of being would explain the English Civil War, because he was tracing the history of the way that idea was employed, how it changed through time, and how and why it self-destructed in the eighteenth century.

In my case, I am tracing a wonderfully rich and contentious history of debate and controversy over the soul's origin. I quote Tertullian, an early defender of Traducianism, as saying it has the merit of explaining the conveyance of original sin logically and simply. If original sin resided in Adam, and original sin is a spiritual condition, then Adam could have reasonably passed it on to his posterity the same way he passed on his dimple or his brown hair, "assuming that he literally fathered the spirits as well as the bodies of his children." That is Tertullian's defense of its merits, not mine.

By the same token, I haven't any idea if my spirit is innately capable of creating a baby spirit, but I do trace how the Cambridge Platonists denied that capacity. At the same time, they believed that God would be complicit in rape if he effectively sanctioned conception by creating a spirit to make such an act fruitful. I am not sure if I find their arguments persuasive or not, but I do know their frequent appearance in the literature of the Cambridge Platonists explains one reason why the Cambridge Platonists rejected both Traducianism and Creationism, turning to the only alternative they saw, which was preexistence.

One should not assume that because I am LDS, I must be writing with the intention of mustering arguments on behalf of an LDS theology. If that were indeed the case, I would have failed entirely. For in the entire history of the idea of a premortal soul, virtually no version matches Joseph Smith's conception or shows evidence of having influenced his own.

I will conclude with a response to one more comment by Professor Siebach. He says, "I would have been delighted with some theological and philosophical explications of premortality's explanatory power with respect to the problems of innocent suffering and the many difficulties of human

existence." Let me give just one of many examples where I have done that. In Book X of the *Republic*, Plato tells the story of Er, a kind of guide to spirits about to enter mortality. In this account, spirits are given a choice of the lives they will lead: royal or impoverished, crippled or sound, beautiful or ugly. However, they are admonished to choose carefully, being reminded that the purpose of life is the acquisition of virtue. They should consider "a life worse if it leads the soul to become more unjust, a better if it leads the soul to become more just." As a consequence, Plato emphasizes, "The responsibility [for the conditions of life entered into] lies with the one who makes the choice; the god has none" (32).

For those who accept such mythology, there is tremendous power to address exactly what Professor Siebach calls for: an example of the idea's explanatory power, from a philosophical and theological point of view, not only with respect to the problem of innocent suffering, but with respect to the "many difficulties of human existence." For Plato and those under his influence, this conception of preexistence was powerful theodicy.

Review by Dana M. Pike—Ancient Near Eastern Traditions

Oxford University Press recently published *When Souls Had Wings: Premortal Existence in Western Thought*, by Terryl L. Givens, professor of literature and religion at the University of Richmond in Virginia. Givens wrote this book for an educated but general audience, focusing on the intellectual history of premortal existence as it survives in documents over the past 2,400 years of Western thought.

Givens claims in his introduction that the idea of preexistence "appears to have more than one point of origin, and influence and inheritance are in any case notoriously difficult to establish with certainty where the history of ideas is concerned" (4). Chapter 1, titled "Ancient Near Eastern Traditions," is thus exploratory in nature. Givens sees a number of elements in ancient Near Eastern texts, including the Hebrew Bible, which, when taken together, eventually mix into a sort of theological stew, contributing to the development of the concept that humans were once premortal spirits. Givens rightly indicates, however, that there is no passage in any ancient Near Eastern text, including the Hebrew Bible, that explicitly communicates the premortal existence of all humans.

Accordingly, this chapter presents a variety of ancient Near Eastern texts that provide potential leads and "intimations" (9) for the development of the idea of preexistent human spirits. Cited passages in Mesopotamian

texts and in the Hebrew Bible relate to four broad areas: Mesopotamian creation myths, divine assemblies, divine election, and what Givens terms "populous heavens" (16), the belief that a host of beings populated that realm. Givens is wise to focus on texts dealing with these four topics, for any hints of preexistence found in the ancient Near Eastern texts will most likely occur in relation to these areas.

However, chapter 1 would have been even stronger, I believe, if it had included a brief statement of methodology explaining why some passages are included and others not. Along with Mesopotamian and Israelite texts, Givens might also have cited Egyptian or Hittite texts in his discussion, which are also part of the ancient Near Eastern literary tradition.

Questions about methodology also arise when Givens uses the writings of Origen to help explain the meaning of a verse in Deuteronomy (15). Origen, a Christian author who wrote in the first half of the third century AD, accepted the premortal existence of human souls; but using Origen's views to support the inclusion of Deuteronomy 32:8 in a chapter on ancient Near Eastern traditions may be construed as a form of eisegesis. Origen's views would more naturally be included in a chapter on early Christian thought. Conversely, Givens makes no mention in his first chapter of Proverbs 8, in which Wisdom personified claims to have been created by God before the creation of the earth, but he does include this passage in his third chapter when discussing later apocryphal texts in the biblical tradition.

Givens, whose expertise is in texts of more recent centuries, is generally dependent upon the work of other scholars in preparing the early chapters dealing with ancient traditions. This is not to imply that he is largely misguided in his choice of texts or in his assessment of them; he is not. Dealing with textual material from so many centuries and cultures would be a daunting challenge for any author. The fact that Givens does so well in this endeavor is a tribute to his extensive research and his intellectual abilities.

The exploratory nature of Chapter 1 will likely elicit some questions and quibbles among scholars about the passages he includes as evidence of early foreshadowings of the concept of preexistence. What, after all, constitutes these "intimations that the soul is traceable to a pre-mortal existence?" (9). To illustrate the challenge of such an undertaking, I will evaluate four texts that Givens provides as intimations of preexistence.

First, in his discussion on divine election, Givens highlights the prologue to Hammurabi's law collection, dated to about 1755 BC, which relates how "in the distant past" the god Marduk was granted powers, and Hammurabi was chosen before he was born to be the great king of Babylon. Givens rightly observes that the apparent purpose of this passage is "to endow Hammurabi with authority and prestige, . . . not to propound an anthropology of

the human soul" (13–14). This is the only Mesopotamian text of which I am aware claiming the divine election of a human before the person's birth. This passage does qualify as a hint or foreshadowing of preexistence.

Second, Givens cites Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations" (14). This verse unambiguously claims that Yahweh "knew" Jeremiah even before his conception, although what that implies is not clear in the Old Testament itself. Functionally similar to the Hammurabi text, this passage is most often interpreted as part of a report designed to imbue Jeremiah with greater authority. No one of whom I am aware, other than Mormons, currently understands this verse as support for the personal preexistence of Jeremiah. Most people dismiss the words in Jeremiah 1:5 as figurative. However, I believe this passage is an obvious choice for inclusion in Givens's quest for early intimations of the idea of preexistence.

Third, Givens discusses Psalm 139:15: "My frame [*'otsem*/"bone, skeleton"] was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth." This passage, "while not as clear in its language, similarly suggests a pre-mortal origin to humans." Givens correctly observes that the Hebrew word *'eretz,* "earth," does, in conjunction with Akkadian and Ugaritic cognates, sometimes designate the "underworld" in addition to commonly referring to the earth itself (see Ex. 15:12; Jonah 2:6). "Psalm 139 therefore evinces the belief that the human soul was created in a different, under- or otherworldly sphere to which it will someday return" (14). I fail to see a demonstrable reference in Psalm 139 to the "otherworldly" existence of spirit or soul, nor a reference to a soul returning to that world.[8] Modern commentators generally understand the whole pericope of Psalm 139:13–18 as a metaphoric comparison between a mother's womb, specifically mentioned in verse 13, and the depths of the earth (with the powers of creation and judgment ascribed to Yahweh). Job 1:21 is often cited as a conceptual parallel to Psalm 139:13–18: "[Job] said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there'" (NRSV). True, a few commentators have theorized that earlier mythological remnants lurk behind the present form of these poetic lines in Psalms;[9] but with no solid textual

8. Surprisingly, Givens does not quote Robert Moore, who claimed that Psalm 139:15 suggests the concept of preexistence. Moore notes that some authors have used Psalm 139:15 to support preexistence in the underworld, but Moore provides no citation to document his claim. Robert Moore, "Pre-existence," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* ed. James Hastings, 12 vols. (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1924), 10:238.

9. See, for example, Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60–150, A Commentary,* trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 516–17.

support, such arguments remain speculative. Givens's purposes might have been better served by quoting the next verse as an intimation of preexistence: "Your [Yahweh's] eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed" (Psalm 139:16, NRSV).

Fourth, Givens refers to the portion of the Atrahasis Epic that relates the creation of the first human. This epic is attested from about 1700 BC, the late Old Babylonian period. In it, the god Enki commanded that a mixture be made of clay and the "flesh and blood" of a lesser god to be slain for the purpose of creating humans. Enki further instructed: "Let there be a spirit [*etemmu*] from the god's flesh. Let it proclaim living [man] as its sign. So that this be not forgotten, let there be a spirit [*etemmu*]" (10). In his discussion of this text, Givens cites Tzvi Abusch, who states that the divine killing of the lesser god provided the "soul that imbues the individual [human] with life and consciousness" (11). I hold a different view than Givens and Abusch (and Jean Bottéro, whom Givens also cites). Contrary to the claim of Abusch, the slain god's spirit is never mixed into the substances used to create the first human. It is only said to continue as a "sign" of how people first came about. Certainly, the Atrahasis account indicates that human creation involved divine as well as earthly "stuff,"[10] but I do not see any indication that provides, as Givens claims, "a window into the emergence of the idea of the human soul, its genesis in the heavens, and its ambiguous status in the universe" (9–10).

These four examples illustrate the challenge of determining which texts do, or do not, contain "intimations" of the idea of human preexistence. Whatever one thinks of any particular text, Givens's book is stronger because this chapter on ancient Near Eastern traditions is included in it. His point is valid that there were ancient Semitic conceptions that foreshadow the idea of preexistence, that this idea was not just a Greek phenomenon that impacted Judeo-Christian texts. I also appreciate that Givens ventured beyond the Hebrew Bible by referencing Mesopotamian and Ugaritic texts. I commend him for finding in ancient Near Eastern texts some stirrings of premortal existence, rather than just beginning with later Greek and Jewish claims that date from the last few centuries BC and in which the notion of preexistence is clearly stated, albeit in a variety of forms.

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10. Although different in details, divine and earthly "stuff" are likewise combined in the creation of the first human according to Genesis 2:7: "Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (NRSV).

It will be helpful for readers to think about how and why and where, from a historical point of view, the idea of preexistence got started. Chapter 1 serves as an important preface to Givens's grand overview of a fascinating topic. I recommend this book.

Terryl L. Givens's Response to Dana M. Pike

I appreciate Dana M. Pike's review and want to respond both generally and specifically. The general problem Pike raises concerning methodology relates to the hazards of cross-disciplinary studies. The contemporary impetus for cross-disciplinary research is evidence of a far-reaching recognition that we as a body of scholars have overspecialized ourselves to death, to the detriment of broader perspectives. The discipline of intellectual history often strives to see the grand sweep of an idea across time and culture. Intellectual history of this kind relies upon a certain amount of generosity and forbearance from specialists, as well as their willingness to accept intellectual interlopers in good faith and without fear of colonization.

For this reason, I am only too willing to recognize the limitations of my own expertise. In a work that encompasses traditions from Mesopotamia, Ugarit, Palestine, Greece, Italy, Ancient Rome, England, Germany, Poland, Russia, France, Spain, and America, it should be clear that I often relied on the scholarship of others in my work. The question such cross-disciplinary endeavors invite is twofold: Are there any advantages to be gained by such ambitious attempts, and is the academic community supportive enough of these grand forays to make them feasible?

Claude Lévi-Strauss was an anthropologist, but when he brought his own disciplinary training to the study of mythic literature, he detected patterns and ways of constructing meaning that played a key role in the development of a new critical school of theory called structuralism, which had tremendous impact on a discipline not his own. Sometimes, a fresh perspective can prompt useful discoveries and connections. Professor Pike once told me there were no preexistent motifs in Babylonian literature. Later, I came upon the Atrahasis creation narrative. Judging by his review, Pike now acknowledges this passage as at least relevent to the discussion; perhaps my trespass into his discipline has borne some fruit. True, Pike has expressed doubts before about the significance of the Atrahasis narrative, wondering if the passage conveys belief or just inventive creative effort. However, I trace the employment of preexistence as a motif that does important work of many kinds: aesthetic, cultural, psychological, theological—and creative. Whether Mesopotamian references to a preexistent soul were taken literally by the populace is immaterial to my case.

I think it is also important that, when evaluating work from a "generalist" disciplinary orientation, scholars don't always presume that a specific and tightly confined "specialist" methodology is useful for all purposes. Pike wonders about my methodology when I cite Origen, a third-century Christian, in my chapter on ancient Near Eastern traditions. I would find this methodologically problematic only if my interest were confined to some kind of historically circumscribed philological examination of a biblical text. Tracing certain textual motifs and interpretations through four millennia of readings, misreadings, borrowings, and adaptations is the essence of intellectual history. The accuracy (and century) of Origen's reading may be germane to Pike's field of Old Testament studies, but it is not as relevant to the kind of intellectual history *Wings* sets out to be.

Professor Pike also disputes my reading of particular biblical passages. For example, he challenges my interpretation of Psalm 139:15 as having reference to some kind of preexistent creation. While my reading may not be the dominant interpretation among experts in the book of Psalms, yet Pike acknowledges that a few authors do agree with me, so I am therefore not unique in making the connection. I also welcome his constructive addition of Psalm 139:16 to the discussion.

Professor Pike points out that only Mormons use Jeremiah 1:5 to suggest personal preexistence. Certainly, being Mormon doesn't make a reading right, but it shouldn't make it suspect, either. And to clarify, *When Souls Had Wings* is not so concerned with Mormon interpretations. On page 14 of the book, I point out that "this passage could merely suggest foreknowledge," and I repeat subsequently that most biblical allusions to preexistence are plausibly read as referring to God's foreknowledge, not personal preexistence. Certainly there is a danger that a Mormon would read Mormon theological presuppositions into the text, and Pike is wise to point this possibility out to *BYU Studies* readers. Interestingly, non-Mormon reviewers thus far have not noted any such presuppositions.

Surely there are areas where my readings could have benefitted more from Pike's important work in the Old Testament. Although I was not successful in my attempt to connect with Pike, I was able to have six other scholars with expertise in the literature and languages of Mesopotamia review this chapter, in addition to other scholars in Hebrew studies. Of course, no one of them is responsible for what errors may remain, but all made significant contributions in reviewing and contributing to the chapter. Though Pike and others may disagree with the readings of Bottéro and Abusch, there are trained scholars today who support me in citing these readings.

In conclusion, my general plea is that we as writers and scholars, in order to contribute to a common enterprise of greater understanding of the

past, look for opportunities to make our various disciplines mutually supportive, realizing that we are often asking different kinds of questions and using different methodologies. I hope that this exchange has moved in the direction of facilitating that kind of greater understanding.

Review by Jesse D. Hurlbut—
Middle Ages

In his latest book, Terryl L. Givens undertakes the fascinating project of surveying historical attitudes and teachings regarding the premortal existence of the soul. Limiting his review to the Western tradition, he also demonstrates the inextricable associations of this fairly narrow topic to such broad concepts as the nature of human existence, the purpose of life, and even the attributes of God. The author admirably maintains academic distance and objectivity throughout the book. Nevertheless, LDS readers especially may find their interest piqued (and their objectivity challenged) by numerous indications that what they sometimes hold as proprietary to LDS belief has recurred in the writings of philosophers and theologians throughout the ages.

Givens's treatment of the Middle Ages is almost completely limited to the theological positions established in the fourth and fifth centuries, and which then stood essentially unrefuted for most of the next thousand years. Givens's thorough investigation into the Platonic and Neoplatonic antecedents prepares the way for him to present the decisive role of Augustine in establishing orthodoxy on the question of premortality. The book points out, however, that even Augustine approached this question with only the greatest hesitation. After reciting the possible views on the origin of the soul, the Bishop of Hippo commented: "It would be rash to affirm any of these. For the Catholic commentators on Scripture have not solved or shed light on this obscure and perplexing question" (109). Augustine's early writings seemed to favor the idea of a premortal soul, and he may have been content to leave the question unanswered for lack of sufficient insight, had it not been for the controversial ideas of the British monk Pelagius.

Givens presents a clear account of how the greater question of whether salvation comes by grace or by free will forced Augustine to take a position against the preexistent soul. The extreme view of Pelagius that free will alone sufficed to lead mankind to salvation undermined the role of Christ and his grace. "It is not that Pelagius promoted the particular unorthodoxy of preexistence," writes Givens, "but that . . . an emphasis on human preexistence comports quite comfortably with a celebration of humanity's primal

purity, inherited innocence, and divine potential" (175). In order to refute these heretical teachings, Augustine argued to the opposite extreme in favor of grace and against premortality. Givens carefully teases the subtle interwoven arguments out of the historical record, thus revealing how an uncertain concept becomes doctrine as the unintended casualty of a struggle for orthodoxy in weightier matters.

In the chapter entitled "Middle Ages to the Renaissance," Givens seems content to accept the Augustinian position as the dominant theological stance. He briefly cites a number of authors who contribute nuanced arguments to the discussion in later centuries, including Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Hildegard von Bingen, and Julian of Norwich. The strength of this chapter, however, is in the discussion of the Jewish teachings from the (premedieval) Mishnah and Midrashim, and the ensuing Kabbalistic texts appearing in the thirteenth century. Givens then skips to the seventeenth-century writings of the Lutheran mystic Jacob Boehme.

Even though Givens discusses the role of angels in the Creation as well as in relation to the soul in both the Christian and the Jewish traditions (notably, in Pseudo-Dionysius and in the *Zohar*), he foregoes the opportunity to discuss the war in heaven and the fall of Lucifer and the rebel angels—a theme that frequently appeared in late-medieval art and drama. Even though some treatment of the subject appears in his later discussion of Milton, this chapter would have been the appropriate place to establish the roots for this tradition. Because of the breadth and extent of his project, Givens is certainly entitled to editorial omissions, but since he frequently opens the door to nontheological teachings and even folk traditions, leaving out the deep-rooted cultural artifacts of Saint Michael slaying the dragon and even the dramatic allegorical debates of Justice and Mercy that precede the Creation seems more like a lacuna.[11]

Notwithstanding the limitations of his treatment of the later Middle Ages and the early Reformation period, Givens has produced an impressive volume. The detailed examination of classical and early Christian writings

11. In addition to the countless depictions in painting and sculpture of Saint Michael slaying a dragon or a devil, there are a number of representations of the fall of the rebel angels. See, for example, folio 64v in the Très riches heures du duc de Berry. Several late medieval passion plays represented the history of the world from Creation to Apocalypse in a series of plays that took several days to perform. Frequently, a short prologue featured a debate between the allegorical characters of Justice, Mercy, Truth, Peace, and Wisdom. God the Father supervises the debate, and a plan that meets the needs of each party is devised in which Christ is sent as a savior for mankind. Arnould Gréban, *Mystère de la Passion,* ed. Gaston Paris and Gaston Raynaud (Paris: F. Vieweg, 1878), 3–8.

on the origins of the soul provides the necessary foundation for understanding how Augustine and others finally took the dogmatic stance that they did. This understanding constitutes the springboard for comprehending later intellectual and theological developments.

Terryl L. Givens's Response to Jesse D. Hurlbut

A continuing challenge in writing this book was the selection of what was relevant. First in priority were actual discussions or illustrations of a *human* premortal existence. Second were treatments that directly influenced or grounded subsequent developments. Hurlbut and others may wonder why I include the epic describing the war in heaven by John Milton but not those accounts and traditions from the Middle Ages. After all, Milton himself does not represent the war in heaven as directly involving human participants. Unlike other versions of a heaven populated by numerous and at times hard-to-situate beings, Milton's treatment is generally straightforward: God, Satan, and angels fill the pre-earth realms. I include him, nonetheless, because a number of imitators, some self-acknowledged, modify his representations to include human participants. Some believed that Milton's poetry was good but his history was not, insofar as there actually *was* human involvement in the events he described.

Abel Evans, for example, published *Pre-Existence: A Poem, in Imitation of Milton.* In it, Evans retells the story of the war in heaven but turns the rebellious angels into premortal humans. As I describe in my book (178–80), "in imitation" turns out to be more a matter of "in correction." The poem depicts a scene in heaven after the defeat of the rebellious angels and their dispatch to hell. Not all dissenters, in this version, meet the fate of the eternally damned. For upon returning to heaven, the victorious hosts find there a suppliant throng of repentant rebels, "troops less stubborn, less involv'd / In crime and ruin." These plead so persuasively for clemency that God softens. Eventually, he decrees, they may again "emerge to light," but only after a penance described in terms so harsh as to certainly deter any future rebellion. They shall expiate their crimes upon "a dusty ball" even then taking shape—the earth.

But like the ancient writer Basilides, Evans believes that God in his mercy caused us to forget our origin as rebellious angels. (Remember that Dante said the greatest torment was to remember bliss in the midst of present pain.) So God imposes by way of preparation for their descent, long draughts of the river Lethe. The resultant human condition is one that dulls the shock of such a cataclysmic decline in fortune but at the same time torments the soul, Tantalus-like, with reason and memory alike that feed but cannot satisfy an inarticulate longing for home. The beauty of Evans's re-creation of premortality is that it

explains the pain of the human condition, God's justice in our suffering, and our inarticulate sense of loss as we make our way on earth.

A century after Milton, a would-be historian of Masonry takes a similar position. Laurence Dermott describes a project he undertook to go beyond conventional histories of his brotherhood, in order "to trace Masonry not only to Adam in his sylvan Lodge in Paradise, but to give some Account of the Craft even before the Creation." In other words, he is going to trace the origins of Masonry to its foundations in premortality. He completed a volume in which he describes what he refers to euphemistically as the heavenly "transactions of the first Grand Lodge, particularly the excluding of the unruly Members." That story, he notes, was already recounted by Milton in *Paradise Lost.*[12]

It seems to me that if I had chosen to extend Milton's genealogy backward, by discussing medieval versions of the war in heaven, that would have only been relevant to my topic at two generations removed. As for Professor Hurlbut's comments on Augustine and subsequent medieval orthodoxy, I think he is exactly right. Augustine is the hinge on which the entire history of preexistence turns. That preexistence persisted so pervasively as a motif, in spite of the eventual opposition by Christianity's most influential theologian, is proof of the idea's immense and almost irresistible appeal.

Review by David B. Paxman—
Romantics, Transcendentalists, and the Modern Age

Terryl L. Givens is one of the most respected Latter-day Saint scholars and one of the most successful in publishing with a top-tier press, having published previously *The Viper on the Hearth* (1997), *By the Hand of Mormon* (2003), and *People of Paradox* (2007) with Oxford University Press. In *When Souls Had Wings,* he addresses a doctrine that often separates LDS from orthodox Christian belief. Before reading, I had not grasped how heretical most Christian traditions now consider the proposition that we had individual existence as spirits before this life. Givens succeeds in demonstrating that (1) the concept of premortal existence has a history as old as Western thought, both in theology and secular philosophy; (2) early Christian theologians had declared the concept heretical; and (3) in spite of its supposed heretical status, the concept has persisted into the twentieth (and

12. Laurence Dermott, *Ahiman Rezon, or A Help to a Brother; Shewing the Excellency of Secrecy and the First Cause or Motive of the Institution of Free-Masonry* (London: Laurence Dermott, 1756), v.

twenty-first) century because it offers such powerful advantages in explaining the nature of the human soul and God's justice in placing people in such radically different, and sometimes miserable, circumstances on earth.

In advancing these lines of thought, Givens is aware of the paradox of origins: by tracing back to early expressions of preexistence and to the ultimate origins of the human soul, many more foundational questions arise, such as what came before human premortality and what caused the whole preexistent state of affairs to come about in the first place? Still, the book effectively challenges the rest of Christianity, if not philosophers, to rethink their opposition to this important account of our state of being before mortality.

My review will concentrate on the chapters that cover from the late seventeenth century through the twentieth century. Here, as in earlier sections, the book demonstrates that religious thinkers opposed preexistence not because they had scriptural evidence against it, but because it did not square with creedal orthodoxy concerning God's eternality and omnipotence: "To posit preexistent souls can be construed as an affront to God alone as eternal and a diminishing of the distance that separates Creator from created" (285). Proponents insisted that the injustices of mortal life were standing challenges to belief in God's justice, a problem that was resolved if we lived in a prior state in which we made choices that affected conditions in our earthly existence, or if in that state we assented to come to earth under any circumstances. Secular philosophers in the modern era had their own qualms about directly postulating preexistence. They employed its conceptual advantages while exploring problems of knowledge and identity, but they often hedged and placed the idea of preexistence in the abstract lest they appear to follow Plato, rely on religion for solutions to philosophical issues, or assert what could not be demonstrated.

The chapter entitled "The Cartesian Aftermath" explores a century in which primarily a philosophical exploration rather than a religious inquiry kept the concept of premortality alive. René Descartes posited that some ideas, those that seemed to be innate, could not be accounted for by external sources or by the mind's making them. While John Locke attacked such a proposition, his contemporary Gottfried Leibniz also made innate ideas central to his philosophy. Givens is especially adept at noting the "double-speak" of these philosophers, who invoked various concepts of preexistence without overtly affirming them. Leibniz walked a tightrope, eschewing the Platonic realm of the soul and the religious pre-earth life as well, yet postulating a conceptual preexistence. Thus one scholar called his preexistence "the centerpiece of his metaphysics" (196), even though Leibniz embeds the concept in some curious and imaginative postulations. Among these is the idea of monads—self-existing, self-defining entities

that exist eternally, exist solely in themselves, but also exist fully in their relations to all other monads.

Givens devotes two chapters to the nineteenth century, one on "Philosophy and Theology, 1800–1900," and the other on "Romanticism and Transcendentalism, 1800–1900." In the first, Joseph Smith appears as "one of the few Christian thinkers to develop notions of preexistence that do not derive from or rely upon the standard Platonic precedents" (216). Among the notable features of Smith's teachings are that premortal spirits were essentially innocent rather than inherently corrupt, that intelligences preceded even the premortal existence of humans as spirits, that pre-earth life featured some form of familial organization, and that the spirit has material properties, though finer than earthly physicality. Givens notes the potential redundancy of this last formulation: if spirit is matter, then why the need for the physical? "Exactly what purpose is served by sheathing a pure form of matter in an impure form is never explained in Mormon doctrine" (218). Givens does not emphasize Joseph Smith over other figures—a tactical choice, I suspect, made to avoid a book with an LDS partisan feel. Still, readers might well have appreciated a discussion on how Smith and other Latter-day Saints resolved the problems of divine justice that nonorthodox theologians escaped by positing a fall and evil choices in the premortal realm, or how (and if) the spiritual creation of all things in Moses 3 differs from the creation of our spirits.

Further along in the chapter, Smith can be contrasted with his contemporary Edward Beecher, whose *Conflict of the Ages* comprises the "last fully sustained effort to win theological legitimacy for pre-mortal existence in the American tradition" (231). Beecher, a prominent Boston minister and son of a famous orthodox Protestant family, was convinced that "almost two millennia of efforts to reconcile faith and fairness, dogma and intellect" had failed to settle the debate over how a just God could create a race of depraved sinners and hold them accountable before him (223). Beecher thought he had discovered the missing piece: before this life, human spirits were created and given freedom and opportunity. Many failed in that state of existence, and those spirits went to earth for a second chance. Thus, mortal life on earth, this "vast moral hospital," offers another opportunity to master the self and choose truth. Beecher's theology is part of a mosaic of the decline of Calvinism in nineteenth-century American religion.

The other prominent advocate in this chapter is the German Julius Müller, who was led to believe in a preexistent state by the problem of sin and how to account for it. Premortal existence appeared to Müller as "a paradigm with compelling power to solve the dilemma of free will and also to explain those aspects of the human condition that fall under the domain

of otherwise indecipherable intuitions and sentiments" (235). In his theology, spirits and, by extension, humans cannot be held accountable unless they are given a moment of free choice where alternatives are equally balanced—and in that moment choose evil still.

In the chapter "Romanticism and Transcendentalism," Givens takes his readers through the much-loved poets Blake, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, as well as Victorian poets with less overt expressions of preexistence such as Tennyson. Most of these poets found preexistence imaginatively and poetically compelling without overtly affirming a religious dimension to belief in the soul and divine creation. The chapter points out that no translation of Plato's complete works existed in English until 1804, so a rediscovery of Plato at this time may explain the resurgence of thinkers and poets pondering on the soul's endowments. Blake was the "most unabashedly mystical and the most unapologetic in his embrace of Platonic preexistence" (243). Wordworth's great "Immortality Ode" is probably the best known and most haunting expression of preexistence in poetry. The lines beginning "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting" have led many readers to construct a belief system out of his poetry, though the poet himself resisted expressing personal beliefs of this kind. American transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Amos Bronson Alcott, constrained by fewer religious inhibitions than theologians, were much more positive in their vision of the "heritable component" that human souls brought with them. These writers endorsed preexistence because it explained the divine in man and supported the expansive versions of human prehistory (263–64).

In "Preexistence in the Modern Age," Givens lays out several vigorous twentieth-century assertions of preexistence that were made before the concept again retreated from orthodox theology and philosophy. Nicholas Berdyaev, a prominent Russian philosopher, was perhaps the last to argue for it unambiguously and at length. He believed that preexistence was the only viable alternative to "the terrorist and servile doctrine of everlasting hell" (279). Considered a heresiarch by the Greek Orthodox Church, he nonetheless held that "the kind of freedom preexistence makes possible outweighs the dangers of traditional constructions of God's sovereignty" (281). Theosophists such as Madame Helena Blavatsky also kept preexistence alive, but with theosophy we move out of mainstream philosophy and religion into peripheral religion and art. "As the motif disappeared from religious discourse, so did it decline in artistic representation as well" (291). It is found in the poets Robert Frost and Wislawa Szymborska (I enthusiastically recommend her poem "A Version of Events"), the dramatist Sam Shepard, the film *Wings of Desire,* as well as in pop culture and parascience, such as in the prebirth experiences (BPEs) many mothers have had of prospective children.

Givens thoroughly succeeds in showing the long history of, and opposition to, the concept of premortality, its advantages in religious and philosophical contexts, and the orthodox rationale for resisting its adoption. LDS readers will learn that a long line of theologians have battled the doctrine not so much on its merits—orthodox arguments are "almost invariably logically inferior" to it—but because it clashed with already-adopted ideas of God's eternality (6). From my perspective, Givens clearly intends his book as a challenge to orthodox Christian thought. I hope it succeeds in drawing theologians of other faiths into thinking again about where we come from and how that relates to why we are here.

Terryl L. Givens's Response to David B. Paxman

I appreciate Paxman's point that I do not explore the full details and ramifications of LDS belief in premortality. This was a deliberate decision on my part that has surprised and dismayed some readers. To explain, I wanted to situate Joseph's teachings on the topic without judgment or special favor. It turns out his teachings had striking resonance with some contemporary developments in German theology but were otherwise almost entirely disconnected from a nineteenth-century context. As it has been noted, the early nineteenth century was awash with a rediscovery of Platonism, which was the principle inspiration for almost every version of preexistence from antiquity to the present time. Joseph's pronouncements, by contrast, occur in a kind of conceptual vacuum, resonant with Semitic precursors but with nothing Platonic.

Even so, if I were to write the chapter on Joseph Smith today, it would be very different because two very exciting discoveries occurred several months after my book was finished, involving two revelations that were originally planned for inclusion in the Doctrine and Covenants but were left out. They would not only have given us a different provenance for the Mormon idea of preexistence, but they also would have connected the idea with some Platonic and Neoplatonic currents. These documents can be found in the revelations and translations series of The Joseph Smith Papers.[13] Two of them, surprisingly, involve preexistence, though perhaps obliquely.

In March of 1832, Joseph Smith received a sample of pure language that gave the name of God as Awman, or "the being which made all things in all its parts." The "children of men," it went on to say, are "the greatest parts of Awman."[14] Now, this phrasing might not by itself suggest anything

13. The history behind this series of The Joseph Smith Papers is introduced in a special feature of *BYU Studies* 48, no. 3 (2009): 5–91.

14. Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds. *Manuscript Revelation Books,* facsimile edition, Revelations and Translations series

to do with a premortal genealogy; however, together with a subsequent revelation dated February 27, 1833, the text points quite clearly to a conception of spirits as *emanating* (that's a very Neoplatonic concept) from God. Little is known of the context in which this second revelation was received. An undated broadside of a poetic rendering of the revelation indicates it was "sung in tongues by Elder D. W. Patten . . . and interpreted by Elder S[idney] Rigdon." So it has the distinction, I believe, of being the only revelation in the revelation book where Joseph Smith played no part, which may be why it was later excluded from the Doctrine and Covenants. Recorded in the hand of Fredrick G. Williams, it had connection with the prophecy of Enoch, which had been recently revealed at the time. In this song, Enoch "saw the begining the ending of man he saw the time when Adam his father was made and he saw that he was in eternity before a grain of dust in the ballance was weighed he saw that he emenated and came down from God."[15]

The likelihood that the Awman revelation and the Enoch hymn were together pivotal in concertizing a Mormon concept of preexistence is supported by the fact that when W. W. Phelps published in the Church paper a poetic celebration of preexistence in 1833, it bore the marks of these two sources. Smith unambiguously affirmed the eternal preexistence of human spirits in early May 1833 with a revelation Latter-day Saints are familiar with: "Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be" (D&C 93:29). Tellingly, Phelps published his poetic declaration based not on that revelation but on the hymn of Enoch: "Before the mountains rais'd their heads, / Or the small dust of balance weigh'd. / With God he [Enoch] saw his race began / And from him emanated man, / And with him did in glory dwell / Before there was an earth or hell."[16] The importance of the Awman and the Enoch texts as founding the first clear understanding of preexistence is further evident in the fact that Parley P. Pratt relied on those same two texts, invoking the language of the Enoch hymn and the imagery of the Awman revelation in his 1838 linkage of theosis and premortality: "The redeemed will return to the fountain and become part of the great all from which they

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of *The Joseph Smith Papers,* ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2009), 265; Sample of Pure Language, circa March 1832, http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/sample-of-pure-language-circa-march-1832.

15. Jensen, Woodford, and Harper, *Manuscript Revelation Books,* 509.

16. W. W. Phelps, "Age after Age Has Rolled Away," *Evening and the Morning Star* 1, no. 12 (May 1833), 8.

emanated."[17] I was unfamiliar with these two revelations at the time I wrote *Wings,* so it does not include them.

Even so, my section on preexistence and Joseph Smith was restrained (and would have remained so even with these two revelations) because I did not want to create the impression that other treatments in the history of that idea were necessarily inferior to or preparatory for Joseph's definitive treatment. In some ways, his was actually the sparsest of all treatments. Unlike his peers, he did not arrive at the idea of preexistence as the solution to a problem. It's as if he knew the answer but wasn't aware that there was a question. He did not invoke the idea of preexistence to make sense of God's justice, spiritual intimations, love at first sight, freedom of the will, or a dozen other problems that the idea might have elucidated.

Question and Answer Session (Moderated by John W. Welch)

Welch: The mention of these two revelations brings up a question that arose as I read the book, which is, How many more of these kinds of texts are there—not just from Joseph Smith but in the Western tradition? What did you include and what did you exclude? I'd like to know what's in the scrap pile.

Givens: Everything I found is in the book. Everything! There are no scraps left *(laughter).*

Welch: But seriously, are any of you aware of other texts that could have been included? Should there be another project in the future? I hope this is just the beginning of looking at these texts and finding more sources out there.

Givens: There are some German sources not included. There was a real flowering of the idea of preexistence where theology and philosophy intersected in early nineteenth-century Germany. The idea mostly arose with the notion of sin from a theological point of view and the notion of freedom from a philosophical point of view. And these thinkers were all coming to the same conclusion, as expressed by a contemporary Cambridge philosopher named John McTaggart, who said, "Look, it's common sense! If God created the human spirit, then he's responsible for our sins."

The same argument was made by Immanuel Kant; in fact, he clearly defends preexistence three times, in three completely different contexts, in three separate arguments. One of his contemporaries complained that

17. Parley P. Pratt, *Mormonism Unveiled* (New York: 1838), 27.

Kant was dogmatic about insisting on human preexistence, and yet in modern textbooks on German philosophy, you can hardly find even a footnote on the idea. Julius Müller wrote a two-volume work on the doctrine of sin and said that preexistence is the only possible theological foundation upon which God can hold us accountable for our choices. There were many more obscure German philosophers writing about preexistence, and they are probably the largest single group that fell by the wayside.

Welch: So, there is more.

Givens: Yes, there's more.

Welch: One might also want to read more about the "Hymn of the Pearl," an early Christian text that *BYU Studies* has published an article about.[18] Also, I was recently in the museum in Lyon, France, looking for Roman antiquities. I walked into a room dedicated to Louis Janmot, who was a native of Lyon. From 1836 to 1855, he worked on a poem called "The Poem of the Soul," and he also painted a whole series of large murals that would fill this room. The first mural is called the *Generation of the Soul,* which depicts the soul as a babe in the arms of God, along with a lot of other preexisting souls gathered around God's throne. The second painting [see the back cover of this issue] is called *The Passage,* where an angel delivers a baby to a mother. *Spring Time* depicts a growing boy and his feminine counterpart; throughout the poem they have a platonic and eternal relationship. In *The Recollection of Heaven,* they go forth in life, and even though they have a veil drawn over their memory, there's still a distant recollection that they came from some preexistent realm. These murals are heavily influenced, artistically, by Catholic images—but obviously this artist didn't read Augustine very carefully *(laughter).*

Givens: And that first Janmot mural would have made for a more authentic book cover illustration. The illustration that I used by William Blake looks like it depicts the preexistence, but it actually doesn't have anything to do with it. It's about the third temptation of Christ.

Welch: Well, maybe the second edition can have the Janmot mural as the cover.

Givens: However, Blake did personally believe in the preexistence. Actually, his is my favorite defense of the preexistence. He said to his friend, "Obviously, I acquired my talents in the preexistence. Look, do you really think

18. John W. Welch and James V. Garrison, "The 'Hymn of the Pearl': An Ancient Counterpart to 'O My Father,'" *BYU Studies* 36, no. 1 (1996–97): 127–38.

I could have become this much of a genius in just the thirty years that I've lived here?" *(laughter).*

Welch: Very good. Let's now turn to the audience for questions.

Audience question: Blake also illustrated a poem called "Brave" in 1809. There, Blake depicts preexistent souls, both male and female, coming to earth, then being resurrected as male and female as they move on to the next life. Blake's songs are filled with poems about children who are abused in this world—taken away from the purity they enjoyed in the presence of God. Mormonism has defended the innocence of children about as strongly as any religious tradition I can think of. An idea blossoms in multiple places at the same time, concurrent with the Restoration of the gospel, affirming the preexistence. Augustinianism, which had held sway for centuries, was suddenly repudiated. So the question this all implies is, How does the idea of preexistence change the way we think about children and the character of mortality that grows out of that childhood?

Givens: Jean-Jacques Rousseau is usually credited with being the father of this idea, the innocence of children. But there's an antecedent to this in the seventeenth century among the Cambridge Platonists, which Mormons should really know more about. Here we have a group of clergymen at Cambridge teaching the innocence and purity of children, denying original sin, teaching preexistence, and affirming the deification of humans. So it seems that one has to repudiate original sin in order to establish that kind of connection between preexistent memories and the innocence that is shaped from those memories. Such a connection is natural and is made by Wordsworth and by the Cambridge Platonists.

Audience question: You mentioned the newly discovered Awman revelation and the revelation about spirits emanating from God. Augustine and, later, the Calvinists rejected the notion of premortality because they said that the concept of coeternal man detracted from the absolute omnipotence of God. Today, some complain that Mormons overemphasize the independent nature of premortal spirits and thereby diminish the power of God. If we bring together these newly discovered revelations and D&C 93, we have a story where spirits or intelligences are both eternally independent *and* at some later point emanate from God—probably through a spirit birth process. To me, this is an incredibly elegant way of grappling with the questions concerning the omnipotence of God versus the agency of man. Your thoughts?

Givens: Well, I think in some ways that's a nice compromise. You can have preexistence without detracting from the supremacy of God

himself. Orson Pratt, for example, would have been very amenable to this approach. You know, there's one huge complication in the Mormon history of preexistence that I'll be dealing with in my forthcoming theology book. The problem is this: the idea that we are literal spirit progeny of Heavenly Parents is nowhere present in the teachings of Joseph Smith. That development takes place with Parley P. Pratt. Orson Pratt gets it from Parley, then Brigham Young quotes the Pratts, and every prophet since then quotes Brigham Young. But in the King Follett discourse, Joseph Smith clearly describes an adoptive model. There are all these preexistent entities, whether you call them intelligences or spirits, they are the same thing to Joseph. And then God the Father adopts them into a kind of fatherly relationship.

Audience question: Are you saying that the emanation *from* God is actually the adoption *in*?

Givens: Well, an adoption sounds much closer to what Joseph taught. God is not giving birth so much as God is gathering a kind of divine matter that already fills the universe.

Welch: Or the emanation could be some sort of coming forth, which takes place after the adoption.

Givens: It could be that as well.

Audience question: While researching, did you find any evidence of thinkers who were influenced by Hindu or Buddhist traditions?

Givens: Yes. The influence is extremely pronounced among the American transcendentalists: Emerson, Alcott, and that whole generation. The Transcendental Club launched a journal called *The Dial,* and they were vigorous proponents of preexistence. In their writings, they often linked to and borrowed from Eastern traditions.

Audience question: Does the idea of premortal life show up in folk culture?

Givens: In the second-to-last chapter of *Wings,* I give contemporary folk examples, where stories are passed along that are essentially the opposite of near-death experiences—a prospective mother has an encounter with a premortal spirit right before conceiving, and so on. This is prevalent not just among Mormon communities but in other cultures as well.

Audience question: Professor Jesse Hurlbut has enlightened us concerning many medieval murals depicting a premortal war in heaven. What are the origins and traditions behind these paintings?

Givens: Well, the idea itself of the war in heaven is biblically based. Mormons aren't the only ones who read the book of Revelation and, of course, the harrowing of hell is a very old theme. And Catholics have been

celebrating Michaelmas for centuries, which is a celebration of Michael's victory in the war in heaven.

Audience question: As a missionary, I taught an MIT professor of planetary science who knew several languages, including Sanskrit. When we taught him about the premortal existence, he went and grabbed his translation of ancient Hindu scripture from Sanskrit and said, "What you just taught is what I've translated here." The passage in question had been interpreted by Hindu scholars as an explanation for the transmigration of souls. The professor said that the scholars simply got it wrong. The scripture says, in Sanskrit, that there was a premortal existence. I'm wondering, did you find anything like that in other sacred texts from your study?

Givens: Not from any Eastern traditions, and the whole problem of reincarnation and transmigration of souls gets mixed up with preexistence all the time. In my book, I tried to describe why I was separating the two concepts. One can believe in reincarnation without a premortal existence and vice versa. Even Plato at times talks about a linear progression and at other times talks about the cyclical nature of incarnation. So I tried to confine the book to just preexistence.

Welch: This begs the question, will there be a sequel? The subtitle is "Premortal Existence in Western Thought." What about a book on Eastern thought? Maybe that's coming.

Givens: Well, not from me. I think I was overly ambitious enough the first time *(laughter).*

Audience question: I'm interested in your approach. You write to a non-Mormon audience, but your books clearly have very Mormon themes. What are you trying to accomplish in these various communities of readers, Mormon or otherwise?

Givens: Well, in many ways, I'm trying to do what BYU theologian David Paulsen is trying to do. He's working to insinuate Mormonism into a broader theological discussion. He's saying, "Look, there are very important elements you're overlooking, and you can't tell the whole story unless Mormonism is a part of that conversation." In terms of audience, all of my books have been written and directed at non-Mormons, but they tend to have an impact, as far as I can gauge, among Mormons who are either at the peripheries of orthodoxy or who are just more interested in thinking of Mormonism in very broad terms.

My personal model comes from D&C 49:8. The Lord gives a revelation concerning the mission to the Shakers, where he says that the world is under sin, "except those which I have reserved unto myself, holy men *that ye know not of.*" So I get this sense early on in the revelations to

Joseph that there are these other people, and perhaps these other ideas and communities, that are inspired and have important pieces or fragments of the Adamic gospel.

After all, Joseph was very much an eclectic thinker, and if I have any kind of agenda, it would be to encourage Mormons to be as open-minded and generous as Joseph Smith was, to take him seriously when he said, "We take truth wherever it is." Too often, when people today discover that there are, for example, striking similarities between Masonic rituals and the Latter-day Saint temple, they lose their heads, right? But Joseph Smith was essentially saying, "Well, that's how I'm going to operate." Augustine observed that the problem with the pagans was that they had all the gold of the Egyptians, but they didn't know the context of that gold. Likewise, we need to take our materials and put them back into this comprehensive, vortexlike understanding of the gospel.

Welch: No small agenda *(laughter).* Well, I think this would be a perfect place for us to end. We thank everyone, thank our panel, and especially thank Terryl for taking time with us this afternoon *(applause).*

Terryl L. Givens is Professor of Literature and Religion and the James A. Bostwick Chair of English at the University of Richmond. He received his PhD at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill.

James L. Siebach is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Brigham Young University. He received his PhD in philosophy and classical languages from the University of Texas–Austin.

Dana M. Pike is Professor of Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University. He received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania.

Jesse D. Hurlbut is Associate Professor of French at Brigham Young University. He received his PhD from Indiana University.

David B. Paxman is Professor Emeritus of English at Brigham Young University. He received his PhD from the University of Chicago.

All contributors can be reached via email at byustudies@byu.edu.

BOOK REVIEWS

Shawna Dolansky. *Now You See It, Now You Don't: Biblical Perspectives on the Relationship between Magic and Religion.*
Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008.

Reviewed by David A. Allred

Defining terms is a foundational task in academic studies, and a clear example of its importance is in the ongoing debates on the relationship between magic and religion. Because of the various ways in which magic has been defined over time and because of the negative connotations that can accompany some definitions, explorations of magic and religion are rife with misunderstanding and ethnocentrism, most famously dating back to the milieu of cultural evolution that characterized nineteenth-century anthropology, especially in the works of Edward B. Tylor and James G. Frazer. However, questions about the relationship between magic and religion go back much further, even into biblical times, and it is these difficult issues that Shawna Dolansky explores in her monograph *Now You See It, Now You Don't: Biblical Perspectives on the Relationship between Magic and Religion.*

Dolansky, who teaches religious studies at Northeastern University, explores magic in the context of ancient Israel and the Old Testament. Readers should not be misled by *Now You See It*'s playful titles (in addition to the book's title, chapter 3, for example, is titled "Magic: For Prophet?"). The book is written for scholars of biblical studies; it employs discipline-specific language, delves into the specialized scholarship, and is published by a press with an emphasis in this academic area. Still, it is a brief book (107 pages) that can be accessed by nonspecialists, and its conclusions should be interesting for students of Old Testament culture and biblical texts. The book also has value for those interested in reports about Joseph Smith's treasure digging and other magic-related practices. These issues came to the fore with Mark Hofmann's forgeries and D. Michael Quinn's book on magic in early Mormonism, but of course accusations about the "problem" of Joseph's treasure digging date back at least to Eber Howe's 1834 anti-Mormon tract *Mormonism Unvailed*. While the cultural contexts of ancient Israel and frontier America differ widely, Dolansky's methodology and theoretical stance make the book valuable in considering these issues.

Foundational to Dolansky's approach is avoiding ethnocentric definitions of magic that rely only on social distinctions of structurally similar practices like divination and prophecy. Put another way, she strives to move beyond definitions that exhibit the attitude of "what we practice is religion; what they practice is magic." Instead, she defines magic more objectively, as "an act performed by a person (as opposed to theophany or direct acts of God), with or without attribution to God, that has no apparent physical causal connection to the (expected or actual) result" (14). This definition helps to move *magic* beyond negative connotations and broadens the concept considerably. Thus, it opens the way for her argument, which corresponds with recent scholarly trends, to see magic and religion as concepts that are inescapably intertwined.

The book opens with an introduction that reviews biblical and anthropological literature about magic and religion. The second chapter analyzes the Hebrew used in the legal texts of Deuteronomy 18 and Leviticus 19–20 to explore prohibitions about magic. Her argument grapples with the problems of translation; a word like *měkaššēp,* which is used in Deuteronomy 18:10, can be translated as *sorcerer* or *magician*, and deciphering which English word is appropriate for the connotation in the biblical text is a difficult task. (An even more difficult translation in verse 10 is the magical practice that the KJV presents as "[passing] through the fire," a concept with no easy translation into modern English.) Notwithstanding these linguistic difficulties, Dolansky reconstructs some of the cultural context of ancient Israel, and she concludes that these legal texts do not "categorically [condemn]" magic. Instead, they restrict activities like prophecy and divination to the divinely authorized (54).

This insight about divine authority determining whether an act is magic or religion raises interesting questions in the case of Joseph Smith. While one must avoid simply equating attitudes about magic in these two different times, Dolansky's insight might be used to explain why Joseph distanced himself from using seer stones to find buried treasure but used a similar practice to translate parts of the Book of Mormon. Divine authorization distinguishes the two situations. Stated another way, if a particular practice—like Moses and Jannes and Jambres turning rods into snakes before Pharaoh—differs primarily in the authority used to enact the practice, then concerns about "magical" acts of Joseph Smith have more to do with his authority claims than his supposed "contamination" with the occult.

After the second chapter, Dolansky uses two more substantive chapters to find other structural similarities between some magical practices and Israelite religion. In chapter 3, Dolansky documents different attitudes among the

Priestly, Elohist, and Yahwist sources about what practices constitute prohibited magic and who is authorized to perform acts that mediate divine will for the people. In chapter 4, Dolansky argues that magic—according to her definition—is widespread in both the attitudes and rituals of ancient Israel. A final chapter helpfully summarizes the conclusions the book has made.

In making these arguments, *Now You See It, Now You Don't* makes two especially salient points. First, Dolansky argues that too often magic is defined solely by etic criteria, or outsiders' views on the meaning of a magical practice. While an outside definition, which can be standard across space and time, is crucial for cross-cultural comparison, Dolansky also uses emic, or insider, perspectives when exploring the meaning of a magical act. This is an important move because insider perspectives help calibrate the culturally specific meaning and significance of such acts.

In a related vein, Dolansky identifies an important issue in the scholarship of Old Testament magic. She argues that by using an etic, cross-cultural approach, the scholarship on biblical magic has overused classical views, leading to false comparisons. She writes that because "by the Greco-Roman period, there was a definite dichotomy between magic and religion," the many examinations that use classical studies along with New Testament and rabbinic scholarship overemphasize a magic-religion distinction that "is not represented in contemporary ancient Near Eastern literatures" (26). Dolansky argues Egyptian and Mesopotamian views on magic are more productive comparisons in understanding the views in ancient Israel on the matter, and using these comparisons leads to her conclusions of less distinct lines demarcating magic and religion.

Those interested in Mormon studies will find value in Dolansky's ideas because of the controversial debates about Joseph Smith's involvement in treasure digging and other magic-associated activities. Despite her focus on a different time and place, her approach is helpful because it expands the reach of magic by pointing out the inescapable structural overlaps it has with religion. Applied to Joseph Smith, Dolansky's book encourages scholars to use both etic and emic ideas in considering the complexities in accounts of Joseph's practice of folk magic and in his use of divinely sanctioned powers.

David A. Allred (david.allred@snow.edu) is Associate Professor of English at Snow College. His graduate work focused on folklore, and he received his MA at Brigham Young University and his PhD at the University of Missouri. His publications include a forthcoming article giving a folkloristic perspective on Joseph Smith's involvement with "magic."

Patrick Madden. *Quotidiana*.

Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010.

Reviewed by Eric d'Evegnee

Some LDS readers have an intriguing tendency to venerate obviously scholarly research while turning up their noses at what they consider less "academic" work. These readers are missing out on a potentially impactful genre. Eugene England wrote, "It is the personal essay that seems to me to have the greatest *potential* for making a uniquely valuable Mormon contribution both to Mormon cultural and religious life and to that of others."[1] If that notion is true, reading works like Pat Madden's collection of personal essays, *Quotidiana,* should be added to our academic diet to refine and broaden the value we place on a whole spectrum of study.

For readers who wince at the sentimentality of some creative nonfictional writing, Madden's book might be the ideal transition into the genre. Madden, who was once on a scientific path himself, not only embraces academic research, he joins it with his personal accounts, holding out his hand to readers who crave objective data. The data, the research, and the scholastic theory are all present, but they form a sort of bridge to the more personal applications. While not self-consciously avoiding the spiritual, Madden allows his belief to shape his vision rather than having that belief *be* his vision. In other words, Madden's work might not appeal to the Mormon reader waiting for meditations on the Book of Mormon, the priesthood, or Interstate 15. But that just might be a good thing.

Quotidiana speaks to me like a sort of intellectual impressionism. Where impressionism creates perspective from brushstrokes, Madden's essays employ a wide range of allusions from antiquity to the present that provide a layered perspective to his subject. His is a collection of essays that

1. Eugene England, "Mormon Literature: Progress and Prospects," in *Mormon Americana: A Guide to Sources and Collections in the United States,* ed. David J. Whittaker (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1995), 477.

Published by BYU ScholarsArchive, 2011

follows in the rich history of essayists who made "the mundane resplendent with their meditative insights" (4). Unfortunately, though, this comparison to impressionism conjures unwanted images: denimed American tourists milling their tube-socked and sandaled way through the Musée d'Orsay in Paris or ubiquitous posters foisted upon walls and ceilings by tween-aged suburban girls. The light of impressionism's aesthetic virtues should not be shrouded by contemporary consumer culture's attempt to postcard it into annihilation. For me, impressionism genuinely represents a perspective of an object rather than attempting an "objective" recreation of it, and Madden's staggeringly panoramic collection of allusions offers an intentionally wide-lensed perspective. Those who read Madden's densely allusive prose to find easily epiphanic recollections of life will be as challenged as those who would use impressionist paintings as road maps.

Madden's allusions are the primary characteristic of this collection of essays and offer more an intellectual imprint of his subject than a comprehensive personalized theme. Madden describes how the personal essay "mimics the activity of a mind at work. It reflects discovery through writing. Its author had better not begin with a conclusion or epiphany already in hand" (68). Madden remains staunchly true to this Montaigne-esque vision of the essay. He invites his readers into his lush, associative mind, which is unique in a creative nonfiction genre filled with confessional memoirs.

In longer essays like "Laughter" and "Remember Death," I found myself searching through them in the same meandering way I read the encyclopedia as a boy. I discovered then the thirst for understanding—not understanding things in particular, but understanding everything. Reading Madden's essays reconnected me to the part of myself that led me to teach at a university. Madden's essays are breathlessly dense with ideas from varied sources on the essay's topic, taking the reader whirling through centuries of perspectives. I found myself fascinated by the array of knowledge, sources, and ideas that he connects. It is truly a talent. And while this book, written by a Latter-day Saint, is not a group of essays with overtly Latter-day Saint themes, it still has the potential to speak powerfully to those Saints who care about literary quality and are searching for examples of this genre's expressive possibilities.

In his essay "Garlic," Madden juxtaposes his father-in-law's work selling produce in Uruguay, lists of produce sold at the market, a brief history of garlic, his wife's family, and a thought about the "complexity of interrelationships" symbolized by New York City, wherein the gilded order of that city conceals a lurking chaos. Ultimately, his reflections take us back to the

life of his hardworking father-in-law and the difficulty of the interconnections in his life. Admittedly, the virtue of these vast encyclopedic tours of ideas becomes a vice in some of the essays. The wealth of allusions in these connections is stunning; however, I would gladly give up a reference or two to read more of the voice that placed all these references together.

Despite his clear reluctance to wax personal, I found Madden at his best in his narrative writing. He is able to invoke the essence of narrative without using narrative to punish his readers with a moral. In "Remember Death," Madden manages to bring out references and tie them together with the death of a childhood acquaintance, Wayne Marino. He keeps the essay from falling into a simplistic "I knew I could die too" theme by tracing allusions to the *momento mori* motif in such varied places as songs from the band Rush to seventeenth-century Dutch painters' use of a skull in their paintings. The meditation ends with Madden's move away from cliché in an observation about timing, stating that despite never really liking Wayne Marino much at all, he is "writing this essay exactly seventeen years later, to the day, having survived twice as long as I had then, been whirled through a universe of time and ideas so immeasurably fleet that it may be contained entirely within my memory and repassed, perhaps, in a moment, a sudden flash" (60). This "flash" unexpectedly marries the personal nostalgia of reconnecting with his best friend from home with the images of the skulls in de Gheyn paintings.

In his essay "Hepatitis," Madden's mention of his scientific background aids the reader in further grasping his listlike leanings. While the compilation of facts satiates his logical drive, the author and the power of his voice shine when he describes his children's illness and, in particular, how the disease slowly takes the life of the family dog. Even with all the details about hepatitis, the muscle of the essay comes from its ending where Madden restrains from indulging in a sentimental ending but still maintains the power of the narrative:

> I had long ago given up crying over dead dogs, but I cried for Karina [Madden's wife]. Then Karina is gone to the pet cemetery to witness the burial, to say goodbye one last time, and I am home with the kids, struggling to keep them still, not fighting, out of the fridge, with slippers on their feet. A glance out the front window toward the gate reminds me that the dog is gone. The trees are losing their leaves in May; the winds are bringing cold from the South. Pato's shoelace is still hanging tied in a square knot from the window latch in the kitchen, in case we have to give another i.v. It's raining steadily and gray and I can't get it out of my head how small the dog looked, bent, doubled over and bundled in a white sheet tied at the corners leaning against a tree. (163)

As this final example shows, Madden's essays invoke an intellectual context to what we see everyday, thereby making his essays at once personal and scholarly. He employs the contemplative and reflective habits essential to the life of a true religious scholar, fulfilling England's prediction about the essay's potential contribution to Mormon thought.

Eric d'Evegnee (devegneee@byui.edu) is Professor of English at Brigham Young University—Idaho.

Confessing History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Perspective, edited by John Fea, Jay Green, and Eric Miller (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

George Marsden's 1994 book *The Soul of the American University* ended rather unusually for an academic work—this well-respected historian suggested that religious faith should have a place in the academy. Such a bold assertion sparked a number of heated discussions within and without the intellectual world. Three years later, Marsden responded again to his critics by producing a volume that explored this topic, which he aptly titled *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship.* As a result of this book, additional conversations ensued in which Christian and non-Christian scholars grappled with Marsden's proposition. More recently, the contributors to the edited volume *Confessing History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Perspective* have added to the ongoing discussion about religion's role in the historical profession and have assessed the relationship between faith and learning in today's academy.

Like their predecessors, the predominantly young scholars contributing to this volume are broaching and responding to the same important topics, and yet they are also attempting to build upon and transcend prior works. While Marsden and others have proposed that faith commitments inspire Christian questions that result in "Christian interpretive insights," the scholars whose essays are included in this text are attempting to explore what has remained unanswered: how? How might the historical profession affect those committed to Christ? In what ways does the idea of calling come into play? Indeed, how does a Christian's faith influence how she approaches her calling as a historian? And how might a disciple's responsibilities shape how he works in and responds to his professional objectives and settings? Does being Christian determine how a person writes, teaches, advises and speaks? Or should the two be mutually exclusive, as those looking through a more secular lens have suggested?

Although written by a group of scholars who share common values, their theological and professional perspectives are diverse. The book is divided into three sections that examine the concerns, experiences, questions, and desires of a new generation of Christian historians: Identity (How do we define ourselves in a world that seems to require dualism?); Theory and Method (How can we approach our work from lenses of intellect and faith?); and Communities (How do we teach from both a secular and a spiritual perspective, and how might we contribute to both our career and our church simultaneously?). Woven throughout each chapter are suggestions about how believing historians might work within the intellectual expectations of the field, as well as an acknowledgment of the challenges that will be faced as they attempt to do so.

Although edited and written by Evangelical scholars who are grappling with their own theologies in a professional context, this book will resonate with any scholar of faith. Quite simply, the questions posed and the challenges addressed are relevant, indeed, thought provoking; the authors challenge readers to consider how they might take their callings as Christian historians more seriously than the training they received to become secular historians. Therefore, they encourage readers to think differently than graduate school trained them

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to think, while also acknowledging how difficult it is to make this transition. For those who study Latter-day Saint history and other related topics, this book may ring particularly familiar and should become a springboard into similar conversations of their own.

—Rachel Cope

The Book of Moses, paintings by Linda Etherington (Mormon Artists Group, 2010).

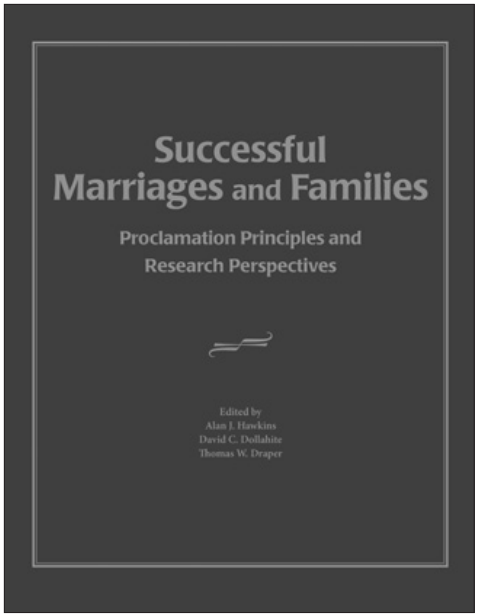
Since Linda Etherington graduated from BYU in 1991, her paintings have been exhibited in numerous local and international shows in places such as New York, California, Virginia, Utah, Idaho, Washington, and Mississippi. Her work is also in the permanent collection of Brigham Young University Museum of Art and the Springville Museum of Art.

In 2008, at the invitation of the Mormon Artists Group, she began a project of creating thirteen large-scale paintings to illustrate the Book of Moses. The process of painting required two years and reflects Etherington's point of view that this book of scripture is about extended family. Etherington creates a series of vibrant, colorful works that concentrate on the relationships of people, one to another, often in family groupings—the artist is a mother of seven daughters and brings her firsthand experience to highlight the beauty of domestic life.

The Book of Moses is the twenty-first project of the Mormon Artists Group, an organization based in New York City that creates limited edition books, music, collaborative projects, and visual artworks by members of the Church. The book is large and luxurious, measuring 14.5″ by 11.25″. It is printed on heavyweight BFK Rives mould-made paper with deckle edges. It is sewn and bound by hand and covered in white silk moire bookcloth. The book was designed by Cameron King.

The text used for the publication is the 1878 edition of the Book of Moses revised by Orson Pratt that placed the work in chronological order and reconciled the manuscript between various sources. This was the edition accepted by the Church as part of the standard works in 1880. It is the last edition before the book was divided into chapters and verses in 1902 by James E. Talmage. The design and format of the new publication enhance a reading of the Book of Moses as a single narrative—propulsive, exciting, and ultimately tragic. It is published in a limited edition of 100—signed and numbered by the artist. Mormon Artists Group issued a smaller, paperback edition of the book in full color which is available on Amazon.com and through the publisher. Additional information can be found at mormonartistsgroup.com.

—Glen Nelson



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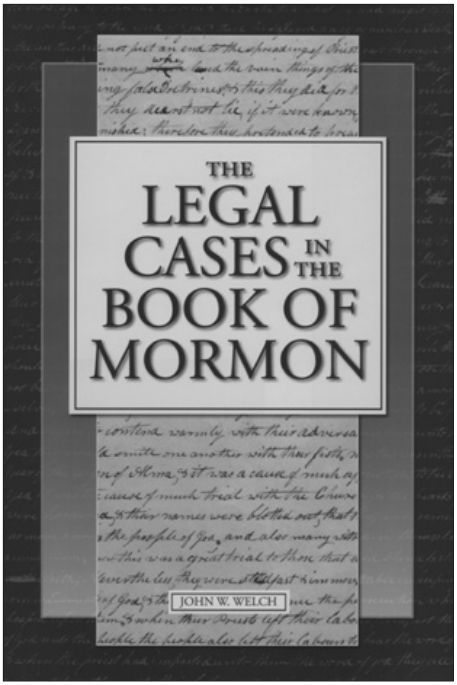

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—Raymond Westbrook,
Professor of Near Eastern Studies, Johns Hopkins University

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