

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Semester 4, Lecture 93
3 Nephi; Psalm 19
Physical and Spiritual Bodies
Anthropism

I got two phone calls from the East before eight o'clock this morning. One of them was from Washington, D.C. They have to do with discussions in Sunday School classes and priesthood quorums that took place yesterday. They all have to do with Adam and his having a body. This fellow said, "Was Adam's sin really a sin, or was it a transgression?" President Joseph F. Smith said that Adam's [act] was a transgression rather than a sin. There is a difference. He [the caller] said there's no difference between them. Oh, yes, there is a great difference between them. That's in our second Article of Faith: "We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression."

There's a difference between being naughty and being vicious and rancorous, you see. How far can you go? Will you say with Macbeth, "I am in blood stepped in so far, that should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er"? I've sinned already so I might as well go on sinning. That's what John Chrysostom preached: Sin all you can; give God a chance to display his mercy and forgiving power. If you sin less than you can, you've robbed him of that privilege. See how you can rationalize these things.

But it goes back to this marvelous idea we have in 3 Nephi. I've been writing like fury all morning now as a result of this. To the Christian world Adam's fall was *the sin*. It was vile and unspeakable. "It brought death into the world and all our woes," as Milton tells us, with the loss of Eden until a Greater One redeems us. There was everything nasty and vile that followed it. The early Fathers of the church tell us that it was matter and matter alone (substance) that was the defilement. That's what the Neoplatonists taught. It was what the Gnostics taught; it was what the Hermetics taught. As Plotinus said, any contact with matter would completely corrupt God himself. That's how bad matter was. Where did they get this idea, this Neoplatonic obsession that the Christian world adopted, that matter was all bad? (We were talking about Christ coming to the Nephites here.) It was in their world. They couldn't even think of existing without misbehaving. The world had become so nasty, corrupt, and decayed, as ours is becoming, that they would just equate the two: Having a body means being vile. You don't have to, you know.

In the most beautiful of all Christian hymns, "The Pearl," a very early writing, the hero leaves his happy family in heaven. They all believed in the pre-existence in those days. He says, "When I was with my Heavenly Father above . . ." He goes forth, comes down and goes to Egypt to be tested. He has to get the pearl and bring it back undefiled. But the warning is, if you go to Egypt you will be subject to defilement, and you will be tempted—and he was. If you go to Egypt you are lost. Well, the question arose: If you go to Egypt, how far do you have to sink? That depends entirely on yourself.

Does having a body make it necessary for you to be utterly vile? That has become the idiom of our time. What does the spirit lack? I should start asking questions here. Brother Havens, what is spirit lacking? What do you have that you didn't have as a spirit?

"Matter."

Exactly, substance—that’s what you have, you see. The spirit apparently doesn’t have enough. Does the spirit have enough substance? Well, enough for what? Brigham Young has a lot to say about that; he is very good on that. (Question that is not audible, about substance) Well, it is all physical. We get into quantum physics, you see. It’s all forms of energy anyway; there’s no real substance there at all, except we know it does exist. We are aware of it at various levels. Joseph Smith absolutely shocked everybody when he said “spirit is a more refined form of matter.” We had spirit bodies. You don’t just go around as a gas when you are a spirit, you see. The Christian world doesn’t know how to handle that. It has to be something like [you find] in *Dr. Who*; you have to be made out of cellophane or something like that. You shake a lot and that makes you a spirit. They didn’t know how to define spirit. Origen, the first and greatest of all the Christian theologians goes into this quite deeply. He said, “There is only one thing you can say about a spirit; it is *asomaton*.” It has no matter, no body, no photons, no electrons, no neutrons—nothing in it at all. It is just pure idea and nothing else.

The most eminent Catholic theologian in this country and this century, Étienne Gilson, wrote a book on God. His final definition of God is: “God is the self-thinking thinker who thinks only of thought.” So now you know what God is. The idea is to get away from all matter. Don’t have Christ coming down here eating with people and things like that. That’s all wrong; you can’t have that.

Well, let’s pursue that scene for a minute here. Brigham Young tells us that there are peculiar kinds of joy that you can experience here. We’re told about appetites, desires, and passions. Are they bad? Brother Hiram, are appetites, desires, and passions to be wiped out, ignored, denied, and suppressed entirely? What’s the formula? [answer inaudible] They are to be kept within the bounds that the Lord has set. They are to be there, but to be within the bounds the Lord has set. As Brigham Young tells us, these are for our edification and enjoyment, but don’t overdo them. A good example of that is in Psalm 19. I looked at this verse and then suddenly looked at the first verse and realize that this is anthropism of a high order. This takes us right into the whole problem. Psalm 19 is perhaps the one people know best, next to (Psalm 23), “The Lord Is My Shepherd.” This is what I’m talking about here (Psalm 19:5): “Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.” You rejoice to run a race—that is a physical experience. A strong man rejoices to run a race, and a bridegroom comes glowing (the word it uses is *yāšîš*) out of the bridal chamber—perfectly legitimate pleasures that they couldn’t have as spirits. This is a very interesting point.

Notice how Psalm 19 starts out.¹ This is right on this theme. It is cosmism; it deals with the cosmos. “The heavens”—always in the plural.

Sēpher is a book; *lāsappēr* is “to make known.” *Sippûr* is “an account, story or lesson.” See, they tell the story. They will tell you about the true nature of the *kəḥôd-ʾēl*, of “the greatness of God.” *Kəḥôd* means “the weight, the heaviness, the greatness, the glory, the might of God.” This is the physical heavens; you mustn’t deny them. They announce to you that God is a very powerful and glorious being.

Maʿāseh means the “deeds or performances of YHWH (Jehovah).” The workings of his hands are clear before you if you study them carefully. *Hā-rāqîaʿ* is “the other galaxies, the world beyond this world.” He uses lots of astronomical terms in this one. We all know, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth [forth] his handiwork.” But it goes further than *sheweth forth*; it means *explains*. Every single day, day by day. That word *yabbîaʿ* means “to gush forth in a great overpowering stream.” It announces his *ʿōmer*, his words, his commands, his plan for the thing. *ʿŌmer* is what he has uttered, the *logos*, the word of his mouth. From day to day and

then from night to night *yḥawweh*. That's another one; it means "to blow hard, a powerful blowing wind, an irresistible course." Day after day his utterances gush forth, in continued creation, and night by night *yḥawweh dā'at*, "he blasts forth knowledge." That's pretty strong.

There is no *ōmer* (they use that word again and again), meaning "teaching, doctrine, or knowledge." There are no words and no statements whose voices are not heard—without the hearing of their voices. We are being blasted with information whether we know it or not. The stars do send forth hints; all we get from them is hints. We have been unable to react to them. As Hawking says here, we could have known all this as early as the time of Newton; all the data we needed was there. But he says we had another plan of the universe we were sticking to, so we completely ignored it. That's what we do now. God is trying to teach us. *Bəkhōl hā-āretz* is everywhere. This is an amazing verse. There are two different sentences actually. Everywhere *yātzā*; it goes forth. It says, "His string is extended everywhere." Now what on earth does that possibly mean? The word here is *qāw*; that means "the string of a musical instrument."

Hey, I've written this all out this morning. Let me go through here. What am I bothering about this for? "Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth . . ." We've come to verse 5. Now, what rejoicing? This smacks of the anthropic principle. Man is not an observer but a participator in the universe, we are told now, in which everything is immediately influenced by everything else, including himself. So we'll read the Psalm. "The heavens declare [forth] the glory of God [and I see and react to it—declare it to me as a personal message]; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." *Yabbīa'* means "to gush forth in torrents," and *yḥawweh* means "to breathe out, to blast out knowledge." You can't control it. Verse 2 is on communication by speech, language, voice, and hearing. All those are mentioned in this verse here. (They are numbered differently in different editions.)

Arthur Clarke tells us that light and sound waves don't travel very far. They travel, but they have to be sorted out very soon. Unless we send a camera clear out to Neptune to take a photograph of the thing, we are never going to see it in a telescope. A telescope can only dissolve up to a certain point because after sound or light waves have traveled a short distance they dampen each other. You are not going to get a clear image no matter how powerful an instrument you have. The conclusion is that there is only one way known so far by which information can be conveyed over vast reaches of time and place, and that is the written word. All you need for the written word is a surface to scratch on and something to scratch with. You have something that can travel for millions of miles and deliver your message, which will not only be time and place (where you are) but what you think. Carl Sagan is [interested in] this; he is trying to write things to send out into galaxies. The written word will convey not only who you are—time, place, and your name—but your inmost thoughts and feelings, your most subtle emotions and nuances of experience and reaction, etc. All this can be conveyed in writing over thousands of years. I'm reading a text now that is positively terrifying—an Egyptian text that goes back five thousand years. Boy, what a description it is of a world gone bad way back then!

ōmer is "to utter, to make a statement, to make a claim, to make a command." There is no formula, or uniting, or putting together of words except they are all heard by someone; they must be heard by someone. Then he says *bəkhōl hā-āretz*. Then the next verse says a funny thing: Their line is extended to all the earth. What's he talking about, "their line"? That's the way they translate it; that's not the thing at all. The word is *qāw*, which is the string of a musical instrument. Here's what we say with great wisdom. This refers to the music of the spheres (you've all heard of that). It was the string of an instrument that taught Pythagoras the principles of mathematics, which have been developed ever since as the key to understanding the structure of

the universe. The way he discovered it was by plucking a string and finding that if he took half the string, it was the same note, only twice as high, etc. Then he suddenly found that the whole thing was laid out in a mathematical order. There are seven notes on the scale; the eighth is the repetition of the other one. And there are the seven spheres that go around the sun—the seven heavens. Each has its tone, and as they go around they make harmony together—each making its note. With that combination there is an infinite number of harmonies and combinations that you can make. You can figure out the factorials, how many combinations of notes you can make with eight notes. They go on to billions and billions; the song never ends. This is talking about that. It makes absolutely no sense in the King James Version—“his line is stretched in the earth.” What it says here is “through all the universe his string is stretched.”

The planet earth is *tēbēl*; whereas *’eretz* is a sweeping term that means many things. It could just mean “the land of Israel.” It could mean “the earth.” It is our word *earth*. But *tēbēl* is the earth we walk on down here; that’s *planet earth*. *Millim* is another word for *words*. To the ends of the earth the human speech reaches and the *mālēhem*, “the words discussing them.” *Mallōn* is a dictionary; that’s words put together.

Then there’s another sentence: Out of these words (this is sounding very cabbalistic here) and out of these notes, he has constructed an *’ōhel*. That simply means a *tent*, but it doesn’t mean a tent here. For words and for hearing—by these communications he has provided a frame of reference (that’s what an *’ōhel* is—a *tent* that is set up) for the suns. See, the sun is not everything; it is in a closed system here, too.

Verse 6 is a typical hymn to the sun. It sounds like relativity. The sun rises and sets as it goes through the sky. Relatively that’s correct. If you are amateur astronomers, you have to use the Nautical Almanac all the time. It tells you the time the stars rise and set and the sun rises and sets so you can find your way at sea. But anyway it always talks about sunrise and sunset. Well, how unscientific—the sun doesn’t rise and set. Oh, yes, it does if you use the Nautical Almanac and if you refer from the place you stand. Seven times in one chapter in the book of Abraham, the Lord says, “This is as it is from the place where thou standest.” It’s with reference to your standing place only. With reference to where I stand, the sun rises at a certain hour. I can walk ten steps to the east and it will rise earlier. I can walk ten steps to the west and it will rise later. That’s all I have to do. The instruments are sensitive enough for that. It’s the same thing if I go north or south. It depends entirely on where I stand, but the sun does rise and set. That’s for us, and it’s a form of this *anthropism*. *Anthropos* is man. The whole structure depends on our viewpoint. You can’t view it now without being affected, or without affecting it—that’s the surprising thing.

Let’s see what else it says here. Comparing the laws of nature and the laws of science by which the world is governed . . . Oh, this next verse is a beauty. This takes us to something that wasn’t supposed to have been discovered until the twelfth century, *Tabula Smaragdina*, which is called “The Mystery of the Kāf” and “The Mystery of the O,” the great circle. Here it calls it the *kāf*, an amazing thing. *Kāf* is the Arabic letter, but it is not the Hebrew letter. The interesting thing is that it goes back to the old *kāf*.

What is this thing that comes to the end? I don’t know what it calls it in the King James. Does someone have a King James here? Here it’s in verse 7. What is it in yours?

“The circuit.”

Ah ha, it uses the *circuit*, and here it uses the word *tāqūphātō*. The word for *circuit* is the word *kāf* here. That tells me a great deal. We won’t go into that, but that’s an amazing thing because this

kāf is not the Hebrew letter. It's not written that way. Well, it was once; the archaic letter was that. But that's what it is talking about, the cycle or the *kāf*. Then it says the law of God belongs exactly in the same system; it belongs with this. The law of God is *tāmîm*, perfect; that means a complete circle. "Job was an upright and a perfect man," doesn't mean he was the greatest who ever lived. It means he completed the circle; he did all he should do. *Tāmîm* means "a complete circle." It's an Arabic word; in Babylonian it's the same thing. How big does a circle have to be to be a perfect circle? It can be any size you want. The idea is the form, and it's a closed circle. It has to be an equal distance from the center at all points; then it's a circle. That's the word it used. The law of God is *tāmîm*; it's perfect in that regard.

Māshîbāh means *repeating* or *bringing to repentance*. This means "bringing to the spirit a reminder of its true nature." You know what the *yeshiva* is. That's the *atonement*; that's coming back again. It's "bring the spirit back home." That's what we call *at-one-ment*, coming back again. What a thing! Then the knowledges (plural) of Jehovah are absolutely secure; you can say *amen* to them. You must say *amen*; that's part of an ordinance. When somebody prays or blesses the sacrament, people don't say *amen* anymore. You must—that's required. You're not participating if you don't say *amen*. It means "confirmed, be steady, stay where it is." I confirm that—*amen*, and you should say *amen*. *Ahmen* is a Latin term. We think it is a highfalutin sound. But the Semitic term is *amen*, as we say it. [Translating again:] And the knowledge of the Lord is most certain. *Maḥkîmah* is wisdom of a direct and simple sort; you can't argue with it. *Petî* means "the simplicity of a child." Remember, when the Lord came to the Nephites, the first thing he wanted was for them to be like children. This is "the making of wisdom with the simplicity of children." What a thing to say.

Verse 9: It brings conviction with it. It is the conviction of God. *Yōshārîm* is *upright, perfect, proper, of the righteous*—from the secrets of the heart. *Māsamḥê-lēb* protects you from all confusion. The idea is that all you have to do is think about these things. "Relax and let it work on you" is what he is telling here. Verse 10 is an example: The fear of the Lord is purity. The laws that God has set down are true, and they are consistent—they are all the same together. They are consistent with each other; you can test them that way. As they tell us, you never ask anymore if a thing is true or not, but whether it is consistent. Does it work? There are some very striking statements here on that sort of thing.

Then it is desirable; it is lovable. *Ha-neḥēmādîm* is the same root as *Muhammad*. "It is more desirable than gold," is what it says. The word is actually *lovable*. Remember, Brigham Young said you should seek knowledge because you love it. You should seek truth because it is lovable and desirable. That's why—not because it will get you something to eat or it will bring you higher income. He says, forget that. "Greater is its sweetness than honey and the runny honeycomb." *Nōphet* means *to run*, where the honey runs out of the honeycomb. It's sweeter than when you are sucking a honeycomb, you see.

There's a little more here: Moreover, we are admonished by these teachings for our own lives. He was talking about the cosmos; now he is talking about us. In observing these ordinances and commandments, in accepting these facts, there is a great reward or consequence. *Ēqeb* means *consequence*. I think they render it *reward*. If you follow these admonitions that are clear from the Lord [there is a reward]. You know them directly. They are sweet to your taste. Remember, Joseph Smith said, "How do I know that's true? Because it tastes good." A thing will hit you directly if it's true. He tells us here "it tastes good."

I must have neglected this little psalm because it has everything in it; it's amazing.

Then the next one: *Nistār* is the same in Egyptian and Greek; it means “secretly, unknown, caught off guard.” The word *shəgî’ôt* is *tripping* or *slipping*. It’s a *skipping step*, a dithyramb actually. “Whoever slips or makes a mistake in it unaware will know clearly where he stands,” is what it actually tells us. What does verse 13 say? *Mî-yābîn* means “to distinguish, to know, to understand clearly, to exercise intelligence.” The things he has done unaware will be clear to him. That’s what it means. If you’ve made any mistakes that you are unaware of, you will be cleared by them. What does it say [in the King James Version]? Does anyone have this?

I think it is verse 12 in here. It says, “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.”

“Cleanse thou me from secret faults.” There you are. It’s not *secret* faults, but *unintentional* faults. They are hidden from you. In Greek *sathra* means “a hidden ulcer or sore.” It cleanses me from things I’ve committed unintentionally, rather than hidden sins.

Then the big sin—the next one is *pride*. “You will deliver your servant from pride by this rule.” *Ētān* means “standing alone independently.” A *yatīm* in Arabic is a person with no family support, an orphan. That’s the same word here. “Thou wilt purify me from a great sin.” That must be what it means. “The words of my mouth shall be for a favor, and the utterances of my heart before thy fact, O Jehovah, my rescue and my Redeemer.” He ends that way. The point about this, when we untangle it, is that it takes us right into the midst of things, as the Book of Mormon does. You just wait; we’ll see about that.

Now, the supreme example of this anthropic principle, or the unity of everything, is in chapter 7 of Moses. Notice the expressions he uses here in verse 30: “the particles of the earth, yea, million of earths like this, . . . and thy curtains are stretched out still; and yet thou art there [there’s the anthropic principle—wherever you go you are there], and thy bosom is there; and also thou art just.” You are there, even to your bosom. Moses 7:24: “And Enoch was high and lifted up, even in the bosom of the Father, and of the Son of Man.” What are these? They are all embraced in one single—not system, because there’s no end to it. It embraces everything. This is right in line with what they [scientists] are talking about these days.

Moses 7:31: “And thou hast taken Zion to thine own bosom, from all thy creations [all the creations are there; they are all one, and he can take one out], from all eternity to all eternity.” It is endless. Verse 36: “Wherefore, I can stretch forth mine hands and hold all the creations which I have made; and mine eye can pierce them also.” A little while ago we would have said, that’s absurd. How could the same man who walked around here be doing all that? This is something, but this is the way it works now—as we shall see, I suppose. Verse 37: “And the whole heavens shall weep over them [when one world has to be destroyed the whole heavens shall weep for them], even all the workmanship of mine hands.” They all weep because they all had a share in it; they are all together. You can’t separate one from the system. I’ll have to find some of those passages; there are some very good ones here. In just a second I will. “Wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?”

See, every world contributes to all the other worlds, so no two worlds are alike. An infinite number of combinations are possible. It’s not monotonous, in other words. “And it shall be Zion which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made.” Each one emerges out of the others and shares with all the others. Notice, never in all the scriptures does the Lord ever imply or say, there are no creations but mine. He never says that at all. He says, these are my creations; this is what I do, etc.

On page 125 Hawking says, “It seems clear that there are relatively few ranges of values for the numbers that would allow the development of any form of intelligent life.” In creating the world,

as various scientists have recently observed, there are innumerable ways in which things could have gone wrong, but only one way in which they could have gone right. That's against all laws of chance, probability, and everything else. It's one to infinity. It shouldn't happen accidentally. On page 128 he says he finds it hard to credit the strong anthropic principle that this whole vast construction exists simply for our sake. Well, it doesn't; there are other creations. There are worlds without number, but it is also for our sake because we are in it. He goes on: "There does not seem to be any need for all these other galaxies [no, not if there's nobody in them] nor for the universe to be [and this is equally amazing] so uniform and similar in every direction."

Those other worlds are uniform and similar, as in "the other worlds we have heretofore formed." Everything follows the same pattern. It doesn't make them monotonous, but the point is they're all the same substance, all by the same principle. He says those two things are absolutely astounding—that there should be all these other worlds, as far as we know, and along with that they are also uniform, all made of the same substance. The possibility of other worlds is made almost certain by billions of other galaxies. The second is that it's the same everywhere, "like unto other worlds I have hitherto created." Is it monotonous? No, they are all alike, but they are all different. As he says, each one comes out of all the others. They share the common existence. (We just shared those passages.) They weep because they all had a share in the creation of each. There is no end that we can see to them. This is again what Hawking writes: "The quantum theory of gravity has opened up a new possibility in which there would be no boundary to space/time ['from eternity to eternity'; there's no boundary to space/time]. The boundary condition of the universe is that it has no boundary. The universe would be completely self-contained and not affected by anything outside itself. It would be neither created nor destroyed; it would just be." Carl Sagan thinks this rules out God, and he is greatly relieved that we can never close the book on the picture, nor can we on the gospel. That's what it means.

Then another one from Hawking: "Any model that described the whole universe in detail would be much too complicated mathematically for us to be ever able to calculate its predictions [so we're not going to find it, but that doesn't mean we can't keep looking. What do you do in a case like that?] One has, therefore, to make simplifying assumptions and approximations." That's what we just read in this psalm here. That's a simplifying assumption and approximation, trying to say the same thing. He says if we are going to try to figure it all out in detail mathematically, it can't be done. [It's not possible] for us to be able to calculate exact predictions; therefore, "one has to make simplifying assumptions and approximations. Even then, the problem of extracting predictions remains a formidable one."

Let's see what else I put down here. 3 Nephi is like a thrust stage, one of these forward stages, with everything brightly illuminated and standing out in all dimensions. This is in contrast to the flat, faded ancient mural of the New Testament, which is a two-dimensional thing. The spirit doesn't just stand out that way. We have slighted the Book of Mormon. We prefer the New Testament, statistically overwhelmingly. Someone went through all the conference reports to see who quoted most from which, and by far the most quoted work is the New Testament. The Book of Mormon is hardly quoted at all. Very interesting. A General Authority told me that at the conference where President Benson introduced the keynote of the conference, the Book of Mormon, after that nobody mentioned it. That's typical. We don't like it. Why? We prefer the New Testament because it gives us more license and liberty to wax emotional, inventive, and sentimental and interpret things our way. The Book of Mormon won't let you do that. It comes right down here. But when we want to make it live we hire Harry Anderson, the Seventh-Day Adventist artist, who is very literal. That won't work. 3 Nephi, though vividly real, is low key. It's the world as we see it; there are no special effects there. There's no George Lucas or Steven Spielberg there at all. You expect all things to break loose; nothing breaks loose there.

This admonishes us to look at the New Testament again, and we overlooked one of the best verses of all. That's in the wonderful chapter 21 of John. This is the third time the Lord appeared. And if

you want literalism, listen to this. Why do they make John the most mystical? Because if they accept him for what he says, he is crassly physical, as they put it here. Lapidé, one of the most famous Catholic commentators, says it's an "outrageous, insulting thing," what it says about Jesus. This is the way it goes, and it's great stuff I think. This will go [faster] than that stumbling psalm. The psalms are very archaic; they are hard to read. I haven't done it for ages anyway.

"After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples on the seashore of Tiberias, and this is how it happened." It happens that Simon Peter along with Thomas, the one called his twin, and Nathanael, who was from Cana in Galilee (there were other Canas all over the place), and the two sons of Zebedee, who were disciples also [were present]. Peter said to them, "I'm going fishing." Well, he did go swimming; he loved to swim. The earliest record we have, the *Clementine Recognitions*, tell us how Clement met him on the beach. They were having a conference at Caesarea, and Peter would get up very early in the morning and go down and swim in the ocean. Nobody else would, but he would go down there and swim and run up and down the beach. That's where Clement met him. So Peter was a very rugged person. But Peter said, "I'm going fishing."

They said to him, "We'll go with you, and we'll all be together." So they all went out and went into the boat. They fished by night; the guppies run better. That night they didn't catch a thing. When it started to be daylight, there was Jesus standing on the beach. That's a surprising thing. They didn't recognize that it was Jesus. Again, he's not appearing in chariots of fire or clouds of glory—just an ordinary man standing on the beach. They didn't even recognize him—just like Mary thought he was a gardener. He called out to them and said, *paidia*. That means *fellows* or *boys*, an affectionate way a teacher addresses his students—just as a colonel in the Russian army calls his men *dyeti*, *children*. So he said, "Boys [*kids* would be all right], have you had anything to eat yet?"

They answered and said, "No."

He said to them, "Try casting your nets on the right side of the boat, and you will find something." So they acted accordingly. They threw the nets on the right side. They couldn't draw in the nets fast enough because they were full of fish already. They ran into a school of fish, in other words. Then the disciple who was with him, the one they called "the beloved one . . ." Now, is John being modest when he refers to himself never by name, but as "the disciple that Jesus loved"? I think he is giving himself a medal every time he says that. The disciple that Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord." Simon Peter, hearing that it was the Lord, hustled into his clothes because he had been naked while they were fishing. That's a good word [hustled] for it, isn't it? He hustled into his clothes and jumped into the sea of Galilee to reach him at a distance. But the other disciples wisely remained in the boat, he says, because they weren't very far from the shore, about two hundred cubits which is almost exactly a hundred yards. They were just a hundred yards out from the shore. Peter was a powerful swimmer, and he jumped in first. It doesn't say he walked on the water on this occasion, but he jumped in first to get to the Lord. He could beat the boat. Peter was a top man in more than one thing; he was quite an athlete.

They were dragging the net of fish behind them, of course, and that would slow them down. When they finally reached the land and got out of the boat, they saw that a fire had already been built on the beach and Jesus had already fried some fish for them. Now this is altogether too much to take—that the apostles should meet with him around a smoky fire on a sandy beach and eat a beach picnic of broiled fish that Jesus had fixed for them because they hadn't had breakfast yet. Now can you get more down to earth than that? They [Christian scholars] said, this is positively insulting. He shouldn't do this. Is this the King of Glory?

Then they saw the coals burning and cooked fish lying upon them, and bread. He had it all ready for them. (It's the miracle of the loaves and fishes again, only he fixes them this time.) He says,

“Come up here.” Peter came and drew in the net onto the shore, and it was so full of fish that it had broken. There were 153 fish. Everybody at this 153 gives an enormous sigh of relief. “That must be a symbolic number,” they say. “This didn’t really happen; this is a mystery.” Because it told us the exact number of fish, just showing what a good catch they had, this proves that we are in a mystical world, and this really didn’t happen. Jesus couldn’t make it clearer. He said to them, “Come and have breakfast.”

It’s very funny, but in the first lesson of White’s *Grammar*, the most elementary Greek grammar, that’s one of the words you learn in the vocabulary. *Aristeuein* is “to have breakfast.” There was one precious sentence in an old grammar which the student had to translate: “We love to destroy the queen’s girdle during breakfast.” Now, that makes no sense but it exercises your vocabulary. It’s rather a silly thing to be doing—destroying a queen’s girdle during breakfast. But “come up and have breakfast” is exactly what Jesus said to them. And none of them dared to ask him questions. They didn’t dare to ask, “Who are you?” Well, they should know. They saw that it was the Lord. Then Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, just as if it was the sacrament, and the baked fish at the same time. And this was the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after he had risen from the dead. This is the resurrected Jesus. When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?” He started talking to them there. But what could you ask more than that? We are coming really down to earth here.

Some pious commentators, like the great Lapide, find it revolting and shocking. All week now I’ve had visits, letters, calls, and complaints. People find themselves perplexed as if their minds were darkened or something. What distresses them is that nobody answers the questions or will touch these things with a forty-foot pole. In the Sunday School everything is on the creation now. This takes us back to some really elementary questions, and they don’t like to handle them. Usually, if they ask somebody they are turned off or even rebuked by some local authority. The stake president or temple president tells them to accept and not make trouble for themselves or others. That’s no good, but if scientists can live with such galling limitations [we can]. As Hawking says, we are going to have to live with them forever. We’ve just got to make our simplifications; we’ll never be able to solve it. Why can’t the priesthood do the same? If we shed our vanity, the limitations aren’t galling—they’re delightful. There’s work to be done, great problems to get with it. Unexplored territory is always the most exciting.

Hawking says a very interesting thing here: “We have seen in this chapter how in less than half a century [that’s since I’ve been at BYU, in other words] man’s view of the universe formed over millennia, has been transformed. Even Einstein’s general theory of relativity cannot tell us how the universe started off because it predicts that all physical theories, including itself, break down at the beginning of the universe.” This breakdown didn’t cause the physicists to resign in disgust—though the head of the Physics Department at Harvard in 1928, in a famous story that’s told a lot—told the students that it was all over; there was nothing else more to do. Just as Professor Linforth, my professor at Berkeley in Greek, told me there was nothing else to be done in ancient history. It had all been done, and we knew everything that happened. He actually told me that, and he was the top man in the country in that field.

It spurred them on to quantum mechanics; that is what happened. Two interesting facts emerge here on one page. He [Hawking] says, “The laws of science contain many fundamental numbers. They are constants which can be learned only by observation [we can’t invent them; we can’t discover them by thinking]. Nobody knows why. It is also possible that some or all of the numbers vary from universe to universe, or within a single universe. It’s possible that they may not have the same constants that we have. [What is most remarkable and commented on with wonder by everybody is] the remarkable fact that the values of these numbers seem to have been finely adjusted to make possible the development of life. [Then he says it seems clear, as we mentioned before:] There are relatively few ranges of values of numbers that would allow any

form of intelligent life. Everything could have gone wrong. It just has to be certain numbers. He says we don't know whether they apply in other universes, but we know there are other universes. Yet we know they are all one; we know they are all together. Well, this thing is really quite something, isn't it?

We should get back to 3 Nephi which is the greatest revelation we have of this. This makes everything come out; we shall see that. Read it again. Remember, seventeen chapters are devoted to the mission of Jesus among the Nephites here after the Resurrection, which is something.

1. Dr. Nibley translated it himself.