


Joseph Smith and Process Theology

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n the early 1950s, Dr. Daniel S. Robinson, head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Southern California, delivered a lecture in which he attempted to expose the fallacies of the finite God concept, a view that sees God as limited either by internal or by external forces over which he does not have immediate and complete control. His principal argument was that such a concept reduces God to a temporal being existing within the time continuum. A student at the time, I was struck with considerable force that the finite God he was describing bore a marked resemblance to what I understood to be the Utah Mormon God concept. I had been nurtured in the conviction that Utah Mormon beliefs in a changing God were contrary to clearly stated scriptural descriptions of a God who “change[s] not.”

As a result of this experience, I began to study the writings of those American philosophers who were generally classified as finitists, including Edgar A. Brightman, William P. Montague, Alfred North Whitehead, Charles Hartshorne, and others. I was particularly impressed with Brightman’s *The Problem of God* (New York: Abbingdon Press, 1931). I wrote my master’s thesis in 1954 on “Some Representative Concepts of a Finite God in Contemporary American Philosophy with Reference to the God Concepts of the Utah Mormons” and included some further development of the finite concept in my doctoral dissertation in 1962.¹

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¹ Garland E. Tickemyer, “A Study of Some Representative Concepts of a Finite God in Contemporary American Philosophy with Application to the God Concepts of the Utah Mormons” (M.A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1954); Garland E. Tickemyer, “The Philosophy of Joseph Smith and Its Educational Implications” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1963).

By this time I was thoroughly convinced that Mormon theology placed God in a limited and temporal mold long before nineteenth and twentieth century philosophers developed any such theories. It was also apparent that although Orson Pratt was principally responsible for the systematized form in which Utah Mormon metaphysical views were cast, the original ideas for those views were either expressed or implied in concepts that were first developed by the Prophet Joseph.

I was also intrigued by the conviction that the germinal ideas expressed by Joseph Smith could serve as the basis for development of a neo-Restoration theology that would benefit from contributions of contemporary philosophic thought. Even though finitism, anthropomorphism, and polytheism may have been interconnected in their organic development, I believed that finitism could be divorced from the anthropomorphic polytheistic form in which it was cast by early Mormon theologians.

Some years after my initial studies, I first heard the term "process theology." I read Gilkey's *Naming the Whirlwind*² and discovered that process theology is a further development of the finitism that I had discovered in Whitehead in my earlier research.

For over twenty-five years I had viewed with frustrated concern the trend toward rejection of Mormon roots, as reconstructive forces in the RLDS Church moved steadily in the direction of accommodation to Protestant liberalism. I was also disturbed by statements of my Utah friends indicating that the LDS Church was leaning toward Protestant neo-orthodoxy as a negative reaction to anthropomorphic polytheism. In a personal letter, Dr. Sterling McMurrin said, "They thirst after the accolades of the Protestant pulpit."³ My efforts to create an interest in the development of a neo-Restoration theology that would enable the RLDS branch of Mormonism to maintain some continuity with its historical beginning had, with a very few exceptions, fallen on deaf ears. The direction of change pointed toward eventual absorption of what could be a liberal branch of Mormonism into the mainstream of Protestantism. Conservative RLDS members resist such a trend and some general officers who are allowing it to happen do so only because they see no acceptable alternatives.

The most encouraging current development is the interest that some of the very capable young theology students of the RLDS Church are taking in process theology.⁴ As yet they have shown no awareness of the relationship which exists between process theology and the teachings of Joseph Smith, but perhaps this relationship will become apparent as they remove the anthropomorphic-polytheistic blinders that prejudice them against limited

² Langdon Gilkey, *Naming the Whirlwind, The Renewal of God Language* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969).

³ Sterling McMurrin to G. E. Tickemyer, 16 March 1952.

⁴ The recent affirmative response of Sterling McMurrin to Floyd M. Ross's paper, "Process Theology and Mormon Thought," *Sunstone* 7 (Jan.-Feb. 1982): 17, indicates that liberal Utah Mormons recognize that "important fundamental similarities exist between Mormon theology and Whitehead's metaphysics." Sterling McMurrin, "Response: Comment on a Paper by Floyd M. Ross," *Sunstone* 7 (Jan.-Feb. 1982): 26.

God concepts and reconsider possible values in the Nauvoo period theological developments.

Process theology is a theological system based on theories of God and creation which were originally developed by Alfred North Whitehead, a brilliant scientist and philosopher in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Process theologians generally agree that God is limited either by internal or by external forces over which he does not have immediate and complete control. As the composite of all emergent entities, God is himself an entity. He is temporal and has subjective aims for which he struggles to achieve satisfaction. He is constantly increasing and is an integral part of the whole process of reality. God is not *before* all creation but is *with* all reality. All occasions emerging in the physical world are absorbed into God and add to his reality. Human beings' actions have meaning for and are of concern to God. God is involved in constant change as the entire universe evolves. God is not all-powerful for he is limited by the individual freedom of every emerging occasion. Each new occasion is a composite of all previous occasions, but it is more than the sum of its parts. It is the sum of its parts plus one.

To view God as struggling, suffering, and achieving (as process and Mormon theology both do) is a radical departure from concepts of the Greeks and the early Church Fathers who describe him as the unmoved mover, the first cause. Viewed as complete and perfect being, he cannot be affected by anything that occurs in the universe. He cannot experience changing emotions or feelings. He exists outside of time; and all past, present, and future events are immediate to his awareness. A complete, self-contained, perfect *being* without needs, his intrinsic glory cannot be added to nor diminished by anything that occurs in the universe. He is unaffected by what human beings suffer or achieve. Both process and Mormon theologies depart from orthodoxy in affirming that man's salvation does benefit God. Latter Day revelation says: "And there is no end to my works, neither to my words; for behold this is my work and my glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39; RLDS D&C 22:23). If God's glory can be increased, then to that extent he is unfulfilled.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

If it is affirmed that God is the Absolute — unlimited in power and being both as essence and as actuality, and perfect in goodness — we are confronted with the insoluble problem of the existence of evil. How can an all-powerful and wholly good God permit the existence of evil in a universe designed to exalt those very virtues of which evil is the antithesis? Resolution of this problem demands a limitation either in God's goodness or in his power.

It may be argued, as the Book of Mormon states, that there "must needs be . . . an opposition" (2 Ne. 2:15; RLDS 1:97). But a staged situation in which God provides the possibility of evil as a foil against which human beings can strengthen their wills is not very satisfactory, for it poses the problem of whether God or the devil is the author of evil. If God is the author of the play,

then he is responsible for its content. If evil is some disguised or indirect form of good, as some believe, then it may be our duty to abet it, not to oppose it.

EVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE, STAGED OR REAL?

The evident use of means and contrivances in nature to attain ends indicates that God is a being who cannot secure his ends directly but is working under limitations. There is evidence of design in nature; there is also evidence of frustration of design and of delay in its achievement. Nature seems to display prodigality and wastefulness. Entire species perish and are known only through their fossil remains. Many forms of life are seemingly trivial and others, such as disease germs and parasites, are destructive and harmful. On the other hand, the law and the progress evident in nature, the adaptations of life to environment and environment to life, the origination of higher and higher forms, all make it evident that evolution is purposive.

Putting these two aspects together, we are led to say that nature is the work of a power that is achieving its ends in the face of what seems to be opposition. There is evidence of design in nature; there is also evidence of frustration of design and of delay in its achievement. The process view of God is more compatible with recognition of the reality of struggle in nature than is the traditional view of an omnipotent and benevolent creator.

FREEDOM AND DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE

Josiah Royce speaks for the Absolutists in asserting that God exists outside of time and that all events — past, present, and future — are immediate to his awareness. Representing the limited God viewpoint, Brightman says, "If man is truly free, God must be finite as regards his knowledge. . . . Man's freedom is actually a limitation on the foreknowledge of God."⁵ Whitehead's position is that God is powerless before the individual freedom of each individual moment, implying that even though the course of events is shaped by a divine will and purpose, those ends cannot be achieved simply by willing them.

The book of Abraham account of a heavenly council held to determine how salvation was to be achieved is, in Mormon theology, a clear indication that the method was not yet determined (Abr. 4-5).

FINITISM IN RESTORATION THEOLOGY

The origin of Restoration finitism is somewhat uncertain. There is no evidence of any link between its introduction into Mormonism and any other philosophic system of which we are now aware. It would have been a fairly simple progression in thought from the theory of eternal progression as it relates to mankind which was developed and published by Thomas Dick in 1830⁶ to the idea of progression of deity itself, though nowhere does Dick express such a view. In the absence of clear evidence of redactional influence,

⁵ Edgar S. Brightman, *The Problem of God* (New York: Abington Press, 1930), p. 102.

⁶ Thomas Dick, *The Philosophy of a Future State* (Brookfield, Mass.: E. & G. Merriam, 1830).

we are justified in assuming that finitism in Mormonism was the product of Mormon thought.

The most able philosopher in the early church was Orson Pratt. The Church is undoubtedly indebted to him for the first serious attempt to formulate the doctrine of finite deities into a metaphysical system. He, in turn, attributed the teaching to Joseph Smith. Pratt's distinction between God as infinite being with respect to principles of light, truth, and knowledge and God as actualized (finite) being, a distinction on which he and Brigham Young disagreed,⁷ does raise questions as to whether Joseph Smith made such a distinction.

Although we have numerous fragmentary references to theistic pluralism and evolution in statements of the Prophet prior to his death, nowhere do we find an overall statement of those views that he could have examined and approved prior to publication. The fact that he failed to do so suggests that the ideas may not have matured in his thinking to the point where he desired to set them forth in written form, or, that they developed so late in his life that his untimely death prevented their being written down.

The clearest enunciation of the finite concept is contained in the King Follett funeral sermon delivered 7 April 1844 at a General Conference of the Church and in an address delivered on 16 June 1844, eleven days before his death. Although leaders in both the LDS and the RLDS churches have been cautious in placing their stamp of approval on the reported version of the King Follett sermon, recent examination of the original sources from which the report was compiled attest to its accuracy on the doctrinal points included in it.⁸

In both addresses the Prophet forthrightly endorses spiritual pluralism represented in a council of Gods: "I shall comment on the very first Hebrew word in the Bible; . . . Berosheit. . . 'The head one of the Gods brought forth the Gods.' That is the true meaning of the words. . . . Thus the head God brought forth the gods in the grand councils."⁹

The Prophet had said that intelligence is not created. He had also said that the elements are eternal (LDS D&C 93:29; RLDS 90:5). This lays the foundation for a primordial dualism which is actually developed into pluralism. Pluralism appears to be quite fundamental in Mormon thinking. Not only are the spirits of persons self-existent manifestations of this primordial and uncreated intelligence, but the elements are also eternal and uncreated. F. Henry Edwards recognized this point in his *Commentary on the Doctrine and Cove-*

⁷ Blake Ostler, "The Idea of Pre-Existence in the Development of Mormon Thought," *DIALOGUE* 15 (Spring 1982): 64-66.

⁸ Donald Q. Cannon, "The King Follett Discourse: Joseph Smith's Greatest Sermon in Historical Perspective," *BYU Studies* 18 (Winter 1978): 179 and Stan Larsen, "The King Follett Discourse, a Newly Amalgamated Text, *ibid.*, p. 193. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, comp. and ed., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), pp. 340-62, prints the exact wording of the original notes of Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff, Thomas Bullock, and William Clayton recorded during the prophet's address from which the King Follett funeral address was reconstructed. The reconstruction appears to faithfully reflect the content and, so far as humanly possible, the exact words used by the prophet in the original address.

⁹ "Conference Minutes," *Times and Seasons* 5 (1 Aug. 1844): 614.

nants: "Evidently the world was not created from nothing, but was created out of previously existent matter."¹⁰

In the second address at Nauvoo, Joseph interprets the Hebrew to read, "The head of the Gods called the Gods together. . . . The head one of the Gods said, let us make a man in our own image."¹¹

In the book of Abraham, of which Joseph is the undisputed author or translator, the supreme God is represented as standing in the presence of lesser but nevertheless uncreated and eternal spirits. Abraham is informed that he was one of those spirits, while God and Christ were more intelligent than the others (Abr. 3:19-22).

Reference to theistic pluralism also occurs in the original of the Liberty Jail letter dated 25 March 1839, which is preserved in the Utah church archives and speaks of a "Council of Gods."

On 1 March 1843, the *Times and Seasons* carried an article by Orson Pratt which explains:

A plan was formed in the councils of heaven, it was contemplated by the great author of our existence, Eloheim, Jehovah, to redeem the earth from the curse. Hence when the Gods deliberated about the formation of man, it was known that he would fall and that the Savior was provided who was to redeem and to restore, who was indeed the "lamb slain from the foundation of the earth."¹²

Expanding on the revelation given by the Prophet which states that both matter and intelligence are eternal and that intelligence was in the beginning with God, Pratt developed a theory of creation on the basis of atomistic materialism. He holds that matter and intelligence are of a material substance and have relationship both to time and to space. In their primal disorganized state they pre-existed all organized intelligence, including God. Particles of this disorganized matter have individuality, and similarity between any two is only accidental. They exist in time and space in which there is also motion, possess an affinity for each other, and tend toward union to form organized units of intelligence. Such concentrations of intelligence constitute an innumerable host of uncreated persons, says Pratt. Through almost an infinity of time, two of these organized masses of intelligence advanced to supremacy over all other organized intelligences and became God the Father and Jesus Christ. Pratt explains emerging deity as follows:

That portion of this one simple elementary substance which possess the most superior knowledge prescribes laws for its own action, and for the action of all other portions of the same substance which possesses inferior intelligence and thus there is a law

¹⁰ F. Henry Edwards, *Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants* (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1946), p. 294. In *A New Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants* (Herald House, 1977), p. 330, Edwards changed his position, stating, "This can hardly mean that the elements coexist with God from eternity to eternity. If this was so, then they are not created and are to that degree independent of God. The sentence is better understood in light of Section 18:2d (RLDS)/Section 19:11-12 (LDS) by which we can understand that the elements are of God, who is eternal."

¹¹ *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, B. H. Roberts, ed., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1959) 6: 475.

¹² Orson Pratt, "The Elias," *Times and Seasons* 4 (1 March 1843): 121.

given to all things according to their capacities, their wisdom, their knowledge, and their advancement in the grand school of the universe.¹³

The spiritual pluralism developed by Pratt is similar to that of William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

The only obvious escape from paradox here is to cut loose from monistic assumption altogether and to allow the world to have existed from its origin in pluralistic form as an aggregate or collection of higher and lower things and principles, rather than an absolutely unitary fact. . . . I feel bound to say that religious experience, as we have studied it, cannot be cited as unequivocally supporting the infinitist belief. . . . Beyond each man and in a fashion continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and to his ideals. All that the facts require is that the power should be both other and larger than our conscious selves. . . . It need not be infinite, it need not be solitary. The universe might conceivably be a collection of such selves, of different degrees of inclusiveness.¹⁴

Whitehead holds that God has no temporal priority, that he is not before all creation but with all creation. In God's primordial state "we must ascribe to him neither fullness of feeling, nor consciousness." This description sounds very much like Hegel's *idea* as ultimate reality which he describes as a blind unconscious essence endowed with a potential for becoming. Schopenhauer used *will* to describe the primal essence, a will which moves toward increasingly complex forms at ever-ascending levels of being.¹⁵

Early Mormon views were influenced by pre-Einsteinian atomistic materialism which is scientifically outdated, but these views are compatible with modern process theology by substituting *essence* for *atoms*.

In his "dipolar" description of God, Whitehead affirms that God is "deficient and unconscious" in his primordial state. The other side of God's nature is his actualized being which is derived from physical experience in the temporal world. Joseph Smith's statement that God did not create the world out of nothing but "formed" it out of pre-existing matter is in harmony with Whitehead's statement that "he does not create the world, he saves it." Whitehead continues in an echo of Smith's concept of eternal progression: "The World is the multiplicity of finites, actualities seeking a perfected unity. Neither God, nor the world reaches static completion. Both are in the grip of the ultimate metaphysical ground, the creative advance into novelty."¹⁶

In the book of Moses, Joseph Smith records statements of God describing a concept of cosmic advance: "Worlds without number have I created. . . . And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come, and there is no end to my works, neither to my words" (Moses 1:33; RLDS D&C 22:21).

¹³ Orson Pratt, *Great First Cause*, (pamphlet) (Liverpool, 1 Jan. 1851), p. 15.

¹⁴ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1908), p. 525.

¹⁵ Irwin Edman, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (New York: Carlton House, n.d.). Second Book, *The World as Will*, pp. 110-11.

¹⁶ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1929), p. 407.

Orson Pratt held that the materials of the universe have not attained the fullness of their ultimate possibilities and that endless ages shall open "new glories, and new laws, and new modes of action" and that human beings will continue to progress in the "grand universal, and eternal scale of being."¹⁷

On 27 December 1832, seventeen years before Pratt wrote his *Great First Cause*, Joseph Smith, who was then only twenty-seven years old, delivered a most remarkable prophecy in which he identifies the Holy Spirit as an elementary simple substance which is in all things and is the power by which all things are made. He said:

Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, . . . This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, . . . This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which they were made; And the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand. And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understanding; Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space — The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things. (LDS D&C 88:7-13; RLDS 85:2-3).

In commenting on this prophecy, Orson Pratt says that if all things were broken down to their smallest component parts we would find that all of the ponderable substances of nature, together with light, heat, and electricity, and even spirit itself, all originated from one elementary simple substance, possessing a living, self-moving force, with intelligence sufficient to govern it in all its infinitude of combinations and operations, producing all the immense variety of phenomena constantly taking place throughout the wide domains of universal nature.¹⁸

Pratt holds that self-moving particles of intelligent substance have united and through eons of time have evolved into two glorious personages whose substance, knowledge, wisdom, and goodness, though eternal, at the same time represent the highest point of development in an ever-ascending scale of being.

It should be noted that Pratt distinguishes between God as one infinite being with respect to the great principles of light and truth, or knowledge, and God as finite with respect to actualization in individual tabernacles. This distinction raises some question as to whether his concept can be regarded as ultimately polytheistic. Pratt's concept resembles Fechner's "circles within a circle," also Leibniz's "Monad of Monads." Christ as incarnate deity and God as unmanifest deity would also fit this concept.

The all-powerful substance out of which God himself evolved possesses the potential for development of myriad personal spirits of like character and ultimate power. This, in fact, explains the origin and nature of man. The Prophet's statement is that "man was also in the beginning with God. . . . Intelligence . . . was not created." Pratt's position appears to be that out of

¹⁷ Pratt, *Great First Cause*, p. 14.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

pre-existing eternal matter God formed spiritual bodies and implanted within them a pre-existent divine spark. He shoved those bits of incarnate intelligence on their way, and the fact of their primal independence of all other intelligence accounts for their inherent freedom of will. Pratt held that God did not create intelligent beings; he formed them, and he has limited control over them.

According to Whitehead, God is not an all-powerful, arbitrary ruler of the earth. He is, in fact, powerless before the freedom of each individual moment.

In all of the previous citations, it will be seen that there is a remarkable parallel between process theology and early Restoration views.

W. H. Chamberlin, a twentieth-century Mormon philosopher whose works are now receiving more careful examination by Mormon scholars than they received during his lifetime, expressed views similar to those held by process theologians:

If the all-pervasive cosmic power is that of a Person who has his own purposes, and is himself a reality, acting and growing in an environment of which we and similar minds are a part, this person has habits and groups of habits similar to those by means of which we have grown and now live. . . . It is not sufficient, however, to think of this complex as a simple federation of lives like our own; the theory demands the presence of a higher order of individuality It postulates the existence of one greater person, or God, who is immanent in the world, forms the ground of interaction between lesser minds, and is the final harmonizing agency.¹⁹

PRESENT TRENDS IN UTAH

The present Utah church appears to be confused by conflicts between some liberal Mormon scholars who see values in theistic finitism and a conservative trend that would accommodate conservative Protestant theology. The late President Joseph Fielding Smith explained to me that God was indeed once a man who has progressed to the level of perfection but that he does continue to progress in the accumulation of more worlds.²⁰ The implications of material accumulations being interpreted as qualitative growth are not altogether complimentary to God.

Many years ago, George T. Boyd, an able Mormon scholar and a fellow classmate of mine at the University of Southern California, told me that in all his contacts with Mormon students he had encountered only one who believed that God was absolute. He also said: "It is my opinion that finitism is implicit in the Mormon personal God concept and whether the early Mormons were conscious of it or not, their strong emphasis on the personal and anthropomorphic nature of God involved them in finitism."²¹

In 1952, Sterling McMurrin expressed the view that the better approach to identification of Mormon theology as finitistic is "the temporalistic character of the Mormon God concept which in principle opposes absolutism, or the intense pluralism that is obviously involved in the Mormon position, a

¹⁹ R. V. Chamberlin, ed., *Philosophy of W. H. Chamberlin* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1925), pp. 321-22.

²⁰ Joseph Fielding Smith in an interview with G. E. Tickemyer in Salt Lake City, early in 1954.

²¹ George T. Boyd to G. E. Tickemyer, 13 April 1953.

pluralism that is incompatible with the monism of absolutism.”²² More recently, he has endorsed the view that Mormonism “has some common ground” with process theology in

its refusal to settle for a finished world, its restless sense of creative process and temporal movement. I personally feel that this is the most interesting and attractive facet of Mormon theology. . . . Mormon theologians might well take a very active interest in Whitehead, who is clearly the philosopher of process. Literate Mormons have for many years found support in William James’s finitism, pluralism, and vision of the unfinished universe.²³

CONCLUSION

Recognition of the role played by Joseph Smith in developing a finite God theology is disturbing to those of his followers who accept traditional Christian orthodoxy. It is particularly unacceptable to those RLDS members who associate it with Adam-God worship, polytheism, and anthropomorphism. However, such teachings need not bar consideration of finite God concepts by Restorationists who are not of the Utah Mormon persuasion.

Joseph Smith was a person of unusual genius. His uncultured but brilliant mind was entirely capable of germinal thinking. Without benefit of acquaintance with the main stream of philosophic thought, he challenged the orthodoxy of his day. The development of such a revolutionary doctrine as that of a finite God can be seen as a typical expression of his contempt for orthodoxy.

A major obstacle to the Prophet’s formulation of a new concept of deity and of creation was the strong influence of traditional theology with its ready-made terminology which was ill-suited to expression of radical views. For example, the whole concept of eternal progression is out of keeping with Joseph’s apparent belief in the perfection of the ancient order of things. He apparently handled this conflict by explaining that new concepts which he was introducing were actually restorations of what had existed in the beginning. He might have avoided the charge of polytheism if he had used some term other than *gods* for evolving spirits. The Catholics distinguish between ordinary souls and exalted spirits by use of *saints*. Eastern religions use *Devas*.

Utah Mormons have had over a hundred years in which to systematize and institutionalize their beliefs. Institutionalized religion tends to expend its energies in conserving and promulgating the truths once delivered to the saints. Process theologians, who are so close to beliefs that were uniquely Mormon in an early day, may be helpful to Utah scholars in demonstrating alternative ways in which Restoration doctrines can be developed.

Missouri Mormons (RLDS) may discover that they have no need to apologize for radical doctrines taught by Joseph Smith. Those very doctrines which have been an anathema to this embattled sect, struggling to survive and to grow in hostile communities, may deserve a second look. Such reexamination may be especially timely in this period when all aspects of organizational and

²² McMurrin to Tickemeyer, 16 March 1953.

²³ McMurrin, “Response: Comment on a Paper by Floyd M. Ross,” p. 27.

theological commitments are undergoing critical scrutiny. For them, a rediscovered Prophet of the Restoration may yet be able to speak to our day, and unique Restoration doctrines may provide helpful bases from which to continue the pursuit of that illusive will-o-the-wisp, "all truth."

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