

# Modernism and Mormonism: James E. Talmage's *Jesus the Christ* and Early Twentieth- Century Mormon Responses to Biblical Criticism

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During a Sunday School class I was teaching, a question came up about the lineage of Mary, mother of Jesus. A knowledgeable and respected class member answered that Mary was a descendent of David. I observed that Mary's genealogy is not given in the scriptures; and, therefore, it would not be unreasonable to hold another opinion or to keep an open mind on the question. The class member responded that his answer should be accepted on authority because "Elder McConkie<sup>1</sup> had so stated." I saw no benefit to continuing the discussion. Later, he delivered the following note documenting his evidence:

Your discrediting of my comment . . . about Mary . . . was incorrect. "A personal genealogy of Joseph was essentially that of Mary also, *for they were cousins.*" Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, p. 94.

P.S. See Bible Dictionary p. 717—"Joseph . . . espoused *Mary, the daughter of his uncle Jacob.*" [Emphases mine].<sup>2</sup>

The assertions that Joseph and Mary were cousins and that Mary was the daughter of Jacob, which are reproduced in these frequently used Mormon sources, are not found in the scriptures. In fact, the former may be questioned as Mary was the "cousin (or relative)" of Elizabeth (Luke 1:36) who was said to have descended from a different tribe than David (Luke 1:5); and the latter is unscriptural, since, according to Matthew

1:16, Jacob was the father of Joseph. Then how did such teachings find their way into commonly accepted Mormon beliefs? The answer is a highly influential work on Mormon doctrine, James E. Talmage's *Jesus the Christ* (1915).<sup>3</sup>

In 1904–06 Talmage delivered a popular series of forty-two Sunday lectures on the life and mission of Jesus. During this time, the First Presidency (Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund) requested Talmage to publish these lectures. Progress on the task was slow until September 1914 when Talmage received a second request from the First Presidency urging him to finish as soon as possible. From this time, Talmage spent every spare moment in writing, secluding himself in the Salt Lake Temple to avoid interruptions. The urgency of the second request and Talmage's response suggest that a new crisis had appeared. Historian Thomas G. Alexander has hypothesized that "discussions of the nature of the Godhead and of the relationship between God and Jesus Christ" may have been the impetus.<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, James Harris, Talmage's biographer, has suggested that the book was intended as a response "to . . . the methodologies and conclusions of an emerging higher biblical criticism."<sup>5</sup> As both were among the challenging issues of the time, it is likely that *Jesus the Christ* was written with several objectives in mind.

This study will examine *Jesus the Christ* as a response to early twentieth-century biblical criticism. I first review some history of criticism, discuss its impact upon early twentieth-century Mormons, summarize Talmage's approaches to some of the major problems, and examine what appears to be the relative demise of Talmage's works among Mormons during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

### Modernism and Biblical Criticism

Modernism<sup>6</sup> was a movement during the decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth century that included liberal American Protestants and Catholics who sought to adjust traditional Christianity to conform to modern culture. Harvard historian William R. Hutchison (1930–2005), has demonstrated that modernists emerged in virtually all American religions.<sup>7</sup> Their "modernisms," some or all of which might have been the focus for a given individual, included the theological liberalism of Albrecht Ritschl (1822–89) and his school, biblical criticism, the philosophy and theories of modern science, and others. The University of Chicago modernist Shailer Mathews (1863–1941), defined modernism as "the use of

the methods of modern science to find, state and use the permanent and central values of inherited [Christian] orthodoxy in meeting the needs of a modern world.”<sup>8</sup> Among the modernist arguments, few were more contentious than the rejection of the historical value of the Bible. As historian of American Christianity Bradley J. Longfield summarized their position: “The Bible was not a repository of inerrant history . . . [and should] be interpreted and reproduced in light of the progress of culture. . . . If modern Christians had difficulty with the resurrection, the virgin birth or the miracles of Jesus, they need only realize that these . . . [were] outmoded expressions.”<sup>9</sup>

By the early twentieth century, New Testament criticism had been divided into “lower (or textual) criticism” and “higher criticism.” Oxford’s William Sanday (1843–1920) defined the aim of lower criticism as reconstructing “as nearly as may be . . . [the original] words and text.”<sup>10</sup> Andrew C. Zenos (1855–1942) of Chicago’s McCormick Theological Seminary pointed out that higher criticism was principally concerned with (1) origins, including author, date, and place of composition, (2) literary form, and (3) value, including but not limited to historical value.<sup>11</sup> The methodology of higher criticism was modern: “The direct application of scientific methods to the study of our Sacred Books, without regard to [religious] authority of any kind.” This approach was justified because “God’s Word was grievously obscured . . . [by] the dogmas of the Church.”<sup>12</sup>

In his early twentieth-century historical survey, Cambridge’s Henry S. Nash (1854–1912) noted that the higher criticism of the New Testament had originated in Germany and that it attacked the notion “that the simple, historical sense of Scripture should be sovereign.”<sup>13</sup> Although important work had been done earlier, Nash traced a major beginning to the mid-1830s with the research of Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860) and his pupil David Friedrich Strauss (1808–74). Baur’s work “forced all subsequent investigators . . . to explain them [New Testament books] from the [environmental] influences which were at work.”<sup>14</sup> In 1835 Strauss published his *Life of Jesus Critically Examined*. According to Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965), Strauss was the first to systematically apply the idea that the New Testament Gospels reproduce legends about Jesus.<sup>15</sup> Among many controversial conclusions, Strauss suggested that readers should be “distrustful of the numerous histories of [New Testament] miracles.”<sup>16</sup> Nash characterized Baur’s and Strauss’s work as “a violent precipitation . . . a new programme of interpretation.”<sup>17</sup>

Among nineteenth-century British scholars, the new German methods and results met first with a reaction. Led by the “Cambridge triumvirate” of Brooke Foss Westcott (1825–1901), Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828–92), and Joseph Barber Lightfoot (1828–89), they engaged in a conservative form of criticism sometimes termed “believing criticism.”<sup>18</sup> This approach was characterized by its intent “to refute the form of skepticism represented . . . by Strauss in Germany,” “ample learning,” and “a firm [belief] . . . in the authority and inspiration of the Sacred Word.”<sup>19</sup> A similar approach was reflected in the work of William Smith (1813–93) in his massive *Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible* (1860–63). Talmage used its single-volume abridgment, *Comprehensive Dictionary of the Bible* (1867).

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, British scholars also made significant contributions to New Testament textual criticism. Along with others, Westcott and Hort demonstrated that the myriad of ancient manuscripts could be classified into a limited number of text types and that the textual tradition underlying the Authorized (King James) Version, the “Received Text,” is a fourth-century conflated work meant to harmonize and standardize the earlier texts. According to Westcott and Hort, the Received Text “rests on a few and late . . . MSS [manuscripts], which have very little or no authority.”<sup>20</sup> This work led to their updated *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (1881). Such advances suggested the need for new English Bible versions that reflected the continuing advances in textual criticism and linguistics. Prominent among these was the Revised Version (1881), which, unlike many other new translations, was a revision of the Authorized Version that “introduce[d] as few alterations as possible.”<sup>21</sup> Upgraded Greek texts and new English versions have continued to appear.<sup>22</sup>

Another reaction in Great Britain and America to the German critics was the publication of a large number of conservative biographies or “Lives” of Jesus. By far the most successful was Frederick Farrar’s *The Life of Christ* (1874), followed by Cunningham Geikie’s *Life and Words of Christ* (1877), and Alfred Edersheim’s *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (1883). Two similar American works are Charles F. Deems’s *The Light of the Nations* (1884) and Samuel J. Andrews’s *The Life of Our Lord upon the Earth* (rev. ed., 1891). Talmage used all five. These works were intended not to debate the German higher criticism but to serve as popular alternatives. Farrar noted that his work “has not been written with any *direct* and *special* reference to the attacks of skeptical criticism.”<sup>23</sup> Andrews added

that his did “not design to enter into any questions respecting the authorship of the gospels [or] the time when written . . . but assumes that they are genuine historical documents.”<sup>24</sup> Although their authors were generally respected, the “Lives” made few if any significant original contributions to biblical research.<sup>25</sup>

But a dramatic change occurred during the first decade of the twentieth century. Cambridge New Testament critic Henry Latimer Jackson (1851–1926) expressed admiration for “the laborious industry and exactness of the German scholar,” and Oxford professor F. C. Conybeare (1856–1924) lamented that, in contrast to the German nineteenth-century critics, “Our own divines, amid the contentment and leisure of rich livings and deaneries, and with the libraries and endowments of Oxford and Cambridge at their disposal, have done nothing except produce a handful of apologetic, insincere, and worthless volumes.”<sup>26</sup> As historian Daniel L. Pals has noted: “Within the space of a decade [1900–10] the [British and American] scholar who had regarded the gospels chiefly as history . . . was to find his confidence [in the Gospels] assailed repeatedly by a new generation of far more skeptical New Testament critics.”<sup>27</sup> The effect was to diminish the Gospels as credible sources for the life of the historical Jesus. As Henry Latimer Jackson concluded in 1909, “It is not likely that there will ever be another ‘life of Christ.’ . . . Biography is impossible.”<sup>28</sup>

Not surprisingly such critics met with resistance from conservative clergy and laymen. The previous half century of “believing criticism” in Britain had the effect of blunting the controversy there; but, as historian Claude Welch (1922– ) has pointed out: “In America polarization was acute, leading to a series of heresy trials and ultimately to the formalization of a fundamentalist movement in which the inerrancy of scripture was a principal bastion to be held against liberal onslaughts.”<sup>29</sup>

Thus, by Talmage’s time, a sharp dispute over the higher criticism was in full process.<sup>30</sup> Chicago biblical scholar Andrew Zenos described the radically differing views.<sup>31</sup> On one end of the spectrum were what Oxford’s F. C. Burkitt (1864–1926) termed the “modern philosophical liberals” or modernists. These, Zenos noted, held to “the impossibility of the supernatural,” denied any “validity of tradition,” and rejected the authority of organized religion in scriptural interpretation. At the other end of the spectrum were the “traditionalists” who vigorously defended “the truth of the views held in the past.” Some divided the traditionalists be-

tween the “orthodox” and “critical” varieties.<sup>32</sup> The former were ultra-conservative and either rejected critical analysis altogether or accepted only those findings that supported traditionalist views. The latter began with traditional presuppositions but were more knowledgeable and accepting of convincing critical conclusions. Between the two extremes was a spectrum of moderates. Approaches without presuppositions Zenos termed “the comprehensive standpoint,” i.e., “[examining] all evidence . . . with a view to solving the questions arising in each case.”<sup>33</sup> Talmage and some other Mormon leaders can also be located within this schema.

### The Modernist Crisis and Mormonism

By the turn of the twentieth century, Mormons were increasingly encountering the challenges of science and biblical criticism. This process was accelerated by the desires for higher education and modern thinking among many of the Mormon youth.

The most visible modernist confrontation occurred in 1911 at Brigham Young University when three professors trained at eastern universities resigned under pressure. The professors were attacked for their beliefs in “the orderliness of Nature” rather than the “exceptional and miraculous”<sup>34</sup> and for regarding the findings of higher criticism as “conclusive and demonstrated . . . [so that] when these ideas . . . were in conflict with the scripture . . . it required the modification of the latter to come into harmony with the former.”<sup>35</sup> Such views made conflict with Church leaders inevitable for, as historian Kathryn Lofton has observed, “one of the great risks of Christian modernism was that it necessarily undermined the institutional orthodoxy upon which religious institutions rely.”<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, Church leaders were clearly more moderate than the ultra-conservative Presbyterians of the time or later fundamentalists who upheld, among other doctrines, the inerrancy of scripture.<sup>37</sup> President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) emphasized that the Church’s decision to terminate the professors was not based on the Church’s rejection of biblical criticism. On the contrary, Smith acknowledged that there might be “many truths” in “the ‘higher criticism.’”<sup>38</sup> During subsequent decades, Church leaders resisted attempts by both Mormon modernists and orthodox traditionalists, including Joseph F. Smith’s son, ultra-conservative apostle Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972), to advance their agendas.<sup>39</sup>

The undermining of New Testament historicity clearly weighed heavily on Church leaders at the time of their second request for publica-

tion of Talmage's lectures. In the April 1914 general conference, Talmage himself had addressed the issue: "There be men who have arrogated to themselves the claim of superiority, who pronounce themselves higher critics of the scriptures . . . [who] profess doubt as to the truth and plain meaning of the Holy Scriptures." They were having "pernicious" effects on young Latter-day Saints who "are impressed by those who instruct them." Likewise, Church President Joseph F. Smith lamented that there are "among us . . . school teachers [who] will tell you that the scriptural testimony . . . [is] . . . simply myths."<sup>40</sup>

It appears that Church leaders decided to address the issue by the publication of a Church-sanctioned book. Talmage was a natural choice for its author. In addition to his appeal to the young; his academic credentials which included formal training in the physical sciences, especially geology (Ph.D., Wesleyan University, 1896), administrative experience as former University of Utah president (1894–97), and election to multiple professional societies; his respect for the authority of Church leadership; his mastery of Church doctrine; and his relative familiarity with biblical critical issues, Talmage was a scholarly authority on the Gospels, having done "extensive research and preparatory work . . . in connection with the earlier lecture series."<sup>41</sup>

### The Critical Problems and Talmage's Response

*Problem 1. Textual criticism: Have the Gospels been transmitted to us accurately?*

One of the first questions that Talmage needed to address was whether the Authorized (King James) Version should be used in his composition. If Talmage accepted the near-consensus of critics that the Greek Text underlying the Authorized Version needed updating,<sup>42</sup> then should he refer to the Revised Version or others?

The Authorized Version had been the standard for nineteenth-century Mormons and represented a common ground with many Protestants. A number of similar passages were found in the Book of Mormon, and the Authorized Version had been used in the speeches and writings of all previous Church leaders. Thus, for Talmage to stray very far from the Authorized Version would cause a major disconnect with his Mormon audience.

On the other hand, Talmage had strong reasons other than the text-critical consensus to doubt the veracity of the Authorized Version.

One of the remarkable aspects of Mormonism in the early nineteenth-century had been its break with traditional Christianity<sup>43</sup> over the accurate transmission of the biblical text. In a reference that surely included the New Testament Gospels, the Book of Mormon describes writings that originated from the “Jews” and were passed by the “apostles” to the “Gentiles” who had then “taken away . . . many parts which are plain and most precious” (1 Ne. 13:24–29). This negative opinion of the Greek text underlying the Authorized Version was reinforced when Joseph Smith received a commandment to make a new “translation” or revision in March 1831.

Talmage expressed his view that there is a need for textual criticism and new Bible translations in *The Articles of Faith*: “Nevertheless, the Church announces a reservation in the case of erroneous translation.” Significantly, he amended this sentence in the twelfth edition, published in 1924, to read: “Nevertheless, the Church announces a reservation in the case *both* of translation *and of transcription*.” Nevertheless, the Authorized and other English versions, which were produced by “the most scholarly men,” seemed to Talmage to contain a “paucity of [doctrinally significant] errors,”<sup>44</sup> an assessment confirmed by at least some of the critics.<sup>45</sup>

Talmage reinforced this position in *Jesus the Christ*. Although adhering largely to the Authorized Version, Talmage readily acknowledged that a number of the translated passages were suboptimal, referring the reader to the marginal alternatives in the Oxford and Bagster editions of the Authorized Version or to the Revised Version, which Talmage felt sometimes gave a “better rendering” or corrected “an erroneous rendering” (701–2).

Talmage was also familiar with the defects in the Greek text underlying the Authorized Version. Sometimes he accepted the critical results, for instance, the “spurious addition” to Luke 24:42 (688) and the “lack of agreement” in the early manuscripts regarding John 18:22 (622).

It may seem remarkable that Talmage failed to acknowledge either the Book of Mormon warnings regarding the text of the Authorized Version or Joseph Smith’s new “translation.” Perhaps the early twentieth-century attacks on the Gospels as history gave Talmage pause. And Talmage had additional reasons for not including the Joseph Smith Translation. The unavailable original manuscript and copyright were in possession of the Reorganized Church. Although published as the *Inspired Version* in 1867, Mormons conventionally regarded it with suspicions of text tamper-



ing until its accuracy was verified by the painstaking work of BYU biblical scholar Robert J. Matthews in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>46</sup>

*Problem 2. Higher (historical) criticism: Did the original Gospels present an accurate account of Jesus's life?*

From the outset, Talmage informed his readers that Latter-day Saint higher criticism differs in two important respects. First, as noted on his title page, *Jesus the Christ* was to be “a study of the Messiah and His mission according to Holy Scriptures both ancient and modern.” Thus, Latter-day Saint scripture and revelation were to occupy a dominant position among the credible evidences. Second, Talmage rejected the basic axiom of the other critics, i.e., that modern research is capable of improving on Christian tradition. The critical position was defended by Cambridge's Henry Latimer Jackson: “The modern scholar is better equipped [than the ancients] for the work of investigation, and his methods are far more exact and rigorous.”<sup>47</sup> Talmage expressed the contrary view in *The Articles of Faith*: “The present is too late a time and the separating distance too vast to encourage the reopening of the question[s] . . . ; [The Bible] . . . must be admitted as authentic and credible.”<sup>48</sup>

Talmage then considered the critical results in the context of his two principal authorities: LDS scripture and revelation and the nineteenth-century British “believing critics” and writers of the “Lives.” To illustrate Talmage's use of each, I examine Talmage's approach to the synoptic problem (meaning the problem of accounting for the similarities and differences among the first three Gospels) and the problem of the conflicting genealogies of Joseph in Matthew and Luke, respectively.

### *The Synoptic Problem*

By the early twentieth century, the synoptic problem was considered “the fundamental problem of New Testament criticism, and consequently of Christian origins.”<sup>49</sup> Two hypotheses were close to scholarly consensus: (1) the chronological priority of the Gospel of Mark and its use as a source in Matthew and Luke, and (2) the existence of a hypothetical source, Q, to explain non-Markan sayings common to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Thus, in 1909 a Cambridge critic wrote: “The relative priority of Mark is to-day accepted almost as an axiom. . . . For not a few, the [two source] hypothesis [Mark and Q as sources of Matthew and Luke] . . . is an established result of criticism.”<sup>50</sup>

Talmage acknowledged the synoptic problem in *Jesus the Christ*, not-

ing: "In style of writing and method of treatment, the authors of the first three Gospels . . . differ more markedly from the author of the fourth Gospel than among themselves" (166). Talmage also frequently pointed out the differences among the synoptic writers, attempting harmonizations whenever possible.

But acceptance of the two-source hypothesis led to disturbing results regarding the historical value of the Gospels. If the First Gospel was based on earlier written sources, it could not have been composed by the Apostle Matthew from his first-hand recollections. Further, one could analyze the changes to their sources by the authors of Matthew and Luke and demonstrate alterations that seemed more dependent on personal author bias and individual literary and theological tendencies than on the desire to preserve historical accuracy.

Not surprisingly, Talmage rejected the two-source hypothesis. Rather than emphasizing the differences among the synoptic Gospels as evidence of individual editorial activity, Talmage argued that such differences suggested independent authorship. As an example, in describing the words of God the Father at Jesus's baptism, Talmage pointed out: "Matthew records the Father's acknowledgment as given in the third person . . . while both Mark and Luke give the more direct address. . . . The variation . . . affords evidence of independent authorship and discredits any insinuation of collusion among the writers" (127).

Talmage did not mention Q but did respond to some of the results of Q research. Two instructive examples that show the influence of LDS scripture are Talmage's handling of the problems of the differences between the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) and the corresponding Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20-49), and the collection of parables in Matthew 13. Reconstructions of Q, especially by Germany's Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930), had shown a good correlation in sequence for some sayings in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and Luke's Sermon on the Plain, suggesting to Harnack that it therefore reproduced the original Q sequence. But for other Sermon on the Mount sayings, Harnack concluded, "It is simply impossible to trace any sign of correspondence in the order of the parallel passages."<sup>51</sup> This conclusion was in large part because some sayings in the longer Sermon on the Mount were found in other locations in the third Gospel than Luke's Sermon on the Plain. To further complicate the matter, the Sermon on the Mount combined sayings with presumed origins from Q with others from Mark and with still others

from sources unique to Matthew's Gospel. Oxford's Burnett Hillman Streeter (1874–1937) and others also observed that the author of Matthew's Gospel made substantially more changes to Mark's order than did the author of Luke's, suggesting that Matthew's document had been the one that had altered the original sequence of the Q sayings.<sup>52</sup> There seemed only one reasonable conclusion, as Cambridge's Henry Latimer Jackson had noted in 1909: "[Jesus's] sayings recorded by him [Matthew] were not spoken by Jesus on any one solitary occasion."<sup>53</sup> Such analyses also suggested that the author of Matthew had combined sayings from diverse sources as five or six extended speeches of Jesus, two of which were the Sermon on the Mount and the parables of Matthew 13.

Talmage rejected the scholarly consensus that the Sermon on the Mount was an invention of Matthew. There can be little question that a strong reason was that this discourse is reproduced in the Book of Mormon as Jesus's sermon at the temple in Bountiful (3 Ne. 12–14). Talmage harmonized the accounts of Matthew's longer Sermon on the Mount and Luke's shorter Sermon on the Plain by postulating two sermons, chiding the critics, and establishing Matthew as an eye-witness in the process:

Critics who rejoice in trifles . . . have tried to make much of these seeming variations [between the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain]. Is it not probable that Jesus spoke at length on the mountain-side to the disciples [Sermon on the Mount] . . . and that after finishing His discourse to them He descended with them to the plain where a multitude had assembled, and that to these He repeated parts [as the Sermon on the Plain] of what He had before spoken? The relative fullness of Matthew's report may be due to the fact that he, as one of the Twelve, was present at the first and more extended delivery. (247)

But Talmage took a different approach to the collection of parables in Matthew 13 as the critical conclusions in that instance did not challenge Mormon scripture: "Many Bible scholars hold that the seven parables recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew were spoken at different times and to different people, and that the writer of the first Gospel grouped them for convenience. . . . Some color is found for this claim in Luke's mention of some of these parables in different relations of both time and place. . . . We must admit that Matthew may have grouped with the parables spoken on that particular day some of other dates" (300).

In other instances, Talmage, seeking non-Mormon scholarly authority, turned not to the critics of his time, but to such individuals as William Smith and the authors of the nineteenth-century "Lives" who, as

Farrar emphasized, were “writing as a believer to believers, as a Christian to Christians.”<sup>54</sup> Mormon historian Malcolm Thorp has recently pointed out a number of similarities between *Jesus the Christ* and Farrar’s *Life of Christ*.<sup>55</sup> It might also be observed that Talmage was already familiar with the works of Farrar when he penned *The Articles of Faith* in the 1890s<sup>56</sup> and apparently used Farrar’s *Life of Christ* in preparing his lectures of 2004–06 as he did for *Jesus the Christ*.<sup>57</sup> Talmage’s extensive array of sources in *Jesus the Christ* reflects Farrar’s mastery of the classics, ancient historians, and Jewish antiquities, subjects with which Talmage also had familiarity.<sup>58</sup> Like Farrar, Talmage felt that many of the higher critics were “unbelieving” and were trying to “discredit the [historical] account[s]” of the Gospels (323–24).<sup>59</sup> Also like Farrar,<sup>60</sup> Talmage distrusted attempts to embellish the Gospel accounts: “It is the part of prudence . . . [to] keep distinctly separate the authenticated statements of fact [the Gospels] . . . from the fanciful commentaries of historians, theologians, and writers of fiction” (87). And Talmage’s writing, although more that of the reasoning scientist, not infrequently reaches for the romantic and poetic style of Farrar. An example is the description of Jesus stilling the storm at sea (Matt. 8:23–27). After describing “the howling of the winds,” Farrar wrote: “He gazed forth into the darkness, and His voice was heard amid the roaring of the troubled elements.”<sup>61</sup> Talmage’s parallel passage reads: “Out through the darkness of that fearsome night, into the roaring wind, over the storm-lashed sea, went the voice of the Lord” (307).

### *The Problem of Joseph’s Genealogies*

Talmage’s use of nineteenth-century British scholarship is illustrated in his handling of the difficult problem of the differing genealogies of Joseph, father of Jesus, in Matthew 1:1–16 and Luke 3:23–38. The solution that Talmage accepted ultimately gave rise to the “evidence” of my Sunday School class member.

By the mid to late nineteenth-century, several ingenious and speculative harmonizing solutions to the genealogy problem had been proposed. The *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature* (1873) and *Smith’s Comprehensive Dictionary of the Bible* (1880) list the two most commonly accepted: (1) Matthew preserves Joseph’s genealogy and Luke Mary’s<sup>62</sup> and (2) both genealogies are Joseph’s but Matthew traces the legal or royal line and Luke the actual pedigree.<sup>63</sup> A non-harmonizing solution, which had originated

with the Germans, was “that the genealogies . . . [were independently fabricated and are not] historical, but purely mythical.”<sup>64</sup>

But acceptance of either of the two harmonizing solutions left problems. One was that Matthew and Luke listed different fathers: Jacob for Matthew and Heli (Eli) for Luke. Consequently, Joseph could not have been the biological son of both. For those accepting that Luke preserves Mary’s genealogy, one way this problem was solved was: “In constructing their genealogical tables . . . the Jews reckoned wholly by males . . . [including when necessary a] daughter’s husband. . . . Joseph, begotten by Jacob, marries Mary, the daughter of Heli, and in the genealogical register of his wife’s family is counted for Heli’s son.”<sup>65</sup> For those accepting the royal/biological pedigree solution, it remained to be demonstrated how Joseph could be the son of Jacob and thus in the royal line. An influential solution was proposed by England’s Lord Arthur C. Hervey (1808–94). Hervey hypothesized that the grandfather of Joseph in Matthew (Matthan) and in Luke (Matthat) was the same person and thus Jacob and Heli were brothers. Hervey then reasoned: “Jacob [the royal line] I *suppose* to have had no son, but to have been the father of the Virgin Mary: [and] Heli, the father of Joseph. Joseph . . . took Mary his [first] cousin to wife, and was thus on every account Jacob’s successor and heir.”<sup>66</sup> Dissatisfied with Hervey’s hypothesis, John Roberts Dummelow speculated that Matthat and Matthan were different individuals and that “Jacob, the true heir to the throne, being . . . childless, adopted the next male heir Heli [who would have been succeeded by his son Joseph], who belonged to the other branch of the family.”<sup>67</sup>

By the early twentieth century, there was relative agreement among conservative scholars that the royal/biological pedigree solution was the best, but there was less enthusiasm for Hervey’s hypothesis that Jacob and Heli were brothers. Fausset’s *Bible Cyclopaedia* (1909), which Talmage used, reproduced Hervey’s Jacob/Heli hypothesis as “probably” correct.<sup>68</sup> However, James Hastings’s larger and more prestigious *Dictionary of the Bible* (1899) did not.<sup>69</sup> And, as shown above, Dummelow’s *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* (1909), which Talmage also used, proposed an alternative. In addition, the more liberal *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (1903) insisted that both genealogies had been fabricated.<sup>70</sup>

Talmage endorsed the royal/biological pedigree solution and largely accepted Hervey’s speculative Jacob/Heli hypothesis. Talmage correctly noted that “the [conservative] consensus of judgment . . . is that

Matthew's account is that of the royal lineage . . . while the account given in Luke is a personal pedigree." But he then added: "A personal genealogy of Joseph was essentially that of Mary also, for they were cousins. . . . Jacob and Heli were brothers, and it appears that one of the two was the father of Joseph and the other the father of Mary" (86). It is important to note that, unlike Hervey, Talmage did not commit on the question of whether Jacob or Heli was Joseph's biological father, an important point which I discuss below.<sup>71</sup> It may seem surprising that Talmage reproduced Hervey's controversial speculation, especially since Talmage simply states it as a fact without his usually associated careful reasoning and evidence. Why did he do this? A close reading shows that Talmage ingeniously used Hervey's Jacob/Heli hypothesis not only to harmonize the genealogies but as lead evidence for another of his favored conclusions, which was defended in Talmage's nineteenth-century sources but which was under attack in his own day: that Mary was a descendent of David (81-82).

*Problem 3. Scientific criticism: Are the New Testament accounts acceptable in the modern scientific world?*

The narratives of the biblical miracles presented challenges. A basic problem was the apparent conflict with the readily observable and predictable orderliness of nature. In contrast to traditional Christianity, which had attributed the orderliness to the influence of Deity, many moderns had hypothesized the existence of underlying independent, impartial, and unalterable natural laws. Some moderns suggested that the biblical miracle stories had originated in a more primitive, prescientific culture in which the phenomena had been misinterpreted. As physicist and philosopher John Tyndall (1820-93) had put it: "Before these [scientific] methods were adopted the unbridled imagination roamed through nature, putting in the place of [natural] law . . . magic, and miracles, and special providences."<sup>72</sup> In philosophical systems such as Tyndall's, God, if included at all, would be reduced to subservience to natural laws. Farrar was particularly hostile to this view. In responding to the suggestion that the miracle stories are "legends," Farrar argued: "But if we believe that God rules . . . that God has not delegated His sovereignty or His providence to the final, unintelligent, pitiless, inevitable working of material forces . . . then we shall neither clutch at rationalistic interpretations, nor be much troubled if others adopt them."<sup>73</sup> But by the early twentieth century, many biblical critics seemed to echo Tyndall. For example, Oxford's William Sanday questioned whether the Gospel writer's presupposed belief

in Jesus's divinity may have "affected somewhat his story of miracles, to the extent of heightening some of their details" and further suggested: "We may be sure that if the miracles of the first century had been wrought before trained spectators of the nineteenth, the version of them would be quite different."<sup>74</sup>

By the mid-nineteenth century, an important compromise had been advocated that seemed to preserve both natural law and God's sovereignty. Anglican Archbishop Richard Chenevix Trench (1807–86), in his popular and oft-reprinted *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord* (1846) (used by Talmage), rejected the older Christian idea that God rules not "by universal [natural] laws, which . . . exist only in our conception, but . . . by his peculiar, individual, and sole will." Rather, Trench proposed, "We should see in the miracle not the infraction of a law, but the neutralizing of a lower law, the suspension of it for a time by a higher."<sup>75</sup> This formulation appealed to many in the early twentieth century, both outside and within the Church. For example, Sanday insisted that: "Miracle is not really a breach of the order of nature; it is only an apparent breach of laws that we know, in obedience to other and higher laws that we do not know."<sup>76</sup> And Mormon scientist John A. Widtsoe had already suggested in a Church-approved publication that "laws may exist as yet unknown to the world of science, which, used by a human or superhuman being, might to all appearances change well-established relations of known forces. That would be a miracle."<sup>77</sup>

Likewise, Talmage explained to his readers, "Miracles cannot be in contravention of natural law, but are wrought through the operation of laws not universally or commonly recognized [by modern science]" (148). In regard to Jesus's healings and modern medicine, Talmage observed: "In no case can such treatment be regarded as medicinal or therapeutic. Christ was not a physician who relied upon curative substances, nor a surgeon to perform physical operations" (320–21). Likewise for modern physics: "A resurrected body, though of tangible substance . . . is not bound to earth by gravitation, nor can it be hindered in its movements by material barriers. To us . . . incomprehensible. [But] resurrected beings move in accordance with laws making such passage possible and to them natural" (698). But Talmage also emphasized that natural law should never be seen as superior to God or as limiting God's power. Thus, in his description of Jesus calming the storm, Talmage insisted that "the dominion of the Creator over the created is real and absolute. . . . What we call

natural forces . . . are but a few of the manifestations of eternal energy through which the Creator's purposes are subserved" (309).

### Where Has Talmage Gone?

Historians and Church leaders have rightly considered Talmage as among Mormonism's most important and original thinkers,<sup>78</sup> and Talmage's works remain fully approved and recommended, encouraged, for instance, along with the standard works for missionaries. Thus, it may seem surprising that Bruce R. McConkie, the leading ultra-conservative Mormon leader of the latter twentieth century, apparently intended his *Messiah* series (1978–80) as a conservative replacement for the more moderate *Jesus the Christ*. McConkie was respectful of Talmage but sometimes expressed dissatisfaction with *Jesus the Christ*, as he did, for example, when that volume presents "the usual sectarian explanation," "skirts the issue," or conflicts with the chronology of *Our Lord of the Gospels* (1954) by J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), a counselor in the First Presidency for almost twenty-five years. McConkie preferred Clark's chronology to that of the non-Mormon Farrar, on which Talmage had relied.<sup>79</sup> McConkie, who unlike Talmage, had not been requested to write his work by Church leaders, remarkably claimed his mandate for the *Messiah* series from the deceased Talmage himself: "But I think I hear his [Talmage's] voice . . . saying, 'Now is the time to build on the foundations I laid some seventy years ago, using the added knowledge that has since come by research and revelation.'"<sup>80</sup>

McConkie's ultra-conservative position toward Bible criticism and non-Mormon scholarship clearly distinguishes him from Talmage. McConkie adopted his much more limited bibliography of non-Mormon sources largely from Talmage, quoting from Edersheim, Farrar, and Geikie, but reminding his readers that they were "without the light of latter-day revelation."<sup>81</sup> Regarding textual criticism, McConkie strongly defended the Authorized Version, rejecting the Revised Version (1881–85) and its updated Revised Standard Version (1952) as "published, among Protestant peoples" and "translated by individuals and groups some of whom have questioned the divinity of Christ."<sup>82</sup> McConkie's principal textual innovation was his frequent use of the *Inspired Version* (Joseph Smith Translation) of the Bible, which by the 1970s had found increased acceptance.<sup>83</sup> McConkie emphasized the superiority of his work over Talmage's in this regard. For example, in discussing the difference in the number of demoniacs between the accounts of Matthew and Mark/Luke,



McConkie pointed out, “If Elder Talmage had had access to this more perfect biblical account [*Inspired Version*], his expressions relative to this and a number of other matters would have been different.”<sup>84</sup>

Also in contrast to Talmage, McConkie argued for a form of biblical inerrancy. An example is seen in McConkie’s handling of the differences in the Sermon on the Mount and Sermon on the Plain, which, unlike Talmage, he saw as the same sermon: “Without question, when Matthew records a thought in one set of words and Luke does so in different language, both are preserving the verbatim utterances of the Lord.” McConkie suggested that the original sermon underlying both must have been longer and that Matthew and Luke each abstracted different portions of it in their accounts. Predictably, McConkie had no use for any of the findings of the higher critics whom he described as “without faith, without revelation” and who teach “doctrines of the devil.” Likewise, unlike the positive view of science held by the scientifically trained Talmage and Widtsoe—that God works through higher natural laws which, at least in theory, might some day be discovered by scientific research—McConkie emphasized the inferiority of science. Miracles are “wrought by the power of God” and “cannot be duplicated by man’s present powers or by any powers which he can obtain by scientific advancements.”<sup>85</sup>

An important and interesting development of the last quarter of the twentieth century has been the general acceptance of McConkie’s works as alternatives, if not replacements, to Talmage’s. McConkie’s books have been continuously popular with rank-and-file Mormons since their original publications, clearly because they satisfy a thirst for authoritative doctrinal statements. But McConkie’s most popular work, *Mormon Doctrine* (1958), which was published outside the Church, apparently without the knowledge of Church leadership, when McConkie was a junior General Authority, was clearly in official disfavor during the administration of President David O. McKay (1873–1970).<sup>86</sup> A dispute continues over whether McKay approved of the publication of the revised second edition (1966). The evidence supporting McKay’s approval for the second edition appears to be restricted to statements from McConkie himself and the assertion of McConkie supporters that McKay assigned Spencer W. Kimball to oversee the corrections. However, the preface to the second edition makes no mention of Kimball’s contribution, McKay’s papers do not document his approval, and the second edition was not published by the Church.<sup>87</sup>

One can only speculate about the reasons for the progressive official embracing of both McConkie and his works following McKay's death. McKay was succeeded by Joseph Fielding Smith, McConkie's father-in-law and predecessor as the leading ultra-conservative Mormon of the earlier twentieth century, and it was Smith's death that created the vacancy in the Church's governing Quorum of the Twelve that McConkie was called to fill. Furthermore, there was the force of McConkie himself who, like Talmage, had become widely recognized as one of the preeminent Mormon theologians of his time, if not *the* theologian. To illustrate the degree to which McConkie has supplanted Talmage, let us return to the statements of my Sunday School class member:

Your discrediting of my comment . . . about Mary . . . was incorrect. "A personal genealogy of Joseph was essentially that of Mary also, *for they were cousins.*" *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, p. 94.

P.S. See *Bible Dictionary* p. 717—"Joseph . . . espoused *Mary, the daughter of his uncle Jacob.*" [Emphases mine.]

The first statement, cited from McConkie's *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* (1966), is actually a quotation from *Jesus the Christ*. The fact that my class member erroneously attributed it to McConkie suggests his greater familiarity with McConkie's works. The history of the second quotation is even more revealing. As noted above, Talmage did not commit himself on whether Jacob or Heli was the father of Mary. However, McConkie did: "Heli was the father of Joseph and Jacob the father of Mary."<sup>88</sup> McConkie's conclusion may have resulted from his use of *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary* (1913), a derivative of *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, which reproduced Hervey's speculative hypothesis. Thus, it appears that the author of the *Bible Dictionary's* section on "Joseph," is also preferentially using McConkie as the source. According to McConkie's biographer Dennis Horne, in 1973 the First Presidency appointed McConkie to "oversee the project" that produced the LDS edition of the King James Bible and its bound-in "Bible Dictionary." Horne also noted that McConkie's *Mormon Doctrine* (1966) served as the basis for a number of "Bible Dictionary" entries.<sup>89</sup> It seems likely that McConkie's other works were used as well or even that McConkie himself drafted authoritative definitions and discussions for this Bible aid.

### Some Conclusions

*Jesus the Christ* is a remarkable and unequalled synthesis of Latter-day

Saint scripture and theology, biblical criticism, science, ethics, and history. Although many of Talmage's critical conclusions would not be acceptable to critics outside Mormonism then or now, one cannot help but be impressed with his effort. In addition, readers can still learn important critical lessons from him. For example, while most current scholars still accept the two-source hypothesis (with modifications) as the best "working hypothesis," a minority vigorously support other solutions, rejecting "the traditional two-document [source] as in any sense an established tool of NT criticism."<sup>90</sup> Thus, one is reminded of Talmage's caution that it is too late to definitively resolve such issues.

In addition, we may ask where Talmage should be placed in Zenos's spectrum of approaches to the higher criticism. To those who accept LDS scripture and revelation as among the credible evidences to be considered, as Talmage did, Talmage might reasonably be classified under Zenos's moderate "comprehensive standpoint." To others who do not, he would be seen as a critical traditionalist. In neither instance can he or the early twentieth-century Latter-day Saints be lumped with the extreme orthodox traditionalism that would characterize later fundamentalism.

Lastly, it is significant that *Jesus the Christ* has not been officially superseded. It would therefore appear that Latter-day Saints who rely on its methodology and conclusions in preference to those of McConkie are well within the bounds of Church approval.

Although we have explored and contrasted several methodologies (both inside and outside of Mormonism) and their results for New Testament exposition and some of their influences on Mormon thought, it has not been the purpose of this study to conclude which is superior. That decision, on which reasonable individuals may differ, and that of who had the better approach in my Sunday School class is left to the reader.

### Notes

1. Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) was a prominent conservative Mormon theologian, author, and Church leader (First Council of the Seventy, 1946–72; apostle, 1972–85) of the last half of the twentieth century.

2. These quotations are from Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1965; rpt., Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977), 1:94; and "Bible Dictionary" in the LDS edition of the King James Bible (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979), 717.

3. James E. Talmage (1862–1933) was a prominent Mormon scientist, educator, theologian, and apostle (1911–33) during the late nineteenth cen-

tury and early twentieth century. Unless otherwise indicated, all references in this study are from James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1915, first printing), with page numbers cited parenthetically in the text.

4. Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), 279.

5. James Harris, ed., *The Essential James E. Talmage* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997), xxvii.

6. The terms “modernism” and “liberalism” can be confusing because of several uses. In their more restrictive senses, they have referred to a movement within Catholicism (modernism) at the turn of the century and to the school of the German theologian, Albrecht Ritschl (liberalism), respectively. As broader terms, they have been used synonymously in reference to the liberal movements within Protestantism and Catholicism in the decades immediately before and after the turn of the twentieth century. I am using them in this latter sense.

7. William R. Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University, 1976), 111–144.

8. Shailer Mathews, *The Faith of Modernism* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), 23.

9. B. J. Longfield, “Liberalism/modernism, Protestant (c. 1870s–1930s)” in Daniel G. Reid, ed., *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity, 1990), 647–48.

10. William Sanday, “The Criticism of the New Testament” in W. Sanday, F. G. Kenyon, F. C. Burkitt, F. H. Chase, A. C. Headlam, and J. H. Bernard, *Criticism of the New Testament: St. Margaret’s Lectures 1902* (1902; rpt., Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 1.

11. Andrew C. Zenos, *The Elements of the Higher Criticism* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1895), 14–46.

12. Henry Nash, *The History of the Higher Criticism of the New Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1906), 101, 47.

13. *Ibid.*, 105.

14. F. C. Conybeare, *History of New Testament Criticism* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1910), 133–34.

15. Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1910), 78–96.

16. David Friedrich Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 415.

17. Nash, *The History of the Higher Criticism*, 134.

18. Geoffrey R. Treloar, “The Cambridge Triumvirate and the Accep-

tance of New Testament Higher Criticism in Britain, 1850–1900,” *Journal of Anglican Studies* 4 (Spring 2006): 13–32.

19. Brooke Foss Westcott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1885), viii.

20. Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881), lxiv.

21. Francis S. Hoyt, ed., *The Revised New Testament* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Jones Brothers, 1881), 6.

22. For a summary, see F. F. Bruce, *The History of the Bible in English*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford, 1978).

23. Frederic W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ* (London: Cassell and Company, 1898), vii; emphasis his.

24. Samuel J. Andrews, *The Life of Our Lord upon the Earth* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1892), v, ix.

25. For example Albert Schweitzer’s survey of important developments mentions only the work of Edersheim, and that very briefly. See Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, 233.

26. Henry Latimer Jackson, “The Present State of the Synoptic Problem,” in *Essays on Some Biblical Questions of the Day by Members of the University of Cambridge*, edited by Henry Barclay Swete (London: MacMillan, 1909), 434; Conybeare, *History of New Testament Criticism*, 127.

27. Daniel L. Pals, *The Victorian “Lives” of Jesus* (San Antonio, Tex.: Trinity University, 1982), 168.

28. Jackson, “The Present State of the Synoptic Problem,” 459.

29. Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. 2, 1870–1914* (1972; rpt., Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 1985), 166.

30. At the turn of the twentieth century, a large number of popular works supporting or opposing New Testament higher criticism appeared. Examples of the former include Ramsden Balmforth, *The New Testament in the Light of the Higher Criticism* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1905) and J. A. M’Clymont, *New Testament Criticism* (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1913); examples of the latter include R. A. Torrey, *The Higher Criticism and the New Theology, Unscientific, Unscriptural, and Unwholesome* (Lestershire, N.Y.: Gospel Publishing, 1911), and John R. Palmer, *The Holy Scriptures and “the Higher Criticism”* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1903).

31. Zenos, *The Elements of the Higher Criticism*, 139–51.

32. For an example of the use of this terminology, see Alan England Brooke, “The Historical Value of the Fourth Gospel,” in Swete, *Essays on Some Biblical Questions of the Day*, 299.

33. Zenos, *The Elements of Higher Criticism*, 147.

34. Ralph V. Chamberlin, *Life and Philosophy of W. H. Chamberlin* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1925), 145. See also Gary James Bergera and Ronald Priddis, *Brigham Young University: A House of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1985), 131–48; and Richard Sherlock, “Campus in Crisis: BYU, 1911,” *Sunstone* 4 (January-February 1979): 10–16.

35. Joseph F. Smith, “Theory and Divine Revelation,” *Improvement Era* 14 (April 1911): 548–51.

36. Kathryn Lofton, “The Methodology of the Modernists: Process in American Protestantism,” *Church History* 75 (June 2006): 381.

37. George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford, England: Oxford University, 2006), 141–95.

38. Joseph F. Smith, “Philosophy and the Church Schools,” *Juvenile Instructor* 46 (April 1911): 209; Joseph F. Smith, “Theory and Divine Revelation,” 548.

39. For examples, see Richard Sherlock, “‘We Can See No Advantage to a Continuation of the Discussion’: The Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13, no. 3 (Fall 1980): 63–78; his “Faith and History: The Snell Controversy,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1979): 27–41; Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 2005), 40–59.

40. Talmage and Smith, *Conference Addresses*, April 1914, 94–95, 4–5.

41. John R. Talmage, *The Talmage Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1972), 182.

42. The most prominent scholar who continued to defend the Authorized Version and its Greek text against the Revised Version was John William Burgon (1813–88). The “King James only” debate continues to this day. See D. A. Carson, *The King James Version Debate* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1979). For some recent reviews of the history of the text-critical problems of the New Testament, see F. G. Kenyon, *The Text of the Greek Bible*, 3rd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1975) and Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford, 1992).

43. For example, Bible scholar Thomas Hartwell Horne (1780–1862), whose works enjoyed wide circulation in Britain and America, wrote at the time of Book of Mormon publishing that “the books of the New Testament exist at present in all essential points, precisely the same as they were, when they left the hands of their authors.” Thomas Hartwell Horne, *A Compendious Introduction to the Study of the Bible* (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1827), 11.

44. James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith: A Series of Lectures on the Prin-*

*cial Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1899), 240–41; emphasis mine.

45. For example, Westcott and Hort concluded that none of their changes in the Greek text affected an important “article of faith or precept of duty.” Westcott and Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, liv.

46. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2004), 7–13.

47. Jackson, “The Present State of the Synoptic Problem,” 426.

48. James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 252.

49. Jackson, “The Present State of the Synoptic Problem,” 454.

50. *Ibid.*, 454–55.

51. Adolf Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus: The Second Source of St. Matthew and St. Luke* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1908), 176. The current status of Q research is summarized in James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, eds., *The Critical Edition of Q* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2000).

52. Burnett Hillman Streeter, “On the Original Order of Q” in *Studies in the Synoptic Problem by Members of the University of Oxford*, edited by W. Sanday (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), 146.

53. Jackson, “The Present State of the Synoptic Problem,” 450.

54. Farrar, *Life of Christ*, viii.

55. Malcolm R. Thorp, “James E. Talmage and the Tradition of Victorian Lives of Jesus,” *Sunstone* 30 (January 1988): 8–13.

56. Talmage quoted Farrar as an authority in his *Articles of Faith*, 137, 161, 423, 439, and 440.

57. One challenge in writing a life of Christ is reconstructing a single chronology from the divergent ones in the Gospels. Apparently, Talmage followed Farrar in *Jesus the Christ* and probably in his 1904–06 lecture series. John Talmage, *The Talmage Story*, 183. For examples of other chronologies by Mormon authors see J. Reuben Clark, *Our Lord of the Gospels* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), and Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979–80).

58. Pals, *The Victorian “Lives” of Jesus*, 80. Talmage’s expertise in Christian history was shown in *The Great Apostasy* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909).

59. For example, Farrar lamented that “hundreds of critics . . . have impugned the authority of the gospels on the score of the real or supposed contradictions to be found in them.” Farrar, *Life of Christ*, vii.

60. For a similar view, *ibid.*, 42.

61. Ibid., 233–34.

62. This idea was originally put forward by the Catholic scholar, Annius of Viterbo (ca. 1432–1505).

63. Proposed by the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) and popularized among English divines during the nineteenth century by Arthur Hervey, *The Genealogies of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (Cambridge, England: MacMillan and Co., 1853).

64. Hervey traced this view to David Fredrich Strauss. Ibid., 131.

65. John M'Clintock and James Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, 10 vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1873), 3:774.

66. Hervey, *Genealogies of Our Lord*, 130–31.

67. J. R. Dummelow, *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* (1909; rpt., London: Macmillan and Co., 1931), 623.

68. A. R. Fausset, *Bible Cyclopaedia: Critical and Expository* (Hartford, Conn.: S. S. Scranton, 1909), 248.

69. James Hastings, ed., *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), 2:137–41.

70. T. K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black, eds., *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (New York: Macmillan, 1903), 1,666–69.

71. Talmage clearly recognized that some early twentieth-century conservative scholars accepted the hypothesis that Matthew's genealogy was that of Mary (after Hervey) while others preferred the theory that Matthew preserved Joseph's pedigree and Luke Mary's.

72. John Tyndall, *Fragments of Science*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1892), 2:32.

73. Farrar, *Life of Christ*, 235.

74. Sanday, *Life of Christ*, 221, and his "Jesus Christ" in Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 2:625. See also F. Crawford Burkitt, *The Gospel History and Its Transmission* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1907), 68.

75. Richard Chenevix Trench, *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord* (London: Kegan Paul, 1889), 16–17.

76. Sanday, *Life of Christ*, 216.

77. John A. Widtsoe, *Joseph Smith as Scientist* (Salt Lake City: Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations, 1908), 34–35.

78. Stan Larsen, "Intellectuals in Mormon History: An Update," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26, no. 3 (Fall 1993): 187–89.

79. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 2:285, 1:186, 2:65.

80. Ibid., 1:xviii.

81. Ibid., 3:42.



82. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 422–23.

83. Many changes in the *Inspired Version* were incorporated as marginal notes and an appendix to the Latter-day Saint edition (1979) of the Authorized Version. See Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible*, 12–13.

84. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 2:285.

85. *Ibid.*, 2:117; McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 354, 506.

86. Prince and Wright, *David O. McKay*, 49–53.

87. For background and opposing views, see Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Bruce R. McConkie Story: Reflections of a Son* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), Dennis B. Horne, *Bruce R. McConkie: Highlights from His Life and Teachings* (Roy, Utah: Eborn Books, 2000), and Prince and Wright, *David O. McKay*, chap. 3.

88. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 1:316.

89. Horne, *Bruce R. McConkie*, 188–200.

90. A. E. Harvey, *A Companion to the New Testament*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9; C. S. Mann, *Mark*, in THE ANCHOR BIBLE (New York: Doubleday, 1986), 51.