

DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

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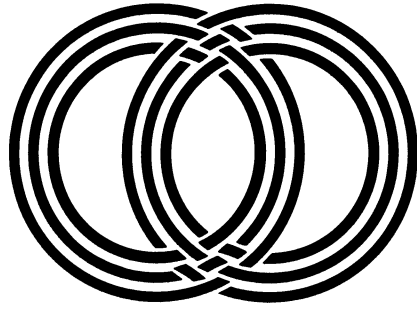
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DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

*is an independent quarterly
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and to examine the relevance of religion
to secular life. It is edited by
Latter-day Saints who wish to bring
their faith into dialogue with the
larger stream of Judeo-Christian thought
and with human experience as a whole
and to foster artistic and scholarly
achievement based on their cultural
heritage. The journal encourages a
variety of viewpoints; although every
effort is made to ensure
accurate scholarship and responsible
judgment, the views expressed are
those of the individual authors and are
not necessarily those of the
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ART

Cover, "October," by *Marilyn Miller*; for more information about this or other works, contact the artist at 333 Pierpont Avenue, Salt Lake City, UT 84101.

"Adam and Leon," photograph p. 22 by *Jess Allen*.

LETTERS

Play Omitted

I was disappointed not to find my anthology of plays, *God's Fools: Plays of Mitigated Conscience* (Midvale, Utah: Orion Books, 1983), listed in your "Bibliography of Recent Books on Mormons and Mormonism." Most everything else brought out this last year by the same publisher was included. If only for the record, I'd appreciate your taking note of my book also.

Thomas F. Rogers
Provo, Utah

Errata

I was very pleased to receive the latest issue of *DIALOGUE* with my article on Jerald and Sandra Tanner. I was disappointed, however, to discover that three typographical corrections which I had made in the galleys remained uncorrected in the final published version. More disturbing, an incorrect title for my article was substituted in final publication. The correct title was: "Career Apostates: Reflections on the Life and Work of Jerald and Sandra Tanner." For no apparent reason and without any consultation with me, the article title as published was changed to: "Career Apostates: Reflections on the Works of Jerald and Sandra Tanner." The difference in wording may seem slight. I believe, nevertheless, that a journal of *DIALOGUE*'s caliber can be expected to do a better job on the technical aspects of its publication. At the very least, authors should be able to anticipate that the titles of their articles will be printed correctly.

Lawrence Foster
Atlanta, Georgia

Specious Kaufman

Rustin Kaufman's reasoning in the Spring 1984 *DIALOGUE* concerning how you "prove" the true church is so shallow and specious that I can't help commenting.

First, he states that you "prove" the true church by numbers alone. Since when was that proof for anything? Copernicus, Galileo, Columbus, and others too numerous to mention refute that idea.

Then he uses the figure of 50 million for the Roman Catholics, divides it by 1950 years, and shows that we have a higher average per year than the Catholics do. Therefore, we are the true church. What he forgets is that there are approximately 600 million other Catholics in the world, so if you are going by numbers alone, the Catholics win hands down. He was only including the Catholics in the United States, but he was including all LDS throughout the world. Hardly a fair comparison.

Omer Dean Nelson
Tucson, Arizona

Elsie Declined

I read with interest Gene Sessions's review of my book *Gospel Letters to a Mormon Missionary*. Upon how many other authors he has bestowed the Elsie the Cow Award (for milking the Mormons), I don't know. But I, at least, must decline for lack of the prime qualification: "milk."

The fact is, my little literary enterprise produced none to speak of. For though Gene Sessions may be unable to recognize theology when he reads it, the Mormon rank and file have no trouble doing so. And if scant sales are any indicator, it appears that they prefer something else.

If only I had written the large print, "happy-daddy" gift book I was credited with in the review, it would have made all the difference. It would have produced "milk" in abundance. It would have justified the bestowal upon me of the coveted Elsie. And, what's more, it would have made an honest reviewer of the dreaded Sessions.

Paul James Toscano
Provo, Utah

Appreciative Audience

I have enjoyed my association with *DIALOGUE* for a number of years. As a former student in a religious studies program, who frequently was assigned essay topics relating to Mormonism, I found the articles invaluable as resource material.

DIALOGUE offers a unique three-fold opportunity for me to stimulate my intellect, expand my vision, and strengthen my testimony. As my own academic career progresses, I look forward to a time when perhaps I may have the privilege of taking a more active role than the one I currently hold—that of solely an appreciative audience.

Sincere best wishes for continued success.

Pat Court
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Repudiation of Evolution

I was happy to see four more letters in the Spring 1984 issue stemming from Steven H. Heath's important article, "The Reconciliation of Faith and Science: Henry Eyring's Achievement" (Autumn 1982). Marc A. Schindler, David H. Bailey, E. B. Christiansen, and J. P. Martin all made useful comments on a letter by Julian R. Durham (Autumn 1983). However, Christiansen and Martin take comfort in quoting Church authorities of the past who condoned belief in evolution. It seems to me that today's leaders have tacitly repudiated all such statements—an astonishing development mentioned in none of the letters.

Since the fifties Elder Bruce R. McConkie has repeatedly declared that prior

to Adam's fall about six thousand years ago, all living things were immortal and unable to reproduce. It was long possible to assume that not all the Brethren would insist we believe that doctrine, but that assumption appears insupportable now. In the June 1982 *Ensign*, Elder McConkie declared that "an understanding of the doctrine of creation is essential to salvation" and then spelled out "what the inspired word sets forth," including the teaching that no plant or animal reproduced or died until after Adam's fall. Having spoken out on this topic for so long, he has had ample opportunity to find out if any of the General Authorities disagree with him. I find it hard to believe that he would contradict the views of any of them in the *Ensign*, especially while asserting that "we are duty bound to accept" the "revealed verities" which he expounds.

If my analysis is correct, the many Mormons who believe in evolution—or even in the existence of fossils over six thousand years old—now bear the burden of feeling that perhaps they are going against all the Brethren. Many of us will want to work toward a change in that situation.

Finally, I agree with Durham that Henry Eyring "kept his knowledge of the revealed truths of religion and his organic evolutionary views in separate compartments." Eyring said so himself: "I never worry what the Brethren believe about my specialty today because it is part of the genius of the Lord's Church that both they and I will understand the entire situation better tomorrow" (letter to Elder Richard L. Evans, 8 April 1954, copy in my possession). Of course he tried to reconcile the findings of science with his religion; but like most scientists, he knew that it is wise to leave religion out of scientific research. Galileo and Darwin would have been far less successful had they not so delimited their investigations.

Richard Pearson Smith
Westfield, New Jersey

Women and Priesthood

RLDS Priesthood: Structure and Process

Paul M. Edwards

It sometimes appears that RLDS members are more impressed with receiving an inspired document from the Prophet than they are with what it says, thus reminding one of Augustine's comment that most folks "pay more attention to the dishes than to the food which is served on them." But the 1984 document is far different for there is considerable emotion and controversy about it.

Two paragraphs of the document deal with the ordination of women. The first (paragraph 9, Section 156, RLDS Doctrine and Covenants) states:

I have heard the prayers of many, including my servant the prophet, as they have sought to know my will in regard to the question of who shall be called to share the burdens and responsibilities of priesthood in my church. I say to you now, as I have said in the past, that all are called according to the gifts which have been given them. This applies to priesthood as well as to any other aspects of the work. Therefore, do not wonder that some women of the church are being called to priesthood responsibilities. This is in harmony with my will and where these calls are made known to my servants, they may be processed according to administrative procedures and provisions of the law. Nevertheless, in the ordaining of women to priesthood, let this be done with all deliberateness. Before actual laying on of hands takes place, let specific guidelines and instructions be provided by the spiritual authorities, that all may be done in order.

Paragraph 10 further explains:

Remember, in many places there is still much uncertainty and misunderstanding regarding the principles of calling and giftedness. There are persons whose burden in this regard will require that considerable labor and ministerial support be provided. This should be extended with prayer and tenderness of feeling, that all may be blessed with the full power of my reconciling Spirit.

While the discussion of the 1984 document tends to revolve around the ordination of women, it is important to note — though I do not notice a lot of people noting it — that this document also contained some significant insights concerning the priesthood, and, as well, further understandings about the temple. While not so dramatic, both have significant implications for the

PAUL M. EDWARDS is president of Temple School of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints headquartered in Independence, Missouri. This paper and those by L. Madelon Brunson and Jill Mulvay Derr which follow were delivered at the Mormon History Association annual meeting in Provo, Utah, May 1984.

Church. There is a very open and firm statement concerning the obligations of the priesthood.

It is my will that my priesthood be made up of those who have an abiding faith and desire to serve me with all their hearts, in humility and with great devotion. Therefore, where there are those who are not now functioning in their priesthood, let inquiry be made by the proper administrative officers, according to the provisions of the law, to determine the continuing nature of their commitment. (D&C 156:8)

Ever since the 1968 and 1972 documents (Sections 149, 194A, and 150), gave consideration to the construction of a contemporary temple in Independence, there has been considerable speculation about what was envisioned in the edifice. Part of the answer was provided here:

The temple shall be dedicated to the pursuit of peace. It shall be for reconciliation and for healing of the spirit. It shall also be for a strengthening of faith and preparation for witness. By its ministries an attitude of wholeness of body, mind, and spirit as a desirable end toward which to strive will be fostered. It shall be the means for providing leadership education for priesthood and members. And it shall be a place in which the essential meaning of the Restoration as healing and redeeming agent is given new life and understanding, inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world. (D&C 156:5)

Our interest here, however, is with the ordination of women in the priesthood of the RLDS Church. In understanding this, some brief comments about the RLDS priesthood structure might be helpful, for it is different than the Latter-day Saints procedure.

For the RLDS, calls to the priesthood have traditionally been a matter of personal "awareness" that an individual — a man, so far — has both actual ability and potential. And that such talent, balanced with dedication and interest, is to be used in the service of the Creator. There is considerable stress on potential, feeling that the office helps make the person as well as the person the office. Within the RLDS movement, persons are generally called in an ascending manner from deacon, teacher, priest, elder, high priest, though many start well up the ladder. Age, level of maturity, and the specialization of talents are primary considerations.

There is no minimum or maximum age, but the first call usually comes early in the young person's career, say in the late teens or twenties. Calls to the office of elder are consistently presented for persons with a period of service in a previous priesthood office. Calls to the high priesthood come for those who are identified as persons of experience and wisdom and for whom administrative assignments are envisioned. Bishops and Seventies are called into orders to perform specialized functions, stewardship and evangelism, respectively.

In the main, priesthood responsibilities are outlined in the RLDS Doctrine and Covenants, and tend to be described along functional lines. The deacon's role, less defined than others, is to look after the comforts and safety of the Saints assembled. The priest is to "visit the house of each member, and . . . exhort them to pray vocally and in secret," and to attend to all family duties. Elders are to conduct the meetings of the Saints "according to the commandments and revelations of God." High priests' duties include responsibilities to

oversee, to administer, counsel, and lead the people. This latter office contains the orders of the leadership of the Church: Presiding Bishopric, Twelve, and First Presidency.

Calls to the Aaronic Priesthood, as well as for elders, are made through either the presiding elder (congregation) or stake president, the stake high council, and the stake conference. Often prior approval is given by the congregation involved. For those called to the high priesthood, a call is initiated by the stake president or the metropole president and then should be approved by the apostle in the field, the director of field ministrics, the First Presidency, and finally by the stake high council, the stake conference, or the World Conference.

As far as I am aware there is no written policy on just how the Church is to deal with inspired documents. The question of how such a document gets to the conference has, historically, been set by the Prophet, and it is the nature of the document which has determined the process of acceptance. Early in the Church, inspired direction to the body was taken either to the quorums — conferences were not a part of the original understandings of organization — or were expressed by Joseph Smith and simply recorded.

The RLDS Church was born in a branch business meeting and its tradition of conference action is very important. The law of common consent requires that a conference of the people assembled must act upon the documents. The first documents of the movement — up through Section 117 — were sent first to the quorums and orders for their consideration, after that to the elders who were, at the time, the most representative body until the conference was fully organized. The 1878 Cincinnati Edition of the Doctrine and Covenants — the first edition the RLDS accepted as such — was approved by the RLDS Church in conference, and this approval carried all previous revelations printed in that volume.

Section 121 was given as simple instruction in 1885. It was accepted by the conference but was never sent to the quorums. Some documents were un-addressed as far as identifying the receivers and were assumed to be business for the quorums and the conference. There was a point, just after the turn of the century, when the quorums considered them serially — that is, moving from the Twelve to the Presiding Bishopric, then to the high priests, seventies, and elders.

In 1916 what was presented came as a report to the Joint Council of the First Presidency, Bishopric, and Twelve, was sent to the quorums after Council consideration, and then to the conference. In 1920 what was to become Section 133 was sent to the conference first and then to the quorums, primarily because it dealt with the function of some of the quorums themselves.

In 1972 the procedure was amended to provide a chance for questions by those delegates and members of the conference who did not have the document available through a quorum session. So, in effect, the entire conference organization has been apprised of the document prior to the time that it came to the floor of the conference. The current document (Section 156) came addressed to the councils, quorums, orders, and members of the World Conference.

While the document comes to the conference legislative assembly it is not really dealt with in a legislative manner. There are discussion and questions, even, at times, serious argument for or against the document but no consideration that would allow for the acceptance of one part and not another or that would allow the amending or alteration of the document itself. Such documents are traditionally accepted or rejected in total. Within the quorums, there were few attempts to make alterations, even to table aspects of the document. But these are automatically out of order. The legislative body may consider it paragraph by paragraph, but it then votes on the document in its entirety. President Smith, following tradition, is not in the chamber for the discussion or vote, and his councilors (or on occasion the Presiding Patriarch or chairman of the Council of Twelve) chair the conference.

Reactions to Section 156 have varied. There have been very few instances I have observed where persons, male or female, have indicated any violent disbelief or dislike for the direction received. After all, a refusal to accept this document and to follow the dictates of the conference action involves far more than simply disagreement. Up until the time that it was approved, the door was wide open for argument, discussion, or questions concerning the validity of the idea or the spirit of the document. But once it had been approved by the quorums and accepted by the conference — especially by such a significant margin — it was the law of the Church. To continue to oppose it is to oppose the Church. And, as is often the case, those most likely to question a new concept on the grounds of its implied liberalism are also those who feel very strongly about obedience to the Church. This was, for a significant number, a test of faith in the Church and as such was an affirmation of the Prophet and the institutional movement.

This does not mean, however, that there has not been considerable reaction. On the negative side I found these sorts of objections: (1) It suggests a God who changes. After all, if God had seen fit for women to be in the priesthood of the Church why were they not originally involved? The seriousness of this question comes from our people's limited understanding of the nature of God and of open canon. (2) There is considerable concern about the violation of tradition. It has always been a male priesthood. In significant ways a change now means a whole new interpretation of that which many feel does not need alteration. After all can women be "patriarchs"? (3) Some have suggested that women are unqualified. This is a much more emotional point than others and is heard from both men and women. *Unqualified* is used in a variety of ways and in degrees, but the general meaning is that women are unfit to hold such offices. This seems to stem from a feeling left over from previous decades, that women are not rational enough. (4) There is a question about what it will do to male ego. While this may seem a little strange — no one has worried much about female ego for awhile — it is serious. How can a man keep control of the household when he is a deacon and she a high priest? (5) Questions of adjustment seem almost overwhelming at the moment. What do you do when a priesthood call is needed at 2:00 A.M. and the only person you can find to go with you is of the opposite sex? That seems to be

heavy on the minds of some persons who are not secure with the intrasexual nature of today's world. It is also interesting to note that many women who want other women to be treated equally do not seem to want their husbands to have lunch with them. Equality is generally seen as a less personal relationship. Those who hold priesthood and who have some idea about how intensely personal and intimate it can sometimes be worry about how well men and women will handle this.

On the positive side, there was a lot of soul searching and more than one person spoke eloquently concerning his or her personal dislike of the alteration in tradition but affirming strong support of an idea whose time had most certainly come. There was strong support for the Prophet and the courage shown in this willing acceptance of a controversial position. Many also felt that the role of women was the central issue facing the Church domestically and saw this document as a powerful statement about the future. They saw it as a significant sign of the Church's willingness to deal with the modern world. I have also observed a great deal of cautious optimism, particularly among women. This is not the end of our difficulties nor does it answer all the questions women had been raising. Now that there are no scriptural or administrative grounds for noninvolvement, those concerned recognize there are very special problems for those who must now consider priesthood in a different light. There is concern as well that this move might carry with it further support for the traditional priesthood system which, in the minds of many, needs serious additional consideration. Few have voiced a desire to abolish priesthood altogether but now question more seriously if the system is operating as it should.

In terms of personal reaction, I cheerfully confess that when I first heard the document read I was shocked. I kept thinking of Epstein's Third Law: "If you think the problem is bad now, just wait until we've solved it." My condition of shock held for some time. Perhaps I have not really gotten over it yet. My shock was not disbelief nor unhappiness over the document. I was proud of Wallace B. Smith for his courage and concern. I found myself unable to deal with the immediacy of it. I recall those years when I rose every morning anticipating the joy of marking off one more day of my army enlistment. On the day of my release I felt a real loss. Well, in some respects this describes my feeling.

I considered the document to be a very valid statement. I have felt for some time that well over half the talent in the church was being limited by our tradition of an all-male priesthood. But now, what was I to do?

Perhaps the real significance of it — and of the power behind it — is seen in the fact that for over an hour that first day, one man after another rose to tell of his experience. They were often seriously opposed to women in the priesthood — sometimes had spoken against it hostilely — but now testified that they found the change valid and felt it should be made. Men I respected, and whom I knew to be more conservative than I, dug deep into their own souls and saw a truth. Of course, some spoke against it. But they did so with serious concern, quietly and without rancor, feeling strong passions mellowed by the concern of the group.

But these are reactions. How did I feel? Good. I feel that I have supported this cause a long time — I shared Adolphus (Bud) Edwards's feeling of utter rejection after his 1970 attempt to get the ordination of women on the floor of the conference was literally yelled down. I am well aware of the limitations of a man's contribution to women's understanding (or understanding women), but felt at least a supportive role. And I felt vindicated. Women have a major and unique contribution to make. Anything that makes it easier for them to make it — and to live peacefully with themselves while they do — is worth our support and dedication.

But I have some serious concerns. I do not want unqualified or unfit women in important priesthood offices any more than I want unqualified or unfit men there. There is, at the moment, no tradition for women in the priesthood. That means nothing and a lot. Just as there was no tradition of women in politics — and thus women have had to make the long climb of experience and expertise — I hope that women, and those who ordain them, will recognize the need for periods of education and experience. This is not an excuse for delay nor even for undue caution — only an awareness of potential problems.

I am concerned as well with the overly structured nature of the priesthood and the tendency toward monarchism in our thinking. It is my hope that authority-minded women (often long starved for recognition) will not increase that difficulty rather than soften it.

Like so many things that we must deal with, it is really too early to tell what the significance of this change will be. I suspect that this instruction will produce far less change than some would want and others would fear. My feeling is that institutions — even those with prophetic leadership and courageous management — do not change as quickly as we sometimes expect. This is a major change — as is the instruction dealing with priesthood and with the temple — and will have long-term effects. I believe that that effect will be good and that the Church will grow in its own significance because of this instruction. Just how, and when, and to what extent is as yet very much to be decided by future direction and the Church's dedication and willingness to work with these new insights.

Stranger in a Strange Land: A Personal Response to the 1984 Document

L. Madelon Brunson

Every RLDS Conference since 1970 has entertained legislation or discussion respecting ordination of women or expansion of their role. A review of the conferences from 1970 forward will be helpful background in understanding the persistency of this issue.

L. MADELON BRUNSON is archivist in the Library-Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, with world headquarters in Independence, Missouri.

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Delegates of the 1970 conference moved to adopt a resolution which stated that women constituted a majority of the church membership but had limited opportunity to act as representatives. The legislation recommended that female participation on committees and commissions be more in keeping with their proportion of membership. When the item reached the floor, individuals in the Australian delegation presented a substitute motion which called the conference to affirm the acceptance of the leadership of women. It advocated an end to discrimination on the basis of gender and asked the presidency to clarify the church's stand on the ordination of women. One delegate objected to consideration. The chair ruled against objection, but the conference voted to table the entire matter.¹

Looking toward the 1972 World Conference, the Portland, Oregon, Metropolitan branch passed a resolution on expanded female participation in church life. The preamble cited scriptures on equality and the church's confirmation of the principle. It called the church to reaffirm its belief. The last paragraph specified: "Resolved, That all those in administrative positions within the church be encouraged to appoint, hire and nominate women for positions not scripturally requiring priesthood so that women, who constitute over half of the church membership, may be more adequately and equally represented in the administrative decision-making of the church."² This resolution resembled the 1970 attempt, which had lost when eclipsed by the more radical substitute regarding ordination of women. During a 1972 World Conference business session, discussion of this "Opportunities for Women" resolution called attention to the fact that the U.S. Senate had, only the month before, overwhelmingly passed the Equal Rights Amendment. A motion to refer to the First Presidency and the Council of Twelve failed when a delegate pointed out that referral would leave the issue in an all-male domain. An amendment requesting the presidency to bring a progress report to the 1974 Conference was also unsuccessful. The body voted down a substitute asking for a study of positions which would not infringe on priesthood responsibilities. The original motion passed.³

The 1974 World Conference legislative body received the presidency's report suggesting implementation of the "Opportunities for Women" resolution. "This would include (a) employment of more women in paid staff positions; (b) appointment of more women to advisory commissions, committees, and boards; (c) moral and ethical leadership in the quest for full equality of women." They concluded with a pledge to continue searching for ways to move affirmatively toward equal participation.⁴

Pre-1976 Conference distribution of upcoming business included a resolution of the First Presidency regarding the ordination of women. Some unrest over this anticipated legislation resulted in counter proposals, and the con-

¹ *World Conference Bulletin*, 12 April 1970, pp. 329-30.

² *World Conference Bulletin*, 9 April 1972, p. 170.

³ "World Conference Transcript: 1972," pp. 355-62, RLDS Library-Archives.

⁴ "Report of the First Presidency," *World Conference Bulletin*, 1 April 1974, p. 208.

ference faced legislation hostile to the concept. The presidency's intention was to rescind General Conference Resolution (GCR) 564 as "no longer responsive to the needs of the Church." GCR 564 had been in the *Book of Rules and Resolutions* since 1905. It originated when Will S. Pender, a seventy assigned to the Seattle and British Columbia District, appealed to the Zion's Religio Literary Society on behalf of his wife, Fannie. He explained that she was in charge of the home class Religio work in Idaho and traveled at her own expense for the organization. Railroad companies offered reduced fares for ordained ministers traveling on church business, and he asked the Religio to request the General Conference to "set apart all such laborers, (Male or female) appointed by the Religio for that class of work by laying on of hands."⁵ On 8 April 1905, the Religio Society presented this communication to the conference without recommendation. The 1905 assembly promptly referred the issue to a joint council of the First Presidency and the Twelve with instructions to report their considerations before adjournment of the current conference body. In summary, the 1905 enactment stated that since no rules or provisions by revelation existed on the ordination of women, and since the request was based on economic measures, the committee could not see its way clear to approve the setting apart or ordination.⁶

In the 1976 request for rescission of this old resolution, the presidency noted that several women's names had been submitted for ordination and that the 1905 decision precluded the processing of these calls. While another clause confessed that there was "no ultimate theological reason why women . . . could not hold priesthood," the final enactment paragraph stated that "consideration of the ordination of women be deferred until it appears in the judgment of the First Presidency that the church, by common consent, is ready to accept such ministry."⁷ The 1976 World Conference voted to rescind GCR 564.

The 1978 Conference heard legislation which claimed that an organizational approach in effect for several years at the congregational level, and as set forth by the *Congregational Leaders Handbook*, 1978, tended to blur the traditional role of priesthood and unordained members. This was ruled out of order and therefore not discussed. However, other business entitled "Utilization of Unordained Men" was considered by the legislative body. The resolution urged the conference to recommend that the presidency study ways to more "effectively utilize the talents and abilities of unordained men."⁸ A motion to amend by changing the word "men" to "persons" failed and the original resolution passed.

Legislation at the 1980 Conference requested endorsing the idea that women should never hold priesthood office in the RLDS church. Objection to consideration was sustained. Two other measures, at the same conference, suggested that the New Zealand National Church and Adelaide District of Aus-

⁵ "Minutes of General Conference: 1905," *Supplement to Saints' Herald*, 6 April 1905, p. 755.

⁶ "Minutes of General Conference," *Supplement to Saints' Herald*, 18 April 1905, p. 804.

⁷ *World Conference Bulletin*, 28 March 1976, p. 181.

⁸ *World Conference Bulletin*, 6 April 1978, p. 256.

tralia were ready to ordain women. The rationale was that various stages of cultural development existed throughout the church and that national churches should be free to determine the ordination issue for themselves in consultation with the First Presidency. This was ruled out of order since the chair interpreted it as conflicting with the 1976 Conference action, and since priesthood authority extended beyond national boundaries. Another enactment enjoined the conference to work toward the end of injustice and any social conditions which limit human freedom. Objection to consideration failed and the resolution passed. A motion calling for an annual progress report regarding the nondiscrimination in employment of women in the church failed.⁹

Finally, the 1982 Conference entertained two resolutions pertaining to the ordination of women. One stated that as there was no scriptural basis for ordaining women, the conference should wait for prophetic guidance. The other contended that there was no scriptural basis for limiting God in the matter and resolved that the church should affirm that there be no “barriers to ordination based on race, ethnic or national origin, or gender.”¹⁰ The chair called these two items to the floor with a report of the First Presidency reviewing the history of the issue as handled by past Conferences. The narration also included the “Recommendations on the Role of Women” as endorsed in 1974. After the recounting of this brief history, the statement requested that the two items be laid on the table.¹¹ However, rather than table the legislation, the delegates chose a motion of referral. This motion recommended that a task force, under the guidance of the First Presidency, make a survey to determine the attitude of members throughout the World Church and report back to the 1984 Conference.¹²

The task force reported the survey results in the 15 February 1984 *Saints Herald* as well as the *World Conference Bulletin*, 1 April 1984, pp. 244–58; 49 percent of the respondents opposed women being eligible for priesthood call, while approximately one-third approved.

Nearly 2,800 delegates attended the first day’s business session on Tuesday, 3 April 1984, with the task force’s information in hand. They had heard the document, now Section 156, only an hour earlier. Legislative consideration of the message was scheduled for Thursday. About 40 percent of the 1984 Conference body was female. As a member of the legislative group, I heard the document with a complex mixture of emotions and thoughts. A general feeling of depression settled in as I faced the dilemma of deciding how to vote on the pronouncement.

I spent Wednesday evening alone examining my response and listing what I perceived as my responsibilities to God, the church, and myself. When I entered the conference chamber the next day, I knew I could *not* vote no and align myself with those who believe that women are somehow inferior. Abstention

⁹ *World Conference Bulletin*, 6–12 April 1980, pp. 236, 239, 274, 294, 307, 309.

¹⁰ *World Conference Bulletin*, 28 March and 31 March 1982, pp. 268, 331.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 335–337.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 355; “1982 World Conference Transcript,” pp. 234–242, RLDS Archives.

tion seemed the only alternative to supporting the act of bringing women into participation in a hierarchical system. As Patriarch Duane Couey prayed prior to consideration of the document, quiet words entered my mind to go forward in trust. I voted yes on behalf of the women who believe this is an answer to the discrimination problem.

What were the reasons for my feelings of depression? I certainly believe women are capable and competent and should be able to choose ordination. Was I depressed because the guidelines were not included, though preferably separate from the document? Somewhat. Was I depressed because I might not be called; or, that I might be tempted to conform in order to be called? Perhaps. Because of the divisions which will undoubtedly occur among many? Probably. Because the structure seemed destined to remain the same? Certainly. Because of the pain which will ensue with the execution of the process? Assuredly. My depression was accentuated as I listened to others and felt utterly alone in my response. But perhaps the ultimate cause for my depression was being compelled to face the reality that unless I was willing to accommodate and accept the system, I would never perform the ordinances. This is a loss, and I grieve.

Were there some aspects of this change which I could celebrate? Wallace B. Smith was certainly bold in bringing such a controversial proclamation. Many women with whom I have talked have a feeling of relief or release, a general feeling of peace that somehow the institution at last affirms their equality and worth as persons. A few concerned men feel a lessening of the pressure caused from the knowledge that they participate in a discriminating system. I am glad for them, but I do not celebrate this. Relaxation may postpone necessary examination of a structure which still discriminates. The excluded ones have not been the system's sole victims. Eliminating the hierarchical order, the paternalism (maternalism?), which curbs growth and separates us is, to me, imperative. We deserve a time for relaxation and renewal if the resting time motivates us with increased energy toward justice and equity.

I personally feel a sense of urgency to proceed with explorations into what it means to be a church. While I respect President Smith's courage, I yearn for a maturity among our people and our leadership that will allow us to deal with issues openly and honestly. A document is considered by the legislative body under an aura which is absent in resolution deliberations. Are we only a cult with bureaucratic trappings?

The problems of discrimination in all our cultures are so systemically deep that our grasp of the proper questions in this transition is tenuous, let alone the potential solutions. Psychologists are only now discovering differences in the moral development of men and women. "The disparity between women's experience and the representation of human development, noted throughout the psychological literature, has generally been seen to signify a problem in women's development," says psychologist Carol Gilligan. "Instead, the failure of women to fit existing models of human growth may point to a problem in the representation, a limitation in the conception of human condition, an

omission of certain truths about life.”¹³ In short, we operate out of two different realities.

A high percentage of women who choose to accept ordination will probably adapt, rather than bring their own individual femaleness to redefine ministry, office, and authority. Women will be *assimilated*, and this coalescence will be male-defined and male-determined, since administrative decision-makers at every level will continue to be male for long into the future. If women were *integrated* this could begin the necessary changes in the structure because of their different reality.¹⁴ This would mean involving a variety of confident women in very substantial ways in the planning and decisions regarding the effectuation of those plans. The equality I hope for is not “sameness” but equality in our right to individuality and autonomy.

I have heard some men express their hope that women entering the priesthood will change the structure. This seems an unrealistic expectation when the same men are already in the system, some even in positions of power, and have not been able to effect these hoped-for changes. However, the execution of the new directive may cause such a wrenching that changes of structure will become more conceivable. Traditionally all-male professions and trades have been devalued when women enter those fields. This disposition has possibilities for leading us into a long-delayed examination of ordination and organization.

The design of RLDS priesthood calls, which Paul Edwards has described, is capricious in my view and will result in problems unique to our denomination. I say capricious because there are no clear-cut qualifications, and total responsibility for the “call” is in the hands of individual administrators. The pain involved in the struggle to implement this action will illuminate the existing misogyny. I agree with Beverly Harrison when she says, “it is never the mere presence of women, not the image of women, not fear of ‘femininity,’ which is the heart of misogyny. The core of misogyny, which has yet to be broken or even touched, is that reaction which occurs when women’s concrete power is manifest, when we women live and act as full and adequate persons in our own right.”¹⁵ Women will be perceived out of a different perspective now that they are ordainable, and this “core of misogyny” will emerge from the darkest and most unexpected corners. If this bigotry is recognized and overcome, it could result in growth, and this is heartening.

The problem of language could involve another paper, if not a book. Our denomination has not yet been able to deal with the predominant use of male imagery relative to God. The inclusive language policy adopted in 1978 did not confront this aspect of sexism in language. Will women in the priesthood

¹³ Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 1–2; see also Anne Wilson Schaef, *Women’s Reality: An Emerging Female System in the White Male Society* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Winston Press, 1981).

¹⁴ See L. Madelon Brunson, “Scattered Like Autumn Leaves: Why RLDS Women Organize,” in *Restoration Studies II* (Independence: Herald Publishing House, 1983), pp. 125–32.

¹⁵ Beverly Wildung Harrison, “The Power of Anger in the Work of Love: Christian Ethics for Women and Other Strangers,” *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 36 (Supplementary, 1981): 42.

help us deal with the predominant male imagery relative to God, or will our predominant male imagery relative to God deter us from accepting female ministry?

In the dualistic system of thought, ordination of women was the only answer. There will be pain for everyone. We now have a broader base of discrimination. But there will also be joy for the women set free to touch people at the essence of their being through the symbolic acts of the ordinances.

The priesthood-of-all-believers philosophy still claims my attention. Our over-emphasis on ecclesiastical authority prevents us from perceiving as “ministers” those who act authoritatively through their caring and presence to human need. Acceptance of the “all are called” (RLDS D&C 119:8b) quote cited in the 1984 document signifies the priesthood-of-all-believers attitude. Yet the very act of ordination separates us. There are those who are ordained, and there are the “others.”

My primary concern is that resolving the enactment of the ordination of women, which is already so long overdue for we who call ourselves prophetic, will consume the energies needed in answering our greater call. My lament is that we seem unable to make a leap of faith which would carry us beyond concern over who shall sit on the right and who shall sit on the left — who is the lesser and who is the greater. I feel a sense of urgency that we make this leap of faith that would carry us to resolute commitment to justice and equality in a hungry, nuclear-shadowed world where love and worth of persons is still conditional.

An Endowment of Power: The LDS Tradition

Jill Mulvay Derr

Latter-day Saints share a belief in and a commitment to the Restoration. The LDS and RLDS churches declare that God spoke to the Prophet Joseph Smith that a people might by covenant be commissioned. Latter-day Saints were given a charge — a mission to prepare the earth for the Savior’s second coming — and the power or authority to carry out that mission accompanied the charge. RLDS Church President Wallace B. Smith in the “Inspired Document,” now Section 156, issued in April 1984 expressed hope that, “inspired by the life and witness of the Redeemer of the world, his people might move toward giving “new life and understanding” to the “essential meaning of the Restoration as a healing and redeeming agent.”

The document itself brings new understanding to the meaning of the Restoration. Who shall be called to share the burdens and responsibilities of the priesthood? The document affirms that all will be “called according to the gifts which have been given them” and that Church members should “not won-

JILL MULVAY DERR is a historian of Mormon women whose current research focuses on the history of the LDS Relief Society. She resides in Alpine, Utah.

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der that some women of the Church are being called to priesthood responsibilities," by "the ordaining of women to priesthood." Both Paul and Madelon commented on the courage and boldness of President Smith in "bringing such a controversial proclamation" before the Saints. It is apparent, however, from the background provided by Madelon and Paul, that many years of courageous effort on the part of many people preceded the April 1984 issuing of Section 156.

Paul recounted the first RLDS conference discussion of the ordination of women, when Adolphus Edwards was "literally yelled down," a scene remembered and heard with pain, but reminding us that new questions hurt and that oftentimes questioners are hurt and initially receive no official recognition. Madelon's careful chronicling of the eight conferences which have "entertained legislation or discussion respecting ordination of women or expansion of their role" is a history which many of us must study before we can appreciate the significance of the Inspired Document. It represents fourteen years of consideration, hesitation, examination, and frustration. Many LDS Church members experienced somewhat similar frustration in waiting for the 1978 revelation which extended priesthood to blacks. While the deliberations and discussions of LDS Church members and leaders were not carried forth on the conference floor, they were certainly an important part of the process of change.

Those who believe in continuing revelation know that a prophet can push out perimeters of understanding; but sometimes people push the prophet. Their questions and discussions, their "war of words and tumult of opinions" make urgent the asking, or what President Wallace B. Smith termed the "importuning the Spirit on behalf of the Church."

Paul, with his "cautious optimism" indicated that this official decision regarding the ordination of women would not be "the end of our difficulties," nor "answer all the questions women had been raising." Indeed, it would seem it does not begin to answer the questions of structure Madelon is raising, although she admits being heartened by the possibility that both deep-seated misogyny and "a structure which still discriminates" may be recognized and confronted.

Both of these responses suggest that the RLDS Church cannot consider ordaining women or become involved in actually ordaining them without examining its present definition and structure of priesthood. Madelon lamented "the over-emphasis on ecclesiastical authority" and Paul indicated concern with the "overly structured nature of priesthood" within the RLDS Church. President Wallace B. Smith's Inspired Document likewise expressed worry over priesthood members who misunderstand the purpose of their calling: "Succumbing to pride, some have used it for personal aggrandizement. Others, through disinterest or lack of diligence, have failed to magnify their calling or have become inactive. When this has happened, the church has experienced a loss of spiritual power, and the entire priesthood structure has been diminished." Though in many respects our churches have gone separate ways since Nauvoo, we have both acquired very large and complex organizations that have come to be managed bureaucratically, that is, through increasing specialization. For Latter-day Saints, priesthood has come to be exclusively defined and related to functions performed by males. Sometimes it is equated with males themselves.

It is of more than passing interest that this RLDS proclamation on priesthood should include instructions for furthering the building of a temple "for there is great need of the spiritual awakening that will be engendered by the ministries experienced within its walls." These, the document says, will be "the means of a great blessing" for the people, as well as "the means for providing leadership education for priesthood and member."

Similarly, for LDS Church members who have a long and extensive tradition of temple building and temple ordinances, the temple has provided rich blessings. But it is the temple which points to a major difference between our two churches on the question of women and priesthood. The endowment LDS women receive as part of the temple ordinances is and always has been an endowment of power, of authority. "The Church is not now organized in its proper order, and cannot be until the Temple is completed," Joseph Smith told members of the Relief Society on 28 April 1842. He told the sisters he wanted them to be a "kingdom of priestesses" as in Enoch's day or Paul's day.¹ Later, on 27 May 1842, Bishop Newel K. Whitney, who had just received his own temple endowment through Joseph Smith, told a Relief Society meeting "that without the female all things cannot be restor'd to the earth — it takes all to restore the Priesthood."² In the Church's most sacred liturgy women would both receive authority and pass it on to other women. "You sisters who labor in the House of the Lord can lay your hands upon your sisters, and with divine authority, because the Lord recognizes positions which you occupy," Joseph Fielding Smith told a Relief Society general conference in October 1958. "A person may have authority given to him, or a sister to her, to do certain things in the Church that are binding and absolutely necessary for our salvation, such as the work that our sisters do in the House of the Lord. They have authority given unto them to do some great and wonderful things, sacred unto the Lord, and binding just as thoroughly as are the blessings that are given by the men who hold the Priesthood." Women have authority, affirmed President Smith, but added (for reasons I do not understand) "the sisters have not been given the Priesthood."³

The idea of an eternal union between man and woman as presented in the temple ordinances may well have affected Joseph's perspective on the growing church organization. In organizing the Relief Society in 1842 Joseph Smith told the women that they were being organized "in the order of the priesthood," or "after the pattern of the priesthood." He said "the Church was never perfectly organized until the women were thus organized," and he

¹ "A Record of the Organization, and Proceedings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo," 28 April 1842, microfilm of holograph, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter, LDS Church Archives. See also Bathsheba W. Smith, "Remarks," *Woman's Exponent* 34 (July, Aug. 1905): 14.

² "A Record of . . . the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo," 27 May 1842.

³ Joseph Fielding Smith, "Relief Society — An Aid to the Priesthood," *Relief Society Magazine* 46 (Jan. 1959): 4. The history and significance of Latter-day Saint women's involvement in temple ordinances are carefully examined by Carol Cornwall Madsen in "Eternal Womanhood: The Quest for Definition," forthcoming in a collection of scholarly essays about Mormon women.

turned to them a key or keys which authorized them, in the words of Bruce R. McConkie, "to direct, control, and govern the affairs of the society."⁴

Again, these keys of authority were not termed "priesthood." Relief Society offices were distinguished from priesthood offices relatively early; certainly they never became part of the male authority structure. Yet these female Church officers have provided something of a counterpart to male Church officers. Some scholars suggest that the Prophet Joseph Smith may have intended women to have an organizational structure parallel to the men's — a companion organization.⁵ The RLDS considered a similar option as the survey conducted under First Presidency direction in some twenty nations proposed: "to create some new offices of ordination open to women only," or "to utilize the laying on of hands for setting women apart to specific roles or functions but not ordination to priesthood."⁶ Neither was accepted.

The position of the LDS Relief Society relative to other quorums, namely priesthood quorums, is historically and currently ambiguous. The priesthood reform movement just after the turn of the century defined the Relief Society as an auxiliary to the priesthood, probably a successful definition in terms of practical administration. But ideologically the notion of a parallel or companion organization has persisted among both women and men.

Joseph Fielding Smith indicated that "we speak of [the Relief Society] as an auxiliary, which means a help, but the Relief Society is more than that." Within the Relief Society women

have been given power and authority to do a great many things. The work which they do is done by divine authority. . . . Just as necessary is the labor of the Relief Society in the Church as it is, shall I say? with the quorums of the Priesthood. Now some may feel that I am expressing this a little too strongly, but my own judgment is that the work that you, our good sisters, are doing, finds its place and is just as important in the building up of this kingdom, strengthening it, causing it to expand, laying a foundation upon which we all may build, just as much as it is for the brethren who hold the Priesthood of God."⁷

While LDS women do not hold priesthood offices they have a tradition of liturgical and ecclesiastical authority. But since LDS women today are not generally perceived as having such authority nor perceive themselves as having it, does it really make a difference?

Within the context of our discussion, yes. In the context of expanding the role of women in the LDS Church we have to ask some different questions. Do LDS women need to work toward a different ordination or toward an acknowledgment of the significant power that doctrine and history say is theirs?

⁴ "Early Reminiscence" Relief Society, 17 March 1882, in Relief Society Record, 1880–92, LDS Church Archives; "Sarah M. Kimball, Secretary of the LDS Women's Organizations," *Representative Women of Deseret: A Book of Biographical Sketches*, comp. Augusta Joyce Crocheron (Salt Lake City: J. C. Graham & Co., 1884), p. 27; Bruce R. McConkie, "The Relief Society and the Keys of the Kingdom," *Relief Society Magazine* 37 (March 1950): 151.

⁵ See Linda King Newell, "A Gift Given: A Gift Taken; Washing, Anointing, and Blessing the Sick, Among Mormon Women," *Sunstone* 6 (Sept./Oct. 1981): 16–25.

⁶ "RLDS Women and the Priesthood," *Sunstone Review* 4 (March 1984): 6.

⁷ Smith, "Relief Society — An Aid to the Priesthood," pp. 5, 6.

Our foremothers, whatever frustrations they may have experienced within the system, felt endowed with power. An 1880 poster of "Representative Women of Deseret" features photographs of Eliza R. Snow and other officers of the Relief Society, Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, and Primary Association, as well as other prominent Mormon women writers and leaders. At the top of the poster overarching the clusters of photographs is the sketch of a cloud with a centered crown; from the sides of the cloud extend two hands from whose palms extend rays—of light, of energy, of power?⁸—to the women. These early sisters spoke, taught, and led with authority. They called their sisters to positions of leadership and ordained them to the callings. Their authority took them beyond administration to administer spiritual comfort and blessing to those in need.

Has this female authority been lost or passed away? Is it a matter, as Robert Frost said, of "possessing what we still [are] unpossessed by"?⁸ What about the relationship of this authority to other ecclesiastical authority? Is it a second-class authority because it has not placed women in the Church's highest councils, nor helped us to maintain economic independence, nor allowed us some administrative posts that have no relation to priesthood office and yet are reserved for priesthood bearers? Should women forget this authority and work toward gaining the power designated as priesthood? Can women be partners without holding the same ecclesiastical offices as men?

I am intrigued by Madelon's comment on integration versus assimilation. Do women have something unique to offer — different realities, new energy? Do they, as Carol Gilligan suggests, speak with "a different voice"? Would that voice be lost if women were to enter the government of the Church through offices which are male-determined and male-defined? Is it time to hasten an expanded definition of priesthood that includes both male and female, motherhood and fatherhood, sisterhood and brotherhood?⁹

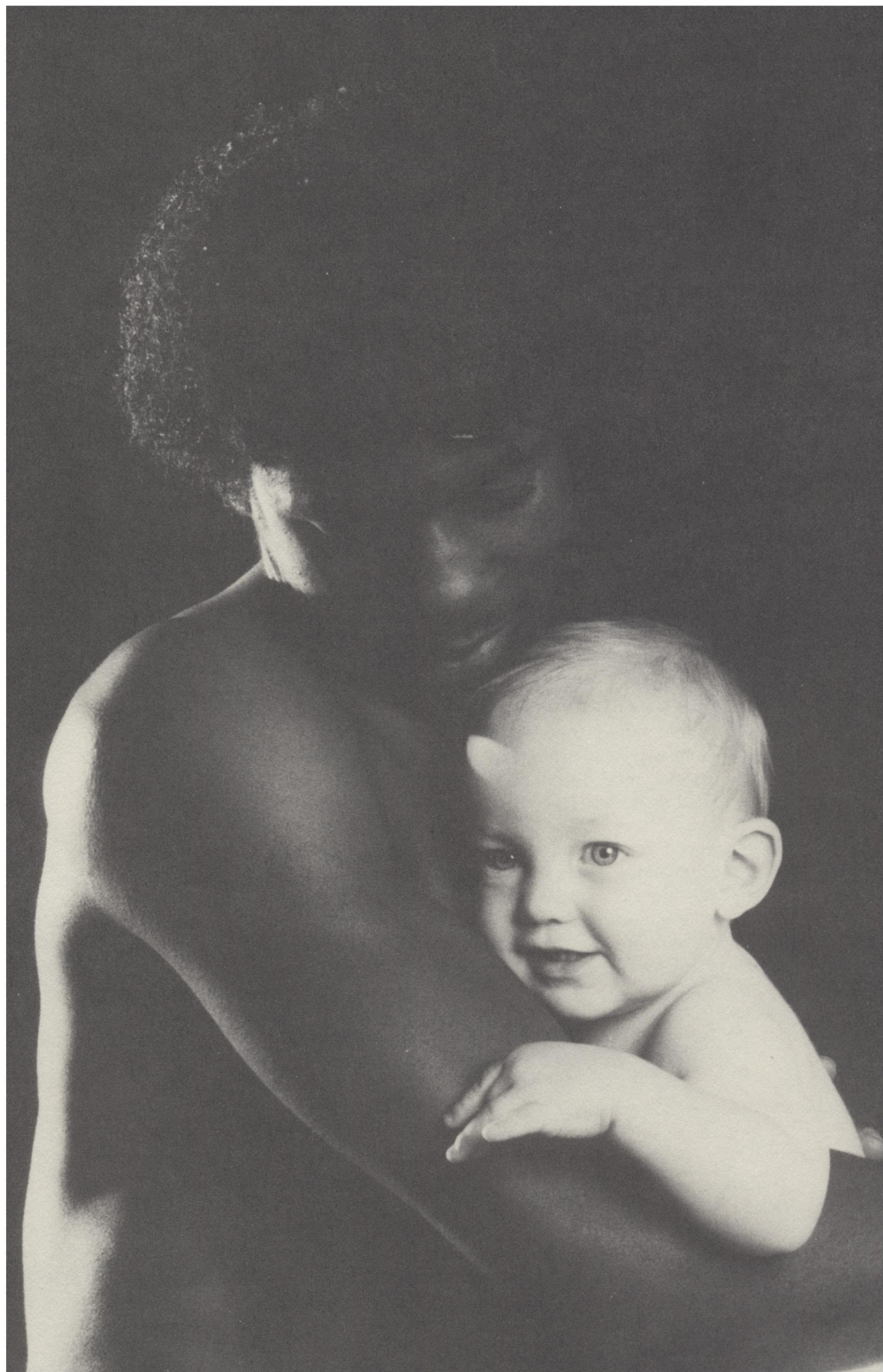
I began this response with reference to the Restoration, which is in my view a process of receiving and implementing truth — line upon line, precept upon precept, grace for grace. Newel K. Whitney's comment that "without the female all things cannot be restor'd to the earth" should be the basis of some important questions for us. Joseph Smith's question began the Restoration and questions will continue the process. Let me close then with a question, one asked by Joseph Fielding Smith:

You [sisters], through your faithfulness and your obedience, will find your place in the kingdom of God when it is established in its fulness and righteousness. . . . It is within the privilege of the sisters of this Church to receive exaltation in the kingdom of God and receive authority and power as queens and priestesses, and I am sure if they have that power they have some power to rule and reign. Else why would they be priestesses?¹⁰

⁸ Robert Frost, "The Gift Outright," *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, ed. Edward Connery Lathem (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 348.

⁹ The idea of a thoughtfully expanded definition is suggested by Grethe Ballif Peterson, "Priesthood and LDS Women: Six Contemporary Definitions," forthcoming in a collection of scholarly essays about Mormon women.

¹⁰ Smith, "Relief Society — An Aid to the Priesthood," pp. 5, 6.



Religious Accommodation in the Land of Racial Democracy: Mormon Priesthood and Black Brazilians

Mark L. Grover



standing before the Mormon congregation, the young man exhibited the excitement and appreciation for life most fourteen-year-old teenagers have. One could sense the willingness, even yearning, to confront the challenges which would be placed before him. He was ready to be made a deacon. The young Brazilian branch president standing beside him reviewed for the congregation the importance of the Aaronic priesthood and the impact such a responsibility should have on the life of a young man. He briefly described what he considered to be the exceptional courage and behavior of this boy. He had joined the Church without parental support and maintained activity despite unusual pressure and adversity. The branch president explained that during the worthiness interview held earlier, the young man had expressed depth and knowledge of the spiritual aspects of life, exceptional for someone just fourteen years old. There was no question in the mind of the branch president and most of the Brazilian congregation of his worthiness to receive the Mormon priesthood. The request for congregational approval by the raising of the right hand was to be little more than a mere formality.

Events did not go as planned. When the obligatory request for negative votes was made, four in the congregation, all American missionaries, indicated opposition. The branch president, surprised and unsure of how to proceed, had the young man sit down and indicated that the problem would be cleared up after the meeting. The congregation was stunned, most having never seen a negative vote cast in church. The boy was confused and not quite sure what was happening.

In a conference held after the sacrament meeting, the elders explained the problem. During visits with the boy's family they had noticed that two younger brothers exhibited some negroid physical features. Even though the young

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man was fair-skinned with brown wavy hair, it was not uncommon for African ancestry to show itself in one member of a family and not in another. If their suspicions were correct, he would be ineligible to hold the Mormon priesthood because of African ancestry. The branch president had never visited the family and had never seen the younger brothers. He decided that his Brazilian counselor and one American elder should visit with the family and very tactfully determine the lineage of the boy before any further action could be taken.

A week later the elders returned. They had spent one evening with the boy's parents talking about genealogy and viewing family photos and felt that they could see in the family pictures evidence of black ancestors. Thus, according to the policy of the Church, the priesthood could not be given to any of the children in the family. The young boy was informed of the decision, explained the reasons for the priesthood denial, and counseled to continue his activity in the Church.¹

This incident, though somewhat unusual, is an example of the difficult problems the Church's policy of priesthood denial to members of African descent created for leaders living in areas with a significant black population. In these parts of the world, the priesthood issue was much more than an occasional embarrassment or a matter for theological debate. It was a very personal issue which had to be confronted often. Many members struggled with this policy which openly discriminated against family members, friends, and occasionally themselves. It was also a source of conflict between local members and missionaries and many times resulted in limited growth and development for the Church.

The Church was very careful to avoid introducing Mormonism into areas of the world with large black populations. However, the Mormons did go to Brazil, South Africa, the American South, and Hawaii. Local officials had difficulty, first in accepting these restrictions, which were sometimes contrary to local beliefs and practices, and then in administering them. An examination of the local response to the Church's policy provides an important picture of the evolution of practices, procedures, and policies developed to help local leaders work with a very difficult and potentially divisive issue.

BRAZIL'S RACIAL MAKE-UP

Brazil provides an excellent example of the effect of the Church's racial policy on local organizations, not because its experience was necessarily unique, but because of the magnitude of the potential problems. Not only did Brazil have a large black population but the Brazilian tradition of intermarriage between blacks, whites, and Indians created a large racially mixed population.

¹ The branch president within a year determined that the missionaries had made an error and the boy was ordained to the Aaronic priesthood. He has continued to remain very active and has since served in several positions in the Church. The circumstances surrounding this event were taken from oral interviews with the boy (now in his thirties) and the branch president, as well as the *Manuscript History of the Brazilian Mission* (hereafter *Manuscript History*), Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; hereafter, LDS Church Archives.

This situation forced the Church to confront regularly not only the issue of priesthood denial but that of racial identification.

For three centuries (1538–1850), African slaves were imported to work the country's plantations and mines. The small number of white women among the early Portuguese settlers created a quasi-European population with a high percentage of mulattos and mestizos, thus blurring the racial lines between white and black. Although an equally important European and Asian immigration of 47 million between 1884 and 1957 significantly altered the racial picture, over 30 percent of the population is some combination of black, white, and Indian, with interracial marriage continuing within most classes in Brazilian society.²

Because Brazil's colonial sugar and mining industries absorbed most of the African slaves, blacks are concentrated in the northeast and parts of the state of Minas Gerais. Brazil's southeastern coffee plantations developed later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, drawing both blacks and a large European immigrant population. The cooler weather of the Brazilian south attracted European small farmers, and a lack of any significant labor-intensive industry resulted in a small black population in the lower three states. These differences were to significantly influence the Church's decisions as to where missionaries would be sent.³

MORMON BEGINNINGS

In 1928, when missionaries were sent to Brazil, they were instructed to avoid the priesthood question by working only with German-speaking people in Brazil's southern immigration colonies. However, as part of the nationalistic fervor of President Getúlio Vargas's *Estado Novo* (New State), the Brazilian government in 1938 outlawed the use of non-Portuguese languages in any

² The latest Brazilian census to include racial categories (1950) showed 26 percent of the population as racially mixed. The figure should be much higher since the Brazilian perception of color classifies as white many who are actually mixed. T. Lynn Smith, *Brazil: People and Institutions* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), pp. 68–73, 126. For a study in miscegenation in Brazil, see Michael Bergmann, *Nasce um Povo* (Petrópolis, Brazil: Vózes, 1978), and Thales de Azevedo, *Cultura e situação racial no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1968).

³ The 1950 census shows the differences in Brazil's racial make-up. In the northeastern state of Pernambuco, 49 percent were listed as white, 9.3 percent black, and 40.9 percent mixed, while Santa Catarina in the south had 94.6 percent white, 3.7 percent black, and 1.5 percent mixed. Smith, *Brazil*, p. 70. J. Reuben Clark, visiting Brazil on his way to the Seventh Pan-American Conference in Montevideo in 1933, reportedly said, "We've been wondering about starting a mission down here for a long time, but we know there's so much mixed blood we rather hesitate to open it up because there's going to be a problem about the priesthood." Daniel Shupe, Oral History, interviewed by Gordon Irving, 22 Feb. 1973. James H. Moyle Oral History Program, p. 32, LDS Church Archives. Clark was able to give President Rulon S. Howells, Brazil's first mission president, little substantive advice on how to deal with the problem. "You know, I'm quite concerned over the problem you will have with the Negro in Brazil because they are so dominant. The boat stopped at a couple of places [Rio de Janeiro and Santos] . . . All I could see there was Black people." Rulon S. Howells, Oral History, interviewed by Gordon Irving, 18 Jan. 1973, p. 19, LDS Church Archives. Clark was also very interested in a possible blood test which would provide medical grounds to positively identify persons of African ancestry. See D. Michael Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1983), pp. 231–32.

public gathering.⁴ Church leaders realized that they must begin teaching Portuguese-speaking Brazilians. By 1940, the mission language had been changed from German to Portuguese.

During these early years, lineage was relatively unimportant, since the priesthood was seldom given to Brazilians. Mormonism was very much a North American church, and missionaries provided branch and district leadership almost exclusively.

Two incidents in 1949 alerted the mission president, Rulon S. Howells, to the potential priesthood problems which the Church could have in racially mixed Brazil. The first incident was the planned ordination of a physically white active member in Rio de Janeiro who, just prior to receiving the priesthood, determined that he had slave ancestry. The second was a racial conflict between the missionaries and black members in the interior of São Paulo.

Piracicaba, a small city in the state of São Paulo, was one of the first areas where Portuguese-speaking missionaries were sent. It had experienced only limited success but had remained open after the missionaries were sent home during World War II, thanks to members in the nearby city of Campinas. The branch not only stayed open but added thirteen converts, many of whom were of African descent. The returning Americans were welcomed by a branch in which many of the active participants had the "lineage of Cain."⁵ The missionaries thus inherited a difficult situation epitomized by an incident in 1949. As a result of teaching English classes, the missionaries were able to interest some professors at a local college in attending church. After the services, the professors informed the elders that though they were impressed with the message of Mormonism, they were not interested in joining a church of poor blacks.

When Howells received this report, he decided that the relatively slow growth rate in Piracicaba was due to the presence of the blacks. "None of the other churches had a meeting where black and white had mingled completely so they weren't used to it." On 23 October 1949, in a meeting with the elders, he announced that the only way the Church would grow would be to separate the two groups, with a white branch using the chapel and the blacks meeting in a home of one of the members. They could be brought back together when the white branch was stronger and the idea of integrated meetings was more acceptable.⁶

⁴ The law was passed on 19 April 1938. The government had a legitimate concern because of Nazi activity in the German colonies. See Emilio Willems, *A Aculturação dos Alemães no Brasil*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Companhia Editorial Nacional, 1980) or Karl Loewenstein, *Brazil Under Vargas* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1942), pp. 156–90. For a summary of Church history in Brazil during the early period see John DeLon Peterson, "History of the Mormon Missionary Movement in South America to 1940" (M.A. thesis, University of Utah, 1961) and Joel Alva Flake, "The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in South America: 1945–1960" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1975).

⁵ The two most common terms for blacks used in Brazil missions were "the blood of Cain" or "the lineage of Cain." These terms here identify those not eligible for the Mormon priesthood and do not indicate genealogical linkage between Cain and the blacks of Brazil.

⁶ Howells, Oral History, pp. 60–61, and Manuscript History of the Brazilian Mission, 23 Oct. 1949, 29 Nov. 1949, and 31 Dec. 1949, hereafter Manuscript History. For informa-

The black members refused to acknowledge that they were the stumbling block for Church growth. They explained to Howells that separate meetings would harm all involved and that by meeting together the whites would soon learn to accept racial differences. Howells insisted, interpreting the arguments of the black members as an attempt "to force the white people to meet with them" and feeling that their actions exhibited little regard for the gospel. Howells refused to give in and meetings were scheduled in the home of one faithful member, but continued resistance upset Howells to the point that he withdrew the missionaries and stopped visiting the black members. "To make a new start among the white population, the elders go to the city from a neighboring city to hold cottage meetings with white members and friends." The elders were to return after most of the black members had lost interest and a new branch could be started.⁷

To avoid problems in the future, Howells instituted a mission-wide genealogical program designed to discover and document the racial background of all Brazilian members. Ancestral lineage information was also required of potential converts, and missionaries were not allowed to perform any baptisms without President Howells's approval. The primary goal of the mission was racial purity for all new converts. By the end of 1953, Howells was able to report to Salt Lake City that, "during the past year, only two baptisms have been performed where family members are partial descendants of Cain."⁸

The more time-consuming aspects of Howell's racial program were later modified and missionaries were allowed to make baptism and priesthood decisions. However, the essence of Howells's approach continued through 1978. Identifying the racial background of all investigators was an important missionary responsibility. When approaching a contact, the missionaries were to scrutinize the color of the skin, eyes, and hair, the shape of the nose and face, color lines on the hands and feet, and the texture of the hair. If the person did not have negroid physical features, the missionaries would try to interest him or her in the Church. Sometime during the first few visits, the missionaries would discreetly probe the family's racial history using genealogical interest as a pretext. The inquiry generally involved questions of ancestral origin and often included looking at family photos. Occasionally, if necessary, the missionary would visit relatives to check the physical appearance of other family members. After all or most of the gospel discussions, the missionaries would present a special lineage lesson which included a direct question concerning the lineage of the family. If at any point during the teaching process the missionaries had questions or found evidence indicating probable black lineage, they discouraged the person from continuing his or her investigation. Only if the contact

tion concerning the Piracicaba Branch at this time see Harry Maxwell, Oral History, interviewed by Mark L. Grover, 23 July 1982, Provo, Utah, copy in possession of the author.

⁷ "Annual Statistical and Financial Report of the Brazilian Mission, 1950," p. 1, Library, Church Office Building, São Paulo, Brazil.

⁸ *Ibid.*, "1953," p. 2. For a description of Howells's genealogical program see Campinas Branch, Brazilian Mission, Mission Circulars, 1949–53, LDS Church Archives.

continued to attend meetings and accepted the Church's position on blacks would a baptism be performed.⁹

The vigilance of most missionaries and the active discouragement resulted in very few persons with known black ancestry ever joining the Church. Those who did generally accepted their second-class status. Consequently, the obviously black member was not an administrative problem for Church leaders, but difficulties arose when Brazilians without negroid physical features joined the Church and later uncovered a genealogical link to Africa.

American missionaries, as long as they were in charge of branches and districts, applied strict criteria of genealogical purity to determine eligibility for priesthood ordination. Membership records were marked. Men unable to prove their racial origin were generally not given the priesthood. However, in the late fifties and early sixties, as Brazilians began to replace Americans as branch and district leaders, a subtle but important change took place in the criteria used for determining racial worthiness. This change can best be understood by examining fundamental differences in perception of race between North Americans and Brazilians.

AMERICAN AND BRAZILIAN RACIAL PERCEPTIONS

Because of Brazil's large black and mulatto population, Brazilians generally believe that racial amalgamation made their country the "land of racial democracy." A generation of twentieth-century Brazilian scholars trumpeted that Brazil had made a major contribution to world peace by providing an example of a mixed and diverse society in which racial harmony existed without prejudice or discrimination.¹⁰

Sociologists who began to study Brazilian racial attitudes and practices in the late 1950s reported that Brazil in fact had racial prejudice, though it was manifested in different forms. According to Marvin Harris from Columbia University, race in the United States was determined according to "hypodescent," or ancestry. The presence of a black in a person's genealogical line was the most determinant in racial categories. Since this system did not have any middle classifications, the offspring of interracial marriages were socially and legally identified as blacks and subjected to the same restrictions as was the person of unmixed African heritage.¹¹

⁹ I have identified numerous sets of instructions, guides, and lesson plans used to instruct missionaries on the racial question. The most extensive was a twelve-page booklet (8¼×14") probably written in 1970, containing genealogical sheets, extensive instructions, theological explanations, and a Portuguese language lineage lesson. "Lineage Program," Brazilian Mission Ephemera, LDS Church Archives. See also *Handbook: Brazil North Central Mission* (São Paulo: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Brazil Central Mission, n.d.), pp. 38–42, copy in possession of the author.

¹⁰ The most influential writer on Brazil's racial past is Gilberto Freyre, whose ideas have influenced Brazilian and international writers for over fifty years. His most important work is *The Masters and the Slaves* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970).

¹¹ Marvin Harris, *Pattern of Race in the Americas* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1964), pp. 54–64. In 1982, a white woman, descended from African slaves, sued Louisiana to have her legal classification changed from black to white. Louisiana law re-

Anthropologists discovered that in Brazil the determining factor in racial classification was not genealogy but physical appearance. This system had several racial classifications between black and white in which different combinations of physical features determined the group. The child of an interracial marriage frequently would not be in the same racial classification as his or her parents and siblings.¹² A person with lighter skin or non-nappy hair texture could easily move up the social scale in Brazil's less restrictive racial system. Monetary success or educational achievement also facilitated the movement of darker Brazilians into lighter classifications, regardless of color or physical features. Thus, many mulattos were classified by their peers as white because of economic or educational achievement. Many scholars have suggested that poverty and not race is the most important variable in understanding Brazil's social structure.¹³

MEMBER/MISSIONARY CONFLICT

The Church's system of determining the lineage of Cain was so similar to the North American concept of racial identification that missionaries and members were often at odds when the decision of racial classification was made. Missionaries felt that branch leaders many times did not understand or wish to comply with the Church's methods used to determine the lineage of Cain. Members in return felt that the missionaries were overly sensitive to race and that their decisions were often based on false or questionable evidence.

The incidence of racial conflict in the United States also meant that American missionaries were race-conscious, their opinions supported by their perceptions of the Church's theological and political policies about the place of the black in the Church and in society as a whole.¹⁴ Many missionaries doubtless had personal experiences with blacks that broadened their views, but very little in their official experience softened their racial attitudes. They heard frequent reminders from mission presidents and traveling General Authorities to avoid baptizing Brazilians with the lineage of Cain.¹⁵ At regular missionary

quired the black designation regardless of physical appearance because the woman had more than one thirty-second negro blood. K. Demaret, "Raised White, a Louisiana Belle Challenges Race Record That Calls Her Colored," *People Weekly*, 6 Dec. 1982, pp. 155-56.

¹² Charles Wagley, "On the Concept of Social Race in the Americas," in Dwight B. Hoath and Richard N. Adams, eds., *Contemporary Cultures and Societies of Latin America* (New York: Random House, 1965), pp. 540-41.

¹³ See Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black Nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 205-65, and Florestan Fernandes, *The Negro in Brazilian Society* (New York: Columbia University, 1969).

¹⁴ Brazilian missionaries who served as companions to Americans and some members were embarrassed by the occasional obvious racism of missionaries. Alfredo Lima Vaz tells of an elder who not only refused to talk to blacks but would cross the street to avoid getting close. Vaz felt that the issue of race was the cause of greatest conflict between Brazilians and missionaries. Oral History, interviewed by F. LaMond Tullis, 4 May 1976, Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil, copy in possession of F. LaMond Tullis.

¹⁵ The most significant missionary conferences which dealt with the question of priesthood denial occurred during the visit of Joseph Fielding Smith in 1961. See Manuscript History, 25 Oct. 1961. For an example of a more recent conference held with Elder Bruce R.

conferences, the doctrinal reasons for the stand and instructions on how to recognize and teach blacks were discussed. Books and handouts were distributed as additional reinforcements.

However, the Church's practice of limiting information to the Brazilian member about the Mormon position on the black further strengthened the differences in perception between the two groups. There was a conscious effort by mission leaders to avoid talking about the priesthood question with members. In the early 1950s, an occasional presentation was made in church, especially to young members, cautioning against interracial marriage. However, as the racial question became an issue, both within and outside the Church, the flow of written or verbal information on the reasons for priesthood restrictions lessened. For example, the Portuguese translation of Joseph Fielding Smith's *The Way to Perfection* in 1964 left out the two-chapter discussion on the lineage of Cain, while other language translations published at the same time included it.¹⁶ Brazilian members had to rely almost entirely on missionaries for explanations of the Church's position, a situation which left Brazilian members somewhat confused about the reasons for the Church's policy on the lineage of Cain. With such limited background and knowledge, local Brazilian leaders felt little motivation to change and continued to hold their personal racial perceptions. And that was the loophole.

The official policy which branch, ward, and stake leaders were instructed to follow was simple. Descendants of Cain, usually those who traced their lineage to Africa, were not allowed to hold the priesthood.¹⁷ The Church did not, however, explain how to determine African heritage. Brazilians were genuinely puzzled when they needed to make a decision about (1) a man with some African features who did not have genealogical proof of either pure-European or partial-African lineage or (2) a man with ambiguous or no negroid physical features whose genealogy included African ancestry.

Questions on how to deal with the first group were eliminated in 1967 when the burden of proof shifted from the individual to the Church. Even

McConkie, see Manuscript History of the Brazil São Paulo South Mission, 22 Sept. 1975, LDS Church Archives.

¹⁶ Chs. 15 and 16, Joseph Fielding Smith, *O Caminho da Perfeição* (São Paulo: Centro Editorial Brasileira, 1964). In the Spanish, German, and Japanese translations, these two chapters were included. When a revised Portuguese translation was published in 1978, the translators were again instructed to omit the two chapters. Flavia Erbolata, Oral History, interviewed by Mark L. Grover, 8 Sept. 1982, Provo, Utah. When the Pearl of Great Price was translated into Portuguese in 1957, President Asael T. Sorenson felt that the members needed a lengthy theological discussion on the Church's racial policy. Missionaries wrote twelve lessons, complete with scriptural and prophetic statements which would then be given in priesthood meeting over a three-month period. The lessons were translated and sent to Salt Lake City for final approval before being printed. The response from Church headquarters was that the lessons were not to be given and that Church leaders were to "just give the people a statement from the First Presidency saying that those with the Blood cannot receive the priesthood as yet, the reasons we don't know." Historical Record of All Meetings Held in the Mission Office, Melchizedek Priesthood Committee, 6 Nov. 1958, and 7 Oct. 1959, Library, Church Office Building, São Paulo, Brazil.

¹⁷ For an excellent study of the evolution of Church policy, see Lester E. Bush, Jr., "Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview," *DIALOGUE* 8 (Spring 1973): 11-68.

though the previous “clean genealogy” policy had not been strictly adhered to, it was sometimes used to justify withholding the priesthood in questionable cases. After 1967, leaders were instructed that if potential priesthood holders did not have “obvious evidence of lineage in themselves or their families and do not know whether or not it is present, they are not required to prove it before being taught or receiving the priesthood.” The question of race was thus eliminated from most priesthood ordination decisions.¹⁸

The second group, those with genealogical links to Africa, posed a significant dilemma for the leadership. The Mormon Church in Brazil has always struggled to find enough active male priesthood holders to staff local and regional organizations. It was frustrating to have an active member who was considered white by Brazilian racial perceptions but ineligible by Church standards. Two strategies emerged to overcome this problem and to allow ordination.

The first was for someone in priesthood authority to declare racial purity. This generally occurred at the bishop or stake-president level, but at times went all the way to the First Presidency. The most widely known case was that of the president of the Ipiranga, São Paulo Branch. In 1964, while doing his genealogy, he discovered a probable African ancestor in one of his grandmother’s lines. Upon informing the mission president, he was released from all priesthood duties and allowed to work in the Church only in positions not requiring the priesthood. After several years of faithful activity, he was asked to provide information concerning his genealogical research as well as Church activity, which was then forwarded to Salt Lake City. The First Presidency, after examining the documentation, concluded that he did not have the lineage of Cain and should be allowed to use his priesthood. In this and other cases,

¹⁸ “Instructions,” *O Animador*, Dec. 1967, p. 6. There is some confusion about when this change actually occurred. In 1954, as a result of President McKay’s visit to South Africa, the Church’s official policy was liberalized and the requirement that men prove racial purity was done away with. See Armand C. Mauss, “The Fading of the Pharaohs’ Curse: The Decline and Fall of the Priesthood Ban Against Blacks in the Mormon Church,” *DIALOGUE* 14 (Fall 1981): 12, and Farrell Ray Monson, “History of the South African Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: 1853–1970” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1960), pp. 42–46. As far as the First Presidency was concerned, this new policy applied to Brazil as well as South Africa. See Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark*, p. 233. However, Brazilian Mission President Asael T. Sorenson was apparently never told of the changes so there was no adjustment in preordination procedures. In fact, the requirement for genealogical checks of potential priesthood holders were strengthened. Some administrative aspects of the policy were liberalized during the subsequent term of William Grant Bangerter (1958–63) but these changes were due more to increased Brazilian participation in branch presidencies than to any perceived policy change from Salt Lake City. A genealogical check of potential priesthood holders was in effect in some form into the mid-1960s when Spencer W. Kimball during a 1965 tour of the Brazilian South Mission was informed by President C. Elmo Turner that several worthy men were not being given the priesthood because they could not prove racial purity. Upon returning home he sent President Turner a copy of the minutes of the 1954 First Presidency Meeting approving the Church-wide change of policy. He then made an official announcement of the policy to a South American Mission Presidents’ Seminar in 1967. As a result of that announcement some Brazilians who had not been given the priesthood were ordained. Spencer W. Kimball to C. Elmo Turner, 23 Nov. 1965, Brazilian South Mission President’s Correspondence, LDS Church Archives.

priesthood authority nullified genealogical research and allowed for men with apparent African heritage to be declared racially eligible.¹⁹

The second and more frequently used method relied on patriarchal blessings for determining lineage. Since blacks were not allowed to hold the priesthood, the reasoning went, they could not be part of the house of Israel. Thus, the patriarch was instructed that if the person were a descendant of Cain, he should not pronounce a tribal designation. More significantly he was told not to declare whether the person had the lineage of Cain. Consequently, if the recipient was declared to be from one of the tribes of Israel, then Brazilian local leaders believed that he could not be a descendant of Cain. It was a very simple method to dispose of the difficult administrative problem of determining lineage in questionable cases.²⁰

For example, a young teenager from the interior of São Paulo with fair skin and black wavy hair was baptized, given the priesthood, and, at the age of nineteen, called on a mission. While on his mission, his mother wrote that he had no right to hold the priesthood since his father, whom he had never known or even seen a picture of, was a mulatto. Against the advice of his mission president, he returned home, extremely confused and troubled. The branch president was able to convince him that since he had been designated a member of one of the tribes of Israel in his patriarchal blessing, he could not have the lineage of Cain, regardless of what his mother said. The boy began to use his priesthood again, eventually receiving another mission call which he ac-

¹⁹ Eduardo Alfrieri Soares Contieiri, Oral History, São Paulo, Brazil, interviewed by F. LaMond Tullis, copy in possession of Tullis. See also Wayne Beck, Oral History, interviewed by Gordon Irving, 1974, LDS Church Archives, p. 64. For example of President Kimball resolving a similar situation in Mexico, see Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball, Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball: Twelfth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977), p. 231. For an example of a branch president making a similar decision, see Manuscript History, Brasilia District, 19 Sept. 1965 and 23 Sept. 1965. These decisions were most often made at the branch or ward level. The most difficult cases were sent to the First Presidency until the spring of 1978 when all responsibility for determining lineage was formally transferred to stake and mission leaders. See Mauss, "Pharaohs' Curse," p. 26. The administrative clearing of certain men for the priesthood often caused problems with members who found it difficult to understand why one received the priesthood while others with similar racial backgrounds were denied. One member whose friend had been denied, observed, "Since I know Negroes who've received the priesthood in the Church, that upsets me . . . because some people have received the priesthood and its all right for them, and they still continue in the quorums and they still had the priesthood . . . my friend just because he was so far away and didn't talk to the President of the Church or write to him just left the Church." Helio Lopes de Costa, Oral History, interviewed by Gordon Irving, 1973, p. 26, LDS Church Archives.

²⁰ Jose Lombardi, Oral History, interviewed by Frederick G. Williams, São Paulo, Brazil, 1975, original in possession of Williams. I have talked with several Brazilian members and four patriarchs who have generally confirmed these procedures. There were problems, however, when the patriarch did feel inspired to designate a tribe for someone with obvious negroid features. The person would often return to his bishop expecting to be given the priesthood. Apostle L. Tom Perry, after his visit to Brazil in 1976, commented, "I have found a problem in interviewing the two patriarchs. One has been giving lineage from the line of Israel to the Negroes." Quarterly Stake Conference Report by General Authorities of the Santo André Stake Conference, 15-16 May 1976, "Construction of the São Paulo Temple Correspondence," Library, Church Office Building, São Paulo, Brazil, copy in possession of the author.

cepted and completed. In this and other cases the patriarchal blessing was the final authority.²¹

These evolving methods of dealing with the black question meant that the denial of the priesthood to members of African descent ceased to be a significant administrative problem for the Church in Brazil. Leaders were able to work within the restrictive Church policy to deal with almost any administrative situation that came up. These procedures worked well because they simultaneously acknowledged the Church's requirements for priesthood ordination and Brazilian perceptions of racial identification. The Church in Brazil had confronted a difficult situation and had developed a way to live with the problems.²²

SÃO PAULO TEMPLE

This accommodation is important to understand in analyzing the effect of the 1975 announcement that the São Paulo Temple would be constructed. Some observers not familiar with Brazil began to suggest that the Church would face a crisis in Brazil when the temple opened. Would not the mixing of races in Brazil make it impossible to exclude members of African descent?²³ They did not understand that the question had already been resolved at the time of ordination to the Aaronic priesthood. Church leaders in Brazil were not overly concerned with possible administrative difficulties resulting from having a temple in Brazil. The extensive correspondence between São Paulo Church headquarters and Salt Lake City between 1975 and the dedication of the temple in 1978 includes only one reference to any administrative aspect of the black question and it had to do with whether a black could enter the temple to perform baptisms for the dead. (The answer was no.)

If the construction of the São Paulo Temple had any effect on the Church's decision to lift the priesthood restriction, it was the result of compassion rather than administrative concern. President Kimball, during more than fifteen years of contacts and visits to Brazil, reportedly had several difficult and emotional experiences with blacks and was visibly touched by their continued faith. After the announcement of the temple, General Authority Area Supervisors reported how black members gave financial donations, assisted in the construction, and participated in planning the temple dedication. Many in Brazil and Salt Lake City were moved by such wholehearted participation

²¹ Horácio Saito, Oral History, interviewed by Mark L. Grover, Araçatuba, São Paulo, Brazil, 18 April 1982, copy in possession of the author.

²² Notice this remark by William Grant Bangerter of the Quorum of the Seventy who spent several years in Brazil as a missionary, mission president, Regional Representative, and a General Authority Area Supervisor: "I'd learned that it's impossible to tell by observation, or even by trying to establish facts, who had or had not lineage. The ultimate recourse would be to consider the case carefully and then, if there was no assurance that they had the Black lineage, to present it to the Lord with a request that he would inspire or prompt the conferral of the priesthood. We knew unless He inspired us we inevitably make mistakes. I came to feel that He was permitting people to have the priesthood who may have had traces of this lineage, even though we were trying to be as faithful to the instructions as we possibly could." Oral History, interviewed by Gordon Irving, 1981, p. 13, LDS Church Archives.

²³ Jan Shippo, "The Mormons: Looking Forward and Outward," *Christian Century*, 16-23 Aug. 1978, pp. 761-66; and Mauss, "Pharaohs' Curse," p. 25.


towards the construction of a building which they would not be allowed to enter.²⁴ Concern over how to allow blacks into the temple — not the impossibility of keeping them out — was the most likely contribution of the São Paulo Temple toward the 1978 lifting of the priesthood ban.

The history of the Mormon Church's denial of the priesthood to persons of black African descent is an example of change and adjustment to different social and cultural situations within an authoritarian religious structure. The result for the Church was the use of two different approaches and methodologies to implement the same policy. The American missionary generally used a genealogical approach for determining race, thus limiting the percentage of converts joining the Church with African ancestry. When Brazilians were given responsibility over priesthood decisions, the methodology for determining racial worthiness of members changed. First, because of a shift in the burden of proof responsibility, leaders were in most cases simply able to avoid the issue. Secondly, the decisions of priesthood authorities, especially those of patriarchs, were used to invalidate rational genealogical research. The uncomfortable but functioning accommodation to the two different perceptions of race allowed for both Brazilians and Americans to accept and work within a difficult situation.

²⁴ In 1977, Apostle James E. Faust indicated that black members helped "to make blocks for the temple just like anybody else, they have made their monetary contributions for the construction of the temple, and they've made their sacrifices just the same as everybody else. And I've advised President Kimball and Brother McConkie of the faithfulness of these people." Oral History, interviewed by Gordon Irving, 30 Dec. 1977, p. 26, LDS Church Archives. See also Bangerter, Oral History, and Helvécio Martins, Oral History, interviewed by Mark Grover, 18 April 1982, Rio de Janeiro, copy in possession of the author.

Book of Mormon Usage in Early LDS Theology

Grant Underwood

ithin Mormon scholarship, one trend for the 1980s is already discernible — an increasing interest in doctrinal history, or what is more properly called “historical theology.” Historical theology can be broadly defined as the study of the “classical thinking of the church in its effort through the ages to express [the revelation of God] and to apply it as a guide through the perplexities and ambiguities of life.¹ Articles dealing with “classical” Mormon thought on the nature of God, the Holy Ghost, the pre-mortal existence, the millennium, and evolution, to name just a few, have all appeared in scholarly journals since 1980.² The rise of the annual Sunstone Theological Symposium further testifies of, at the same time that it encourages, a heightened sensitivity to “doctrinal development.”

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¹ Fuller Theological Seminary Catalog, 1983–84 (Pasadena, Calif.: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1982), p. 45. Book-length treatments of historical theology include J. Danielou *et al.*, *Historical Theology* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1969); Jaroslav Pelikan, *Historical Theology: Continuity and Change in Christian Doctrine* (Chicago and New Haven: Corpus, 1971); Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Historical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978); R. P. C. Hanson, *The Continuity of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981).

² Thomas G. Alexander, “The Reconstruction of Modern Doctrine: From Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology,” *Sunstone* 5 (July–Aug. 1980): 24–33; Gary James Bergera, “The Orson Pratt — Brigham Young Controversies,” *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT* 13 (Summer 1980): 7–58; David J. Buerger, “The Adam-God Doctrine,” *DIALOGUE* 15 (Spring 1982): 14–58; Blake Ostler, “The Idea of Pre-existence in the Development of Mormon Thought,” *DIALOGUE* 15 (Spring 1982): 59–78; Richard Sherlock, “We Can See No Advantage to a Continuation of the Discussion: The Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair,” *DIALOGUE* 13 (Fall 1980): 68–78; Jeffrey E. Keller, “Discussion Continued: The Sequel to the Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair,” *DIALOGUE* 15 (Spring 1982): 79–98; Grant Underwood, “Seminal versus Sesquicentennial: A Look at Mormon Millennialism,” *DIALOGUE* 14 (Spring 1981): 32–44, and “Millenarianism and the Early Mormon Mind,” *Journal of Mormon History* 9 (1982): 41–51.

Yet, there is another dimension of historical theology that must be considered if this nascent Mormon venture is to be anchored to a sure foundation. In *Historical Theology: An Introduction*, Geoffrey Bromiley points out that since theology is “the church’s word about God in responsive transmission of the Word of God to the church,” its cornerstone is necessarily scriptural exegesis.³ Simply put, any doctrinal formulation grows out of the interpretation of scripture. Thus, exegetical history is at the core of historical theology. Among LDS scholars, however, exegetical history is almost virgin territory. In 1973, Gordon Irving published an article detailing the results of his research into early Mormon use of the Bible (1832–38), but his well-regarded study has yet to be either extended in time or replicated for the other Mormon scriptures.⁴ Such research will ultimately issue in full-scale exegetical histories of each of the four volumes in the LDS canon, but it will doubtless require the work of many individuals over many years. As one step in that direction, this article explores Book of Mormon usage in the pre-Utah period (1830–46), and seeks answers to the following questions: Which passages from the Book of Mormon were cited and with what frequency? How were they understood? What does their usage reveal about the content and nature of early LDS theology?⁵

In order to answer these questions with a degree of comprehensiveness, I searched all major Church periodicals published before 1846 — *The Evening and the Morning Star* (1832–34), *Messenger and Advocate* (1834–37), *Elders’ Journal* (1837–38), *Times and Seasons* (1839–46), and *Millennial Star* (1840–46) — for Book of Mormon citations and commentary.⁶ In addition, the study included some seventy Mormon “books” — what would today be called tracts or pamphlets. These sources, hereafter referred to collectively as “the early literature,” plus a handful of journals⁷ and other unpublished

³ Bromiley, *Historical Theology*, p. xxvi.

⁴ Gordon Irving, “The Mormons and the Bible in the 1830s,” *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer 1973): 473–488. In Gary P. Gillum and John W. Welch, eds., *Comprehensive Bibliography of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies, 1982), about 2,000 entries are listed. Only two attempt some sort of historical look at Book of Mormon exegesis. Even then, theirs is a peripheral concern since they are more interested in tracking general perceptions about the book. Alton D. Merrill, “An Analysis of the Paper and Speeches of Those Who Have Written or Spoken About the Book of Mormon Published During the Years of 1830 to 1855 and 1915 to 1940, to Ascertain the Shift in Emphasis” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1940); Alton D. Merrill and Amos N. Merrill, “Changing Thought on the Book of Mormon,” *Improvement Era* 45 (Sept. 1942): 568.

⁵ Unless the wording has been changed significantly from the 1830 edition, the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon is used throughout this article.

⁶ Lesser, though important, “periodicals” which in reality were serialized tracts published as a single volume (e.g. Benjamin Winchester’s *Gospel Reflector*) were classified as “books.” All known early Mormon imprints are listed in Chad J. Flake, ed., *A Mormon Bibliography, 1880–1930* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1978). Approximately 100 were published before 1846. Only those inaccessible because of their location in distant repositories — about two dozen — were not consulted.

⁷ Journals consulted included Elden J. Watson, ed., *The Orson Pratt Journals* (Salt Lake City: Elden J. Watson, 1975); Dean C. Jessee, ed., “The Kirtland Diary of Wilford Woodruff,” *BYU Studies* 12 (Summer 1972): 365–99; Andrew F. Ehat, ed., “The Nauvoo Jour-

items checked for comparative purposes, yielded a total of 243 citations, classified in Table 1.

Two additional items require special introduction. Little is certain about the origin of *References to the Book of Mormon*, the earliest known reference guide to the Book of Mormon, but bibliographers conclude that the four-page item of unknown authorship was printed in Kirtland in 1835.⁸ Arranged chronologically, *References* is more of an extended table of contents than a topical index, but its 254 brief entries are phrased revealingly ("Nehor the Universalian" or "the Zoramites preach election"). Similar in format is an

TABLE 1
EARLY LITERATURE SOURCES RANKED BY NUMBER OF CITATIONS

Periodical	Volume	Number of Citations		
<i>The Evening and the Morning Star</i>	(1)	45	Charles Thompson, <i>Evidences in Proof of Book of Mormon</i> (1841)	21
<i>Millennial Star</i>	(6)	20	Benjamin Winchester, <i>Gospel Reflector</i> (1841)	10
<i>Times and Seasons</i>	(3)	14	Parley Pratt, <i>Truth Vindicated</i> (1838)	7
<i>Messenger and Advocate</i>	(1)	11	John Whitmer, "Book of John Whitmer"	5
<i>Times and Seasons</i>	(5)	11	Parley Pratt, <i>The Millennium and other poems</i> (1840)	5
<i>Times and Seasons</i>	(2)	9		
<i>Millennial Star</i>	(1)	8	Parley Pratt, <i>Voice of Warning</i> (1837)	4
<i>Messenger and Advocate</i>	(2)	7	John Corrill, <i>History of Mormons</i> (1839)	4
<i>Millennial Star</i>	(7)	7	Orson Pratt, <i>Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions</i> (1840)	3
<i>The Evening and Morning Star</i>	(2)	6	Emma Smith, <i>Hymns</i> (1835)	1
<i>Millennial Star</i>	(2)	6	Daniel Shearer, <i>A Key to the Bible</i> (1844)	1
<i>Times and Seasons</i>	(6)	5	Lorenzo Barnes, <i>References</i> (1841)	1
<i>Times and Saesons</i>	(1)	5	Orson Hyde, <i>A Voice from Jerusalem</i> (1842)	1
<i>Millennial Star</i>	(3)	3	Parley Pratt, <i>Plain Facts</i> (1840)	1
<i>Elders' Journal</i>		2		—
<i>Times and Seasons</i>	(4)	2		64
<i>Millennial Star</i>	(5)	1		
		162	Journals	17

nal of Joseph Fielding," *BYU Studies* 19 (Winter 1979): 133–66. This paper does not discuss Mormon defense of specific passages cited only because they were ridiculed in anti-Mormon tracts.

⁸ On the 1835 *References*, see Flake, *Mormon Bibliography*, p. 545; Peter Crawley, "A Bibliography of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New York, Ohio, and Missouri," *BYU Studies* 12 (Summer 1972): 505.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Table 2 identifies the Book of Mormon chapters and verses which were most frequently cited during the period under study. The subjects treated in Table 2 scriptures are noted in Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 lists and annotates every passage cited more than once in early literature, and Table 4 ranks the themes most commonly developed from Book of Mormon passages. Both the annotations and the classifications are based on period perceptions.

What becomes clear, especially in Table 4, is the thematic preeminence of that cluster of concepts which the early Saints lumped together under the rubric of the "restoration of Israel." In order to appreciate fully their preoccupation with this topic, we must first set Mormon views in the broader context of western Christianity.¹¹ From the Council of Ephesus in 431, until the time of the Reformation, Augustinian eschatology prevailed. In his *City of God*, the Bishop of Hippo allegorized the millennium, identifying it with the period of church history from the time of Christ to the end of the world. Since the church was the antitype of Israel, it fulfilled all Old Testament prophecies of Israel's future glory. Thus, there was no need for nor propriety in a latter day work among the literal descendants of the House of Israel. After the Reformation had been underway a few decades, however, certain of Calvin's followers began to teach that toward the end of the world a widespread conversion of the Jewish people would occur. Some even began following rabbinic exegesis of Old Testament prophecies and postulated a literal restoration of Israel to Palestine. For these divines, such terms as "Israel," "Judah," "Jerusalem," and "Zion" required literal interpretation. They referred to the actual site of the sacred city, rather than being mere metaphors of the church. This significant shift occurred in the late 1500s and early 1600s and crossed the Atlantic with the Puritans.

TABLE 2
MOST COMMON CITATIONS FROM EARLY LITERATURE

Chapters	Number of Times	Specific Passages	Number of Times
3 Ne. 21	16	Eth. 13:4-8	8
3 Ne. 16	13	3 Ne. 21:1-7	7
3 Ne. 3	10	2 Ne. 30:3-6	7
2 Ne. 29	10	2 Ne. 3:4-21	6
2 Ne. 30	10	2 Ne. 29:3	5
2 Ne. 28	9	3 Ne. 8:5-9:12	5
3 Ne. 20	9	1 Ne. 22:6-12	4
Eth. 13	8	3 Ne. 15:11-16:4	4
1 Ne. 22	8	Eth. 2:7-12	4
		Morm. 8:29-30	4

¹¹ For what follows, see Peter Toon, ed., *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel* (Cambridge & London: James Clark & Co., 1970).

TABLE 3
AN ANNOTATED LIST OF PASSAGES CITED MORE THAN ONCE
IN EARLY LITERATURE

	Number of Times Cited	
<i>1 Nephi</i>		
1:14	2	Rhetorical exclamation
13:26	2	Plain and precious parts of Bible removed
22:6-12	4	Indians gathered by United States
22:20-22	3	Identity of Moses-like prophet
<i>2 Nephi</i>		
3:4-21	6	Blessings to and through Joseph
5:14-16	2	Explains archaeological findings
28:3-17	3	Gentile corruption
29:3	5	A Bible, A Bible: Gentile complaint
30:3-6	7	Indians restored
30:7-8	3	Jews gathered
31:5-10	2	Jesus and baptism
<i>Jacob</i>		
2:2-4	2	More than one wife forbidden
5:19-22	2	Ten tribes
<i>Alma</i>		
13:7, 8, 17-19	2	Melchizedek priesthood
22:32	2	Explains archaeological findings
34:17-23	2	Prayer
48:7-8	2	Explains archaeological findings
49:18	2	Explains archaeological findings
50:1-6	3	Explains archaeological findings
<i>3 Nephi</i>		
8:5-9:12	5	Explains archaeological findings
11:20-40	3	Baptism and gospel basics
15:11-16:4	4	"Other sheep" of Israel
16:4-7	3	Gathering of Israel (Indian)
16:8-16	3	Fate of unbelieving Gentiles
16:10	3	Exodus to Utah fulfills
20:22	2	Gathering of Israel
20:43	2	Joseph Smith
21:1-7	7	Sign that restoration of Israel has commenced
21:1-29	3	Restoration of Israel (Indians)
21:11-15	2	Fate of unbelieving Gentiles
21:10	2	Joseph Smith
27:13-22	2	Nature of gospel
28:7	2	Second Coming
<i>Mormon</i>		
8:29-30	4	State of world when Book of Mormon discovered
<i>Ether</i>		
2:7-12	4	Decree concerning America
5:2-4	2	Three witnesses
12:30	2	Faith moves mountains
13:4-8	8	An American New Jerusalem designated for gathering of Joseph

TABLE 4
 PRINCIPAL THEMES BASED ON CLASSIFICATION
 OF BOOK OF MORMON PASSAGES CITED

Restoration of Israel		Archaeological Evidences	32
Gathering of Israel (General)	28*	Atonement	23
Joseph (Indians)	16	Joseph Smith	14
Jews	6	First Principles of Gospel	13
New Jerusalem	6	Concern for Holiness	11
Ten Tribes	3	Revelation and Spiritual Gifts	7
	—		
	59		
Prophecy Relating to Gentiles			
State of Christendom in 1830	16		
America: repent or suffer	15		
General	6		
	—		
	37		

* Each passage is classified only once.

Of course, not all Christians were persuaded by this view. Fundamentally, it was a matter of hermeneutics. If one thought that the prophecies ought to be interpreted allegorically or figuratively, then no Jewish conversion to Christ was expected. On the other hand, a literalist anticipated a wholesale conversion of the Jews and an actual return to their ancestral homeland. Both schools of thought and various shades in between were present in 1830. Though Mormon hermeneutics represented a literalist/allegorist blend, Mormon scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon, provided for striking innovations in their interpretation of the "latter day glory."

To begin with, the book allowed early Saints to move beyond a discussion of Israel's identity and destiny that involved only the Jews. As Joseph Smith explained to an eastern editor, through the Book of Mormon "we learn that our western tribes of Indians are descendants from that Joseph which was sold into Egypt, and that the land of America is a promised land unto them."¹² That their Native American neighbors were as Israelitish as any Jew had long been suspected by others; that the whole prophetic scenario of a gathering to Zion and a restoration to glory was to be *dually* enacted — on American soil by native inhabitants and simultaneously by the Jews in the Old World — added a new dimension to the drama.¹³ To be sure, the Saints still followed newspaper accounts of Zionist stirrings among the Jews with the usual millenarian enthusiasm, but they also believed in a local Zion, as real as the ancient

¹² *History of the Church* 1:315.

¹³ Still useful on the idea of the Hebraic origins of the Indian is Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 2nd ed., rev. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), pp. 34–49. For a more recent study placing this notion in the broad background of American literary history, see Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600–1860* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1973).

Jerusalem, and in a local people, as pedigreed as the Jews, to be gathered to that holy city in fulfillment of ancient prophecy.

As the Saints readily acknowledged, the source for this revolutionary concept was the Book of Mormon. "The vail which had been cast over the prophecies of the Old Testament," wrote W. W. Phelps, "was removed by the plainness of the book of Mormon." At last, "that embarrassment under which thousands had labored for years to learn how the saints would know where to gather was obviated by the book of Mormon."¹⁴ And it was Ether 13:4–8, more than any other passage, that was responsible for this revelation:

Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake concerning a New Jerusalem upon this land. And he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come — after it should be destroyed it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore, it could not be a new Jerusalem for it had been in a time of old; but it should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord; and it should be built unto the house of Israel. And that a New Jerusalem should be built upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph . . . Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph should be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old.

In the heyday of manifest destiny, it was not popular to assert, as did the Mormons, that America actually belonged to the Indians and would be their millennial inheritance. While they frequently pointed out, using parts of 3 Nephi 16, 20, and 21, that all EuroAmericans, or "gentiles," who repented would be "numbered among this the remnant of Jacob," such an "adopted" status, even if it did entitle them to all related blessings, seemed to reverse contemporary caste distinctions.¹⁵ Even more calculated to raise hackles was the sharply drawn alternative. Speaking of unrepentant gentiles — the Saints' nonbelieving neighbors — Parley P. Pratt assured the Indians that

the very places of their [Gentiles] dwellings will become desolate except such of them as are gathered and numbered with you; and you will exist in peace, upon the face of this land from generation to generation. And your children will only know that the Gentiles once conquered this country and became a great nation here, as they read it in history; as a thing long since passed away, and the remembrance of it almost gone from the earth.¹⁶

Such rhetoric, to say the least, seemed unduly solicitous of the lowly Indian, but the drama only intensified when the "ways and means of this utter destruction" were discussed. On three different occasions during his postmortal ministry in the New World, the Savior applied the words of Micah to an American

¹⁴ "The Book of Mormon," *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (Jan. 1833): 57. The editor at this time and almost certainly the author of this unsigned article was W. W. Phelps.

¹⁵ In early Mormon vernacular, *Gentiles* was essentially a generic term for Christendom. For a statement on how the term is used today, see Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), pp. 310–11.

¹⁶ Parley P. Pratt, *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People* (New York: W. Sandford, 1837), p. 189. This portion of the text was deleted by Pratt in his second edition (1839) and has not been restored in subsequent editions.

setting.¹⁷ If the gentiles reject the new covenant offered in the latter days through the Book of Mormon, then

my people who are a remnant of Jacob [Indians] shall be among the Gentiles yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beast of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off. (3 Ne. 21:12–13; cf. Mic. 5:8–9)

Nothing here was figurative to the early Saints. Book of Mormon prophecies, wrote Pratt, “are plain, simple, definite, literal, positive and very express.”¹⁸ As for Jesus’ words, Pratt explained, “This destruction includes an utter overthrow, and desolation of all our Cities, Forts, and Strong holds — an entire annihilation of our race, except such as embrace the Covenant and are numbered with Israel.”¹⁹ Another who believed the passage “very express” was Charles G. Thompson, presiding elder of the Genesee New York, Conference of the Church. In his “Proclamation and Warning,” he intoned,

wo, wo, wo unto you, O ye Gentiles who inhabit this land, except you speedily repent and obey the message of eternal truth which God has sent for the salvation of his

¹⁷ 3 Ne. 16:15, 20:16–17, 21:12–13. For the purposes of this article, I assume that authorship designations made in the Book of Mormon are accurate.

¹⁸ Parley P. Pratt, *Mormonism Unveiled: Zion’s Watchman unmasked, and its author, Mr. L. R. Sunderland, exposed: Truth vindicated* (New York: O. Pratt and E. Fordham, 1838), p. 13, hereafter cited as *Truth Vindicated*.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

REFERENCES TO THE BOOK OF MORMON.		
FIRST BOOK OF NEPHI.		
	Page	
The language of the book.	5	Adam and Eve in innocence &c. 66
Lehi flees into the wilderness.	9	A prophet promised to the Lamanites 68
An angel appears to Laman and his brethren.	11	The death of Lehi 69
Nephi slays Laban.	13	Nephi separates from Laman 71
Sariah complains of Lehi’s visions	14	Nephi builds a temple 72
Contents of the brass plates	15	Laman and his seed cursed 73
Ishmael and his family takes their journey	17	Quotation from the bible 75
Nephi is blessed by his brethren		Darkness of prophecy 103
		Crucifixion of Christ foretold 104
		Christ the only true Messiah 105
		Use of the law of Moses

First page of *References to the Book of Mormon*, 1835. By permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

people. . . . Yea, except ye repent and subscribe with your hands unto the Lord, and sir-name yourselves Israel, and call yourselves after the name of Jacob, you must be swept off, for behold your sins have reached unto heaven. . . . The cries of the red men, whom ye and your fathers have dispossessed and driven from their lands which God gave unto them and their fathers for an everlasting inheritance, have ascended into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.²⁰

Even without the “paranoid style” prevalent in antebellum America, it is understandable that such pro-Indian rhetoric would have caused many outsiders to think there was a treasonous conspiracy against the United States in the offing.²¹ Yet the Saints categorically rejected the Mohammedan metaphor. In the words of a *Millennial Star* editorial:

We wish it distinctly understood that the interpretation given to the Mormon predictions as to the Latter-Day Saints drawing the sword against others who may differ from them in religious belief is without shadow of truth, being contrary to the whole spirit of the Christian religion, which they (the Saints) profess; and however the Lord may see fit to make use of the Indians to execute his vengeance upon the ungodly, before they (the Indians) are converted by the record of their fore-fathers, yet it is certain that if they once become Latter-day Saints they will never more use weapons of war except in defence of their lives, and liberties. The Latter-day Saints never did draw the sword except in defence of their lives and the institutions and laws of their country, and they never will.²²

That few whites in antebellum America had a more expansive, almost romantic, vision of what lay ahead for the Native American is also made clear from the Saints’ exegesis of the popular passage 2 Nephi 30:3–6. Nephi here prophesies that the Book of Mormon would someday come through the gentiles to the “remnant” of his “seed” and would be the means of restoring them “unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.” As a result, his posterity would “rejoice” and the “scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes.” In time, they “shall be a white and a delightful people.”²³ As might be expected, literalist Latter-day Saints anticipated an actual blanching of the skin. Watching the implementation of President Andrew Jackson’s removal policy, W. W. Phelps waxed visionary and predicted the imminent fulfillment of this passage. “The hour is nigh,” he wrote, when the Indians “will come flocking into the kingdom of God, like

²⁰ Charles B. Thompson, *Evidences in Proof of the Book of Mormon* (Batavia, N.Y.: D. D. Waite, 1841), pp. 229–30.

²¹ One of the earliest examples of this is Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), pp. 145–46, 197. Many years later anti-Mormon works borrow extensively from Howe. That the fear did not cease after the Saints left Missouri is apparent from its perpetuation in later works. See, for example, James H. Hunt, *Mormonism* (St. Louis: Ustick and Davies, 1844), pp. 280–83. The phrase “paranoid style” is borrowed from Richard Hofstadter, *Paranoid Style in American Politics* (New York: 1965).

²² “Reply to the Preston Chronicle,” *The Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star* 2 (July 1841): 43.

²³ The 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon follows the 1840 edition, rendering the latter phrase “a *pure* and delightful people”; italics mine.

doves to their windows; yea, as the book of Mormon foretells — they will soon become a white and delightsome people.”²⁴

Still an important aspect of the LDS conception of the “restoration of Israel” was the traditional millenarian anticipation of the return of the Jews. What was new with the Mormons was the idea that the Book of Mormon would be the key to their national conversion. Commenting upon portions of 2 Nephi 29 and 30, Benjamin Winchester, an early Mormon pamphleteer and one-time president of the important Philadelphia branch of the church, remarked that it “will be a testimony that will not be easily dispensed with; consequently the Jews will search deep into the matter and peradventure learn that Jesus is the true Messiah. Hence we see the utility of the Book of Mormon.”²⁵

The Book of Mormon also alluded to the “lost” ten tribes of Israel. Jacob 5, or the “parable of the olive tree,” as it was known in the early years, spoke of “natural branches” being “hid” in the “nethermost part of the vineyard,” which also happened to be the “poorest spot.” This seemed to coincide perfectly with current notions about the tribes having been sequestered away to the frozen “north countries.” In a letter to Oliver Cowdery, W. W. Phelps postulated:

The parts of the globe that are known probably contain 700 millions of inhabitants, and those parts which are unknown may be supposed to contain more than four times as many more, making an estimated total of about *three thousand, five hundred and eighty millions of souls*; Let no man marvel at this statement, because there may be a continent at the north pole, of more than 1300 square miles, containing thousands of millions of Israelites, who, after a highway is cast up in the great deep, may come to Zion, singing songs of everlasting joy. . . . This idea is greatly strengthened by reading Zenos’ account of the tame olive tree in the Book of Mormon. The branches planted in the nethermost parts of the earth, “brought forth much fruit,” and no man that pretends to have pure religion, can find “much fruit” among the Gentiles, or heathen of this generation.²⁶

This last thought about the lack of “fruit” among the Gentiles (Matt. 21:43; Rom. 11), though here mentioned only in passing, was actually central to the Saints periodization of redemptive history. God had originally offered the kingdom to the Jews but in time they ceased to “bring forth the fruits thereof.” During New Testament times, it was taken from them and offered to the gentiles with the warning that, should they too cease to produce the fruits of godliness, they would be “cut off” and the Israelites “grafted” back in. This final shift of divine favor to the ancient covenant people would culminate in the millennium and represent the climactic conclusion to the “restoration of Israel.” The necessary antecedent, however, was the apostasy of Christendom. As Sidney Rigdon expressed it, the latter day gathering of Israel was “pre-dicated on . . . the Gentiles having forfeited all claim to the divine favor by

²⁴ “Letter No. 11” (W. W. Phelps to Oliver Cowdery), *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate* 2 (Oct. 1835): 193.

²⁵ Benjamin Winchester, *Gospel Reflector* 1 (1841): 129.

²⁶ “Letter No. 11,” p. 194.

reason of their great apostasy.”²⁷ Once that precondition was met, the drama was ready to proceed.

Not surprisingly, Book of Mormon passages dealing with the latter-day status of the gentiles attracted exegetical attention second only to the theme of Israel’s restoration. (See Table 4). Among the relevant scriptures, 2 Nephi 28 was often cited in the early years. Because it was generally introduced by writers as a “plain” prophecy needing no commentary, the two indexes to the Book of Mormon provide helpful supplementary material. In the 1835 *References*, there is one entry for 2 Nephi 28: “State of the Gentiles in that day.” In the 1841 *Index*, this is amplified to include three listings: “Their priests shall contend,” “Teach with their learning & deny the Holy Ghost,” and “Rob the poor.” Phraseology of these entries allows us to pinpoint several of the key verses:

For it shall come to pass in that day that the churches which are built up, and not unto the Lord, when the one shall say unto the other: Behold, I am the Lord’s; and the others shall say: I, I am the Lord’s and thus shall every one say that hath built up churches, and not unto the Lord. And they shall contend one with another; and their priests shall contend one with another, and they shall teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance. (2 Ne. 28:3–4)

Remembering what sent Joseph Smith to the Sacred Grove and recognizing that many converts expressed similar concern over the multitude of competing sects, it is easy to see how such verses would have both explained the religious world around them and confirmed the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

On one of his many missionary tours, Heber C. Kimball wrote, “We delivered our testimony to many [ministers] who with one consent said ‘we have enough and need no more revelation’; thus fulfilling a prediction of the Book of Mormon.”²⁸ The passage Kimball was referring to was 2 Nephi 29:3 which says that because of the book “many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.” This passage seemed to be fulfilled at every turn of the corner. “The vanity, the unbelief, the darkness and wickedness of this generation has caused many to fulfill the predictions of Nephi,” wrote the editor of the *Messenger and Advocate*.²⁹ Predicted in prophecy, the book’s frequent rejection thus ended up promoting faith rather than sowing doubt. Perhaps more importantly, it served as one more testimony that gentile Christendom had become effete and that the stage was thus fully set for that final act in the redemptive drama — the restoration of Israel.

Even the very birth of the Book of Mormon was an unmistakable witness that the “winding-up scenes” were underway. The second most frequently cited series of verses in the early literature was 3 Nephi 21:1–7. The Savior promised the Nephites “a sign that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place — that I shall gather in from their long dispersion, my

²⁷ “Millennium No. II,” *Evening and Morning Star* 2 (Jan. 1834): 127.

²⁸ “Communications” (Heber C. Kimball to Editors), *Times and Seasons* 2 (16 Aug. 1841): 507.

²⁹ “Beware of Delusion!” *Messenger and Advocate* 2 (Jan. 1836): 251.

people, O house of Israel.” That sign, as he went on to explain, was the Book of Mormon itself and “it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel.” As Parley P. Pratt remarked, this, and other similar passages

show, in definite terms not to be misunderstood, that, when that record should come forth in the latter day, and be published to the Gentiles, and come from them to the house of Israel, it should be A SIGN, A STANDARD, AN ENSIGN, by which they might KNOW THAT THE TIME HAD ACTUALLY ARRIVED FOR THE WORK TO COMMENCE AMONG ALL NATIONS, IN PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE RETURN OF ISRAEL TO THEIR OWN LAND.³⁰

Thus, the Book of Mormon served as an invaluable prophetic landmark, a millenarian milestone that helped the Saints to locate themselves in the eschatological timetable.

Before leaving the prophetic portions of the Book of Mormon, we must consider the Saints’ fascinating use of the book to justify and explain the life of Joseph Smith. 2 Nephi 3 records the prophecy of Joseph who was sold into Egypt that a “choice seer” would be raised up to bless the “fruit of his loins.” In verse 15, he identifies the individual quite precisely: “His name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me.” Such specific prophecy and its exact fulfillment in Joseph Smith, Jr., obviously appealed to literalist Latter-day Saints. In the church’s first hymnbook a song appeared in which this correlation between antiquity and actuality was extolled:

He likewise did foretell the name,
That should be given to the same,
His and his father’s should agree,
And both like his should Joseph be.

The song goes on to encapsulate the essential significance that this popular portion of the Book of Mormon probably held for the average Saint:

According to his holy plan,
The Lord has now rais’d up the man,
His latter day work to begin,
To gather scatter’d Israel in.
This seer shall be esteemed high,
By Joseph’s remnants by and by,
He is the man who’s call’d to raise,
And lead Christ’s church in these last days.³¹

All the important elements of Joseph Smith’s mission are present — the gathering of Israel, the conversion of the Indians, and the connection with the institutional church.

For ages individuals have found refuge from the unknown in the security of prophecy. That Mormons, therefore, discovered comforting scriptural

³⁰ “The Millennium,” *Millennial Star* 1 (Aug. 1840): 75 (*italics in original*).

³¹ *A Collection of Sacred Hymns* (Kirtland: 1835), pp. 95–96.

assurances that their leader would be protected and his work would not be cut short is to be expected. After receiving word of Joseph Smith's 1841 acquittal in Quincy, Illinois, a distant Parley Pratt editorialized in the *Millennial Star*, "Be it known that there is an invisible hand in this matter," and then he quoted 2 Nephi 3:14: "THAT SEER WILL THE LORD BLESS, AND THEY WHO SEEK TO DESTROY HIM SHALL BE CONFOUNDED." As evidence, Pratt cited "some twenty times in succession" in which Joseph's enemies had tried to destroy him legally but had been foiled each time. This, commented Pratt "is sufficient of itself to establish the truth of the Book of Mormon."³²

Even more popular than the promised preservation was a pair of passages from 3 Nephi. In his visit to the Americas, the Savior quoted various parts of the Isaiah prophecies. One such segment was the concluding verses from Isaiah 52, where speaking of "the servant" he says, "his visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (3 Ne. 20:43–44). For centuries Christian exegetes had considered this one of the great Messianic prophecies of Christ's scourging and crucifixion. Yet in a passage cited by the early Saints, the risen Lord himself gave it another meaning. Speaking of a latter day context and of a "servant" who would be instrumental in bringing about the "great and marvelous work," Jesus said, "and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them. But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil" (3 Ne. 21:9–10).

The 1835 *References* labels these verses, "Joseph the seer spoken of," and in the 1841 *Index*, it reads "He shall be marred." In a *Nauvoo Neighbor* editorial, John Taylor explained the prophecy thus: "This 'marring' happened near the hill Cummorah, when *Joseph Smith was knocked down with a hand-spike*, and afterwards *healed almost instantly!* The second time he was *marred*" occurred in March 1832 "when his *flesh was scratched off*, and he tarred and feathered. He was again healed instantly, fulfilling the prophecy *twice*." But for Taylor there was a critical distinction between being "marred" and being martyred, for Taylor pointed to 1 Nephi 20:19 as evidence that Joseph's death had actually been anticipated in prophecy.³³ Like Parley Pratt's use of 2 Nephi 3:14, then, it seems that for early Saints Joseph Smith's tribulations at once certified the authenticity of the Book of Mormon and imparted divine significance to what was happening in his life.

Occasionally, such parallels between Joseph Smith and Jesus Christ led to novel exegesis. Following the dark days of the Kirtland apostasy, apostle David W. Patten attempted to curb some of the faultfinding by writing an epistle "to the Saints scattered abroad."³⁴ His text, Romans 11:25–26, was a traditional

³² "President Joseph Smith in Prison," *Millennial Star* 2 (Aug. 1841): 63–64.

³³ *Nauvoo Neighbor* 2 (28 Aug. 1844): 2; reprinted in *Times and Seasons* 5 (2 Sept. 1844): 635.

³⁴ "To the Saints Scattered Abroad," *Elders' Journal of the Church of Latter Day Saints* 1 (July 1838): 39–42; also *History of the Church* 3:49–54. The interpretation also appears

favorite among millenarian Christians. It spoke of Israel's salvation in the latter days being effected by a "Deliverer" who "shall come out of Sion" and "shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Despite the fact that other Mormon commentators such as Parley Pratt followed the traditional interpretation of the "Deliverer" as Christ, Patten used 2 Nephi 3 and 3 Nephi 20 along with numerous Biblical passages to prove that this "Deliverer" was in reality Joseph Smith.

If apologetics produced apotheosis, so did the enthusiasm of converts. While Patten's interpretation was unusual, a more common mixing of the roles of Jesus and Joseph occurred when explaining the identity of "the prophet" spoken of by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15–19, although the Saints usually followed the phrasing of Acts 3:22–23. On two occasions it was deemed worthwhile to print clarifications in Church periodicals. In both instances, passages from the Book of Mormon were invoked. *The Evening and the Morning Star* published a letter asserting that the problem lay in "not knowing the scriptures, on the subject, especially the book of Mormon. For Christ said, when he showed himself to the Nephites, Behold, I am he of whom Moses spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up."³⁵ In Nauvoo, the editor of the *Times and Seasons* cited a similarly clear passage from 1 Nephi 22 "where the matter is fully set at rest" as to the messianic identity of the "prophet." Nonetheless, the high regard in which Joseph Smith was held among the Saints caused the editor to tread lightly:

If any are fearful lest we, by our interpretation, wrest a gem from the crown of our beloved prophet, let them remember, that we place it in the royal diadem of him who is more excellent than Joseph; and where even Joseph will be pleased to have it remain and shine. That God hath exalted him to a station of great dignity and responsibility, we do not doubt, but the truth of it rests on other testimony than the above.³⁶

While the primary focus of this article is theological, the prominent use of the Book of Mormon passages to explain contemporary archaeological or scientific findings (Tables 3, 4) deserves brief discussion. The first half of the nineteenth century probably saw the relationship between science and religion reach its apex. In America, where the twin ideals of Scottish Common Sense philosophy and the Baconian inductive method reigned supreme, the association was especially congenial.³⁷ During this Indian summer before Darwin seemingly dealt the death blow to biblical literalism, a plethora of publications

in Noah Packard, *Political and Religious Detector: In Which Millerism is Exposed* (Medina, Ohio: Michael Hayes, 1843), pp. 26–27.

³⁵ "Letters" (Daniel Stephens to W. W. Phelps), *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (March 1833): 79.

³⁶ "Theological," *Times and Seasons* 2 (April 1841): 359–60. The passage cited is 1 Ne. 22:20–22, 24.

³⁷ The three standard treatments of the subject are George H. Daniels, *American Science in the Age of Jackson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968); Theodore D. Bozeman, *Protestants in the Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977); and Herbert Hovenkamp, *Science and Religion in America, 1800–1860* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978).

confidently set forth the “evidences of Christianity.” The undergirding faith of this literature was simple. “The God of science was after all the God of Scripture,” explains religious historian George Marsden. “It should not be difficult to demonstrate, therefore, that what he revealed in one realm perfectly harmonized with what he revealed in the other. The perspicuity of nature should confirm the perspicuity of Scripture.”³⁸

Such, too, was the faith of the Saints when it came to establishing the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. No one doubted for a moment that what explorer John L. Stephens was discovering in Central America and the Yucatán in the early 1840s was tangible testimony to the book’s truthfulness. The tower at Palenque was surely the temple mentioned in 2 Nephi 5; the ruins of Quirigua almost certainly the city of Zarahemla; and the Isthmus of Darien (Panama) the “narrow neck of land.”³⁹ Extracts from Stephens’s book, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, & Yucatan*, were published in church periodicals with considerable jubilation. “It affords us great joy,” wrote the editor of the *Times and Seasons*, “to have the world assist us to so much proof.”⁴⁰

The last major theme to be mentioned is the Atonement. Though positioned fourth overall in Table 4, this rating distorts its actual topical significance in the early years. Nearly 90 percent of all passages cited on the subject came from one 1845 article in the *Millennial Star*. T. S. Barr, a Mormon priest in the Glasgow Church, published a twenty-eight-page pamphlet entitled *A Treatise on the Atonement, proving the necessity of Christ’s Death for Man’s Redemption neither scriptural nor reasonable*. Naturally, the pamphlet came to the attention of Church leaders in England, and Wilford Woodruff, “President” of the church in the British Isles, responded with an article entitled “Rationality of the Atonement.” His introductory comments tell the whole story:

We are sorry to be under the necessity of occupying our time and pages in noticing a pamphlet bearing such an introduction, as the production of a member of the Church of Christ; or that any man, bearing any portion of the authority of the holy priesthood, should have his mind so much overcome by the powers of darkness, as to stray so widely from the order and counsel of the kingdom of God, in presenting for the investigation of the public a heresy so much opposed to the revelations of God and every principle of holiness.

Our object in the present article will not be so much to refute the heretical doctrine advanced, as to introduce a portion of the testimony in favour of the principle of redemption through the blood of Christ, with which the revelations of God so much abound, in order that our views on the subject may be rightly understood by all, and

³⁸ George M. Marsden, “Everyone One’s Own Interpreter: The Bible, Science, and Authority in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America,” in Nathan O. Hatch and Mark A. Noll, eds., *The Bible in America: Essays in Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 86.

³⁹ Stephens’s book has been reprinted with an introduction by Richard L. Predmore, 2 vols. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1949). Connections between Stephens’s findings and Book of Mormon sites are made in “Extract,” *Times and Seasons* 3 (Sept. 1842): 914; see also pp. 921, 927; 4 (Oct. 1843): 346; 5 (Jan. 1844): 390, 406.

⁴⁰ “Extract,” *Times and Seasons* 3 (15 Sept. 1842): 914.

that the Saints of God may be prepared to withstand the assaults of the grand enemy of man's salvation, as well as to set the matter for ever at rest in the minds of those who believe in the revelations of God.⁴¹

What follows is a chain of passages from all the standard works demonstrating that redemption did indeed come through the shedding of Christ's blood. After arraying this arsenal of scripture, Woodruff chose a particularly poignant passage from the Book of Mormon with which to close:

Behold, will ye reject these words? Will ye reject the words of the prophets; and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ, after so many have spoken concerning him; and deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you? Know ye not that if ye will do these things, that the power of redemption and the resurrection, which is in Christ, will bring you to stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God? (Jac. 6:8–9)

In addition to the major themes already treated, Book of Mormon passages were occasionally used to encourage prayer, the obedience of children, and hard work.⁴² They hallowed the American Revolution, explained how to conduct meetings, and promised the revelation of all truth.⁴³ They inveighed against salaried clergy, creeds, and contention.⁴⁴ Though these less frequent usages have transcended time and continue to this day in the LDS Church, others have not.

As the Church's general conference convened at Nauvoo in April 1840, Orson Hyde announced that the Spirit was whispering to him to take up a mission to the Jews and Jerusalem. The expression was heartily seconded from the floor and thus began one of the most famous missions in Mormon history.⁴⁵ Two months later, in a letter written from Ohio, Hyde commented upon a Zionist movement then being reported in the newspapers. This recalled to his mind the words of Isaiah that there would be "none to guide her among all the sons she hath brought forth; neither that taketh her by the hand but these two *things* which are come unto thee."⁴⁶ Noting that in the 2 Nephi 8 recapitulation of this portion of Isaiah, *things* appears as *sons*, "this is better sense, and more to the point," declared Hyde. It also allowed him and his missionary companion, John E. Page, to step into the pages of prophecy: "As Jerusalem has no sons to take her by the hand and lead her among all the

⁴¹ "Rationality of the Atonement," *Millennial Star* 6 (Oct. 1845): 113–19.

⁴² Alma 34:17–23 as in *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (Aug. 1835): 168–69; 2 Ne. 4:3–6 as in *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (May 1833): 93; and, Mosiah 23:7 as in *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (Nov. 1832): 47.

⁴³ 1 Ne. 13:14–19 as in *Evening and Morning Star* (Oct. 1832): 38; Moro. 6:9 as in *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (Apr. 1833): 88; and 3 Ne. 26:1–9 as in Orson Pratt, *Remarkable Visions*, p. 20.

⁴⁴ 2 Ne. 26:30–31 as in *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (Dec. 1832): 54; 2 Ne. 28:31 as in *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (March 1833): 74 and, 3 Ne. 11:29 as in *Millennial Star* 3 (Oct. 1842): 110.

⁴⁵ *History of the Church* 4:106.

⁴⁶ Isa. 51:18–19 as quoted by Hyde, *Times and Seasons* 1 (Aug. 1840): 156.

number whom she hath brought forth, Bro. Page and myself feel that we ought to hurry along and take her by the hand; for we are her sons but the Gentiles have brought us up.”⁴⁷

An equally literalistic exegesis grew out of the Church’s decision in the fall of 1845 to evacuate Nauvoo the following spring. Rather than engage enraged vigilantes from Hancock County in what seemed to be an inevitable civil war, Church leaders decided to move west. Again, Book of Mormon prophecy helped to explain current events. According to 3 Nephi 16:10,

And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.

Early Saints expected the closing lines to be literally fulfilled in the Church’s exodus from Nauvoo. A more elaborate exegesis of this appeared in a circular entitled “Message From Orson Pratt to the Saints in the Eastern and Midland States.” Pratt was then presiding over the church in that section of the country. His analysis deserves quotation in full:

This wholesale banishment of the Saints from the American republic will no doubt, be one of the grandest and most glorious events yet witnessed in the history of this church. It seems to be a direct and literal fulfilment of many prophecies, both ancient and modern. Jesus has expressly told us, (Book of Mormon), that if the “Gentiles shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.” Now, what could the Gentiles further do to reject the “fulness of the Gospel” — the Book of Mormon? Is there one crime that they are not guilty of? I speak of them in a national capacity. . . .

If, then, all these crimes do not amount to a national rejection of the “fulness of the gospel,” I know not what more they can do to fully ripen them in crime and iniquity. Therefore, is not the time at hand for the Lord to bring the “fulness of the gospel” from among the Gentiles of this nation? If we are banished to the western wilds among the remnants of Joseph, is it not to ripen the wicked and save the righteous? Is it not to save us from the impending judgments which modern revelations have denounced against this nation? How could the gospel be brought from among the Gentiles while the priesthood and the Saints tarried in their midst.⁴⁸

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

As we step back to take a larger look at Book of Mormon usage in early years, we can make a number of general observations. First, compared to the Bible, the Book of Mormon was hardly cited at all. Though this present study examines a greater variety of sources over a longer period of time, Gordon Irving’s earlier analysis of Bible usage during the years 1832–38 makes a precise quantitative comparison possible for at least a six-year span of time. (See

⁴⁷ (Extract of letter from Orson Hyde), *Times and Seasons* 1 (Aug. 1840): 156–57.

⁴⁸ “Message from Orson Pratt,” *Millennial Star* 6 (Dec. 1845): 191–92. See also *Times and Seasons* 6 (15 Nov. 1845): 1037; *Millennial Star* 7 (15 Jan. 1846): 26; and *Millennial Star* 7 (1 Feb. 1846): 35.

Table 5.) To a people who have come to prize the Book of Mormon as “the keystone” of their religion, it may come as a surprise to learn that in the early literature the Bible was cited nearly twenty times more frequently than the Book of Mormon. Such a ratio is corroborated in the unpublished sources as well. During his proselyting peregrinations at this period of time, Orson Pratt kept a fairly detailed record of the scriptures used in his sermons. Bible passages were listed ten times more frequently than Book of Mormon ones.⁴⁹ Moreover, in the 173 Nauvoo discourses of the prophet Joseph Smith for which contemporary records exist, only two Book of Mormon passages have been cited while dozens of biblical passages were.⁵⁰

A second observation is that for the years under study a discernible pattern of usage frequency is not evident. A glance at Table 1 reveals that the 1832–33 volume of the *Evening and Morning Star* contained the greatest number of citations, followed by the 1845 volume of the *Millennial Star*, the 1841–42 volume of the *Times and Seasons*, and the 1834–35 volume of the *Messenger and Advocate*. A similarly random pattern is also present in the column ranking the “books.” No sense of steady development across time is apparent here. This becomes especially clear in Figure 1. The fluctuations are best accounted for as a fortuitous confluence of publishing histories and contemporary affairs. There is no evidence of some changing signal or policy statement from Church headquarters. Thus, it is more appropriate to view the sharp drop in citations

TABLE 5
COMPARATIVE USE OF BIBLE AND BOOK OF MORMON

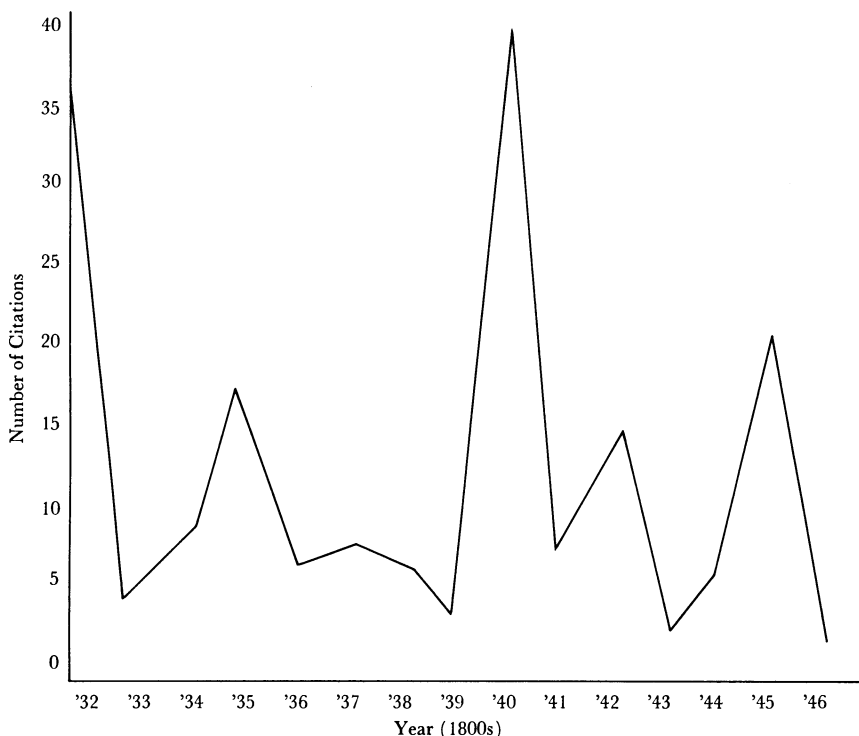
		Number of Bible Citations*	Number of Book of Mormon Citations	Bible to Book of Mormon Ratio
<i>Evening and Morning Star</i> 1	(1832–33)	294	45	7:1
<i>Evening and Morning Star</i> 2	(1833–34)	246	6	41:1
<i>Messenger and Advocate</i> 1	(1834–35)	357	11	32:1
<i>Messenger and Advocate</i> 2	(1835–36)	142	7	20:1
<i>Messenger and Advocate</i> 3	(1836–37)	193	0	—
<i>Elders Journal</i>	(1837–38)	79	2	40:1
Pratt (<i>Voice of Warning</i>)	(1837)	178	6	30:1
TOTALS		1489	77	19:1

* This column is taken from Gordon Irving, “The Mormons and the Bible in the 1830s,” *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer 1973): 479.

⁴⁹ Elden J. Watson, ed., *The Orson Pratt Journals* (Salt Lake City: Elden J. Watson, 1975). A specific search was made for the period between February 1833 and November 1837 (pp. 16–94). Of the 371 entries, 281, or 76 percent, mentioned topics. Within those 281, 96 Bible citations, 10 Book of Mormon citations, and 1 D&C citation appeared. Thus the Bible to Book of Mormon ratio is about 10 to 1.

⁵⁰ Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), p. 230. The phraseology suggests 3 Ne. 27:21 and Moro. 8:12, 19, or 22.

FIGURE 1
CHRONOLOGY OF BOOK OF MORMON CITATIONS



between 1832 and 1834, for example, as a result of much of the print space in the second volume of *The Evening and the Morning Star* being occupied with descriptions of the Saints' expulsion from Jackson County, Missouri. It may also have been related to the fact that Oliver Cowdery, who replaced W. W. Phelps as editor, printed Sidney Rigdon's exclusively biblical treatments of theology, whereas Phelps had published his own doctrinal essays containing an unusual number of Book of Mormon citations. Likewise, one accounts for the sharp peak in 1840–41 by noting that Parley P. Pratt then initiated the *Millennial Star* and that the two "books" which most heavily cited the Book of Mormon during the early years — Charles Thompson's *Evidences in Proof of the Book of Mormon* and Benjamin Winchester's *Gospel Reflector* — were also published at that time.

Table 6 provides a chronological breakdown of citations according to theme and corresponds with Table 4. Except for a flurry in the early 1840s of archaeology-related citations generated by LDS interest in John L. Stephens's book, *Incidents of Travel in Central America* and except for the 1845 cluster of passages on the Atonement emanating from a single article, treatment of the various themes seems fairly even throughout the years studied. Because the number of citations per year is relatively small, especially when divided topically, caution must be taken to avoid concluding too much from such limited

TABLE 6
CHRONOLOGY OF PRINCIPAL THEMES

THEME	YEAR															Total
	32-33*	33-34	34-35	35-36	36-37	37-38	38-39	39-40	40-41	41-42	42-43	43-44	44-45	45-46	46	
Restoration of Israel																
Gathering of Israel	8	1	2	5	1	1	1	1	3	1	0	4	1	0	0	28
Joseph (Indians)	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	16
Jews	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
New Jerusalem	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Ten Tribes	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
(Sub Total)	17	2	5	9	3	2	2	2	11	3	0	4	2	0	0	59
Prophecy Relating to Gentiles																
State of Christendom	1	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	4	2	1	1	0	1	0	16
America: Repent or Suffer	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	3	3	1	0	0	2	1	17
General	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
(Sub Total)	3	1	1	3	2	5	0	0	8	5	3	1	0	4	1	37
Archaeological Evidence																
Atonement	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	9	1	11	0	2	0	4	32
Joseph Smith	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	20	0	23
First Principles	1	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	2	0	0	14
Concern for Holiness	5	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	13
Revelation and Spiritual Gifts	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	11
Total	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	35	4	9	18	8	9	4	4	40	10	16	5	9	24	5	196

* This reflects the publishing year used by the periodicals from which most citations emanated.

data. Perhaps the safest observation to make is simply to reiterate that during the pre-Utah period, Book of Mormon usage was random, infrequent, and appears to have been largely a matter of personal preference.

Lastly, we must consider such usage from the perspective of a book-by-book analysis as displayed in Tables 7 and 8. Table 7 not only shows the number of citations drawn from each book, but also how that number corresponds to the size of each book. Were all books of equal perceived value, one would expect Mosiah, Alma, and Helaman, for example, which together constitute approximately half the Book of Mormon (Column A), to account for 50 percent of the citations in the early literature. In actuality, they account for only 15 percent (Column C). Conversely, 3 Nephi and Ether represent just over 15 percent of the total volume of the book and yet account for nearly 45 percent of the citations. Obviously, this tells us something about the Saints' perceptions of the relative utility of the various books. Such data has been converted into ratios in columns H-J to facilitate a more precise comparison. Table 8 carries the analysis a step further, showing the number of citations coming from different chapters within each book. Passages from just over a third of all Book of Mormon chapters were cited, and the particular book-by-book percentages closely reflect those of Table 7. What is made clear from these two tables is that the prophetic portions of the Book of Mormon — parts of 3 Nephi, Ether, and 2 Nephi — received significantly greater attention from the early Saints than did the historical books — Mosiah, Alma and Helaman.

CONCLUSIONS

With the descriptive and quantitative foundation now laid, we may consider several of the larger questions raised by this study. How, for example, do we satisfactorily account for the comparatively few Book of Mormon citations in the early literature? What is the significance of the preponderant concern with Book of Mormon prophecies? Finally, in the grand manner of the prophet Mormon's penchant for "and-thus-we-see" conclusions, is there something to be learned from all this?

A plausible answer to the question of why the Book of Mormon was cited so infrequently when compared with the Bible would seem to be that such a move was calculated to avoid Protestant antipathy to the "new scripture." If the Saints built their case from the Bible, the gentiles would have no ready excuse for rejecting their testimony. Yet no evidence exists for either a formal church directive or even an informal agreement not to use the Book of Mormon in the public ministry. On the contrary, an early revelation positively instructed the elders to "teach the principles of my gospel which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon," and Orson Pratt, at least, seemed to feel no qualms about publicly quoting from the book when it seemed pertinent to his purposes. (See D&C 42:12.) Though a boldness to preach revealed truth when desired is more noticeable in the early years than any other particular concern that the source might be dismissed out-of-hand, still the Bible was overwhelmingly invoked. Moreover, the "regard-for-the-gentiles" argument

TABLE 7

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
	Percent of Total Words in Book of Mormon	Number of Citations in Early Literature	Percent of Total Citations in Early Literature	Number of Entries in References (1835)	Percent of Total Entries in References (1835)	Number of Entries in Index (1841)	Percent of Total Entries in Index (1841)	Ratio of C:A H	Ratio of E:A I	Ratio of G:A J
1 Nephi	9	23	9	36	14	43	9	1.00	1.56	1.00
2 Nephi	11	50	21	18	7	41	9	1.91	.64	.43
Jacob	3	10	4	6	2	19	4	1.33	.67	1.33
Enos — W. of M.	2	1	0	4	2	16	3	0	1.00	1.50
Mosiah	12	5	2	18	7	38	6	.17	.58	.50
Alma	31	28	12	66	26	121	25	.39	.84	.81
Helaman	8	2	1	26	10	40	8	.13	1.25	1.00
3 Nephi	11	69	28	51	20	63	13	2.55	1.82	1.18
4 Nephi	1	0	0	5	2	8	2	0	2.00	2.00
Mormon	3	10	4	7	3	21	4	1.33	1.00	1.33
Ether	6	37	15	13	5	51	11	2.50	.83	1.83
Moroni	2	8	3	4	2	15	4	1.50	1.00	2.00
TOTALS		243		254		476				

TABLE 8

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Number of Chapters in Book of Mormon	Number of Chapters cited in Early Literature	Percentages for Early Literature	Number of Chapters cited in <i>References</i> (1835)	Percentages for <i>References</i> (1835)	Number of Chapters cited in <i>Index</i> (1841)	Percentages for <i>Index</i> (1841)
1 Nephi	22	9	41	16	73	18	82
2 Nephi	33	15	45	12	36	17	52
Jacob	7	3	43	5	71	6	86
Enos — Words of Mormon	4	1	25	3	80	4	100
Mosiah	29	4	14	15	51	22	76
Alma	63	15	24	45	71	58	92
Helaman	16	2	13	11	69	14	88
3 Nephi	30	19	63	21	70	23	77
4 Nephi	1	0	0	1	100	1	100
Mormon	9	4	44	4	44	8	89
Ether	15	8	53	9	60	13	87
Moroni	10	4	40	4	40	8	80
TOTALS	239	84	35%	146	61%	192	80%

does little to account for the equal lack of Book of Mormon citation *within* the household of faith.⁵¹

A fully satisfying answer looks more toward the Saints' love of the Bible than to an intentional avoidance of the Book of Mormon. The image of Parley P. Pratt spending an entire winter alone in his Ohio log cabin, reveling in the opportunity to study the Bible from dawn to dusk, seems archetypal of those earnest souls who first joined the LDS community.⁵² They had known the Bible from childhood but the Book of Mormon only from adult conversion. From any angle, the depth of familiarity with the Bible among antebellum Americans is staggering compared to today's almost scripturally illiterate generation.⁵³ Even within the Church, the contrast between the two periods is marked. It might be hyperbole, but not by much, to picture every early member as a Bruce R. McConkie in his or her command of the holy scriptures.

After years of immersion in biblical studies, it is small wonder that an early revelation would have to chide the Saints for having "treated lightly the things you have received" and charge them to "remember" the Book of Mormon (D&C 84:54–57). And if, as this study demonstrates, they did not immediately respond to this challenge, is that really so surprising? Modern Mormons seem to have fared little better in "remembering" the two visions, now Sections 137 and 138, added to their canon in 1976. Though these "new" revelations provide the most detailed description of the post-mortal spirit world found in Mormon scripture, many Latter-day Saints continue to cite now familiar, though less comprehensive, passages from the Book of Mormon or Doctrine and Covenants when discussing the topic. It seems to be part of the human condition to rely on the tried and true rather than the new.

Nor did the early Saints have any opportunity for formal instruction or catechization in the Book of Mormon. Sunday School and seminary classes did not exist, and if the "Lectures on Faith" prepared for the "school of the Prophets" are any indicator, the Bible monopolized what little organized study they did have. All factors considered, therefore, it seems almost inevitable that it would have taken a generation or more for the Book of Mormon to fully permeate the doctrinal consciousness of the Latter-day Saints.

When W. W. Phelps reflected upon the early "neglect" of the book, he raised a revealing question. "Has this been done," he asked, "for the sake of

⁵¹ While the major Church periodicals and a number of Mormon "books" were written for the benefit of the Saints, nonmembers undoubtedly read them as well. Conversely, Mormons bought and read tracts explicitly geared to others denominations. Joseph Smith preached deep doctrine when nonmembers were in the congregation. The question of "audience," therefore, that is often brought into a discussion of Mormon intellectual history bespeaks a rather presentist view. It assumes that early Mormons, like the Saints today, made conscious distinctions in their minds between what could be said to outsiders and what was reserved only for the insider. This is neither a prominent nor even a clear motif in early Mormon sources.

⁵² *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt* (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874), pp. 27–28.

⁵³ See, for example, Mark A. Noll, "The Image of the United States as a Biblical Nation, 1776–1865," in Hatch and Noll, eds., *The Bible in America*, pp. 39–58.

hunting mysteries in the prophecies?"⁵⁴ Whether that was what drew or held the Saints to a study of the Bible (and one suspects that he is at least partially correct), a preoccupation with the prophetic has certainly been verified in the present study of Book of Mormon usage. Prophecies relating to the fate of the gentiles and to the restoration of Israel were by far the principal interests of the early Saints. In fact, as Joseph Smith declared in a *Times and Seasons* editorial, they have "interested the people of God in every age." The "latter day glory" was felt to be "a theme upon which prophets, priests, and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight," and to which "they have looked forward with joyful anticipation."⁵⁵

What is amply confirmed from our study, then, is the centrality of millenarianism to early Mormonism — that of all the "logies" that make up "theology," it was eschatology that for the Saints outweighed the rest. Though the Book of Mormon has since been used as a source for a unique LDS brand of anthropology, soteriology, and even Christology, its earliest uses were primarily eschatological. The broad conceptual sweep of millenarianism as a "cosmology of eschatology," however, usually gets short-changed in the popular mind. Most individuals go no further than the dictionary definition and tend to see it as an eccentric preoccupation with pinpointing the time of Christ's second coming. Its advocates are often assumed to be either socio-economically disenfranchised or mentally disengaged. "Eschatology," remarked social gospeler Walter Rauschenbusch, "is usually loved in inverse proportions to the square of the mental diameter of those who do the loving."⁵⁶ In reality, it is the whole dramatic conclusion to the history of redemption and integrates a wide variety of theological topics that often get compartmentalized in doctrinal discourse. Fortunately, the earlier scholarly, as well as popular, perception of millennialism-as-pathology is now almost passé. At least among newer students, millenarian thought is no longer considered the "preserve of peasants and the oppressed" or of "assorted cranks and crackpots." On the contrary, as a recent reviewer points out, increasingly it is being realized by a second generation of scholars that "millennialism is a natural, rational, and sometimes normative force that can exert formative influence over all strata of society."⁵⁷ Certainly this was the case in early Mormonism, for as has been demonstrated the theological millenarianism derived from the Book of Mormon was both complex and pervasive, and was, on the whole, a "rational" and "normative" force in the Church's formative years.

Of course, as we have also seen, it could occasionally be otherwise. To be valued, scripture must speak to the age of its adherents. But if it is tethered too tightly to the times, there is the ever-present danger that some turn of events or shift in circumstances will undermine the household of faith. Caution must be urged, therefore, in ascribing eternal verity and applicability to state-

⁵⁴ "Some of Mormon's Teachings," *Evening and Morning Star* 1 (Jan. 1833): 60.

⁵⁵ "The Temple," *Times and Seasons* 3 (May 1842): 776.

⁵⁶ As cited in Leonard I. Sweet, "Millennialism in America: Recent Studies," *Theological Studies* 40 (1979): 512.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 513.

ments that obviously bear the identifying marks of their era. And yet every age has reinterpreted scripture to impart meaning to its day. In a sense, the Christians Christianized the Old Testament, the early Mormons Mormonized the Bible, and today's Latter-day Saints modernize the restoration scriptures. The challenge here, as elsewhere in life and as always for the Saint, seems to be one of balance, of being able to sort the essential from the peripheral, the eternal from the ephemeral, Christ from culture. In a word, it is to live relevantly "in the world," and yet not be captively "of the world."

APPENDIX

The entries below are organized comparatively and sequentially. Those found on the same line are either identically worded or deemed to refer to the same portion of scripture. While a few entries may appear identical to the reader, it has been possible to determine that they actually refer to two different passages discussing the same event or idea. For example, both sources had an entry about Ammaron hiding the record. In the appendix, however, they are staggered because one refers to 4 Nephi 1:48 and the other cites Mormon 1:2. Entries are staggered to reflect the sequence of the Book of Mormon text for ease of use. Thus, the only entry in *References* for 2 Nephi 2, "Adam and Eve in innocence, &c." is staggered between the 1841 *Index* entries, "Opposition in all things," and "Adam fell that man might be," just as it follows the one and precedes the other passage in the Book of Mormon itself.

Both grammatical and factual errors in the original indexes have been faithfully reproduced in the appendix.

CONTENT

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
1 NEPHI		
1	The Language of the book.	Language of the Record. Nephi's Abridgment.
2	Lehi flees into the wilderness.	Lehi's Dream. Lehi departs into the wilderness.
3	An angel appears to Laman and his brethren.	
4	Nephi slays Laban.	Nephi slayeth Laban.
5	Sariah complains of Lehi's visions. Contents of the brass plates.	Sariah complains of Lehi's Vision. Contents of the brass plates.
7	Ishmael and his family takes their journey. Nephi is bound by his brethren.	Ishmael goes with Nephi. Nephi's brethren rebel and bind him.
8		Lehi's dream of the tree, rod, &c.
10	Messiah or the prophet spoken of.	Messiah and John prophesied of. Olive branches broken off.
11	Nephi's vision	Nephi's Vision of Mary. Do. the crucifixion of Christ.
12		Do. darkness and earthquake
13	The great abominable church. Columbus spoken of. Situation of the bible spoken of. The book of Mormon promised. The Holy Spirit promised to the faithful.	Great abominable church. Discovery of the promised land. Bible spoken of. Book of Mormon, and Holy Ghost promised.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
	Other books promised also.	Other books come forth.
	The book of Mormon and Bible to be one.	Bible and Book of Mormon one.
14	A promise to the Gentiles. Annihilation spoken against. The two churches spoken of.	Promises to the Gentiles. Two churches.
	Nephi saw John the revelator.	The work of the Father commence. A man in white robes (John).
15		Nephites come to knowledge. Rod of iron.
16	Lehi's sons take wives. Lehi finds a brass ball or director. Nephi breaks his bow. The directors work by faith. Death of Ishmael. Lehi and Nephi threatened by Laman and others.	The sons of Lehi take wives. Director found (ball). Nephi broke his bow. Directors work by faith. Ishmael died. Lehi and Nephi threatened.
17	Nephi threatened again by his brethren.	
	They were about to worship Nephi.	Nephi commanded to build a ship.
18	Jacob and Joseph born. They dance in the ship.	Nephi about to be worshipped by his brethren. Ship finished and entered. Dancing in the ship.
	They arrive to the land of promise	Nephi bound; ship driven back.
19	They make plates of ore.	Arrived on the promised land.
	Zenos Neum and Zenock spoken of.	Plates of ore made.
20	Quotation from the bible.	Zenos, Neum, and Zenock
22	Messiah or the prophet spoken of.	Isaiah's Writings. Holy One of Israel.
2 NEPHI		
1	Liberty promised if faithful.	Lehi to his sons.
2		Opposition in all things.
	Adam and Eve in innocence &c.	
3		Adam fell that men might be. Joseph saw our day. A choice seer.
	A prophet promised to the Lamanites.	Writings grow together.
4		Prophet promised to the Lamanites.
	The death of Lehi.	Joseph's prophesy on brass plates. Lehi buried.
5		Nephi's life sought.
	Nephi seperates from Laman.	Nephi separated from Laman.
	Nephi builds a temple.	Temple built.
	Laman and his seed cursed.	Skin of blackness. Priests &c. consecrated.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
		Make other plates.
6	Quotation from the bible.	Isaiah's words (by Jacob).
9		Angels to a devil.
		Spirits and bodies re-united.
		Baptism.
10		No kings upon this land.
12		Isaiah prophesieth.
21		Rod of the stem of Jesse.
25	Darkness of prophecy.	
	Crucifixion of Christ foretold.	
	Christ the only true Messiah.	
	Use of the law of Moses.	Seed of Joseph perish not.
26		Law of Moses kept.
		Christ shall shew himself.
		Signs of Christ, birth and death.
		Whisper from the dust, book sealed up.
	Priestcraft condemned.	Priestcraft forbidden.
27	A great and marvelous work foretold.	
		Sealed book to be brought forth.
		Three witnesses beheld the book.
		The words [read this I pray thee].
		Seal up the book again.
28	State of the Gentiles in that day.	
		Their priests shall contend.
		Teach with their learning & deny the Holy Ghost
		Rob the poor.
29		A Bible; a Bible.
		Men judged of the Books.
30	Mercy yet for the Gentiles.	
	Lamanites is to become a delight- some people.	White and a delightsome people.
		Work commence among all people.
31	Doctrine of Christ spoken of.	Lamb of God baptised.
		Baptism by water and Holy Ghost.
JACOB		
1	Death of Nephi.	Nephi anointeth a King.
		Nephi died.
		Nephites and Lamanites.
2	More than one wife forbidden.	A righteous branch from Joseph.
3		Lamanites shall scourge you.
		More than one wife forbidden.
4	Trees removed by faith.	Trees, waves and mountains obey us.
	The Jews sought dark sayings.	Jews looked beyond the mark.
5	Parable of the olive tree.	Tame olive tree.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
		Nethermost part of the vineyard. Fruit laid up against the season. Another branch. Wild fruit had overcome. Lord of the vineyard wept. Branches overcome the roots. Wild branches plucked off.
7	Sherem the antichrist	Sherem the Anti-Christ. A sign, Sherem smitten. Enos takes the plates from his Father.
ENOS		Enos, thy sins are forgiven.
	Records threatened by the Lamanites.	Records threatened by Lamanites. Lamanites eat raw meat.
JAROM		Nephites waxed strong Lamanites drink blood Fortify cities Plates delivered to Omni
OMNI		Plates given to Amaron. Plates given to Chemish. Mosiah warned to flee. Zarahemla discovered. Engravings on a stone. Coriantumr discovered. His parents came from the tower. Plates delivered to king Benjamin.
THE WORDS OF MORMON		False Christ and Prophets.
	False christs, false prophets &c.	
MOSIAH		Mosiah made king, and received. The plates of brass, swords and director.
1		King Benjamin teacheth the people. Their tent doors towards the temple.
2	King Benjamin's sermon.	Coming of Christ foretold.
3	Coming of Christ foretold.	Beggars not denied.
4		Sons and daughters.
5		Mosiah began to reign.
6		Ammon, &c. bound and imprisoned.
7		Limhi's proclamation.
8	Interpreters and 24 plates.	Twenty-four plates of gold. Seer and Translator.
9		A battle fought.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
10		King Laman died.
11		Noah made king.
	Abinadi the prophet.	Abinadi the prophet.
16	Of the resurrection.	Resurrection.
17		Alma believed Abinadi.
		Abinadi cast into prison and scourged with faggots.
18	Preaching of Alma.	
		Waters of Mormon.
20	Daughters of the Lamanites stolen.	The daughters of the Lamanites stolen by king Noah's priests.
21	The twenty four plates.	Records on plates of ore.
22		Last tribute of wine.
	The Nephites flee into the wilderness.	
23	Kings forbidden of the Lord.	
24	Threatened for praying.	
		Lamanites deep sleep.
25	King Limhi is baptized.	King Limhi baptised.
27	Priests and teachers labor.	Priest and teachers labour.
	Alma beheld an angel.	Alma saw an angel.
	Alma struck dumb.	Alma fell, (dumb).
28		King Mosiah's sons preach to the Lamanites.
	The twenty four plates translated.	Translation of records.
		Plates delivered by Limhi.
		Translated by two stones.
		People back to the tower.
	The records given to Alma.	Records given to Alma.
29	Judges chosen by the people.	Judges appointed.
		Alma died.
		King Mosiah died.
		Kings of Nephi ended.
ALMA		
1	Nehor the universalian.	Nehor slew Gideon.
2	Amlici the universalist.	
	Amlici is made a king.	Amlici made king.
	Two armies unite.	
	Amlici slain in battle	Amlici slain in battle.
3	March of the Lamanites.	
		Amlicites painted red.
	The Lamanites come up to battle.	
4		Alma baptised in Sidon.
	Great pride in the Church.	
5	Wonderful preaching by Alma.	Alma's preaching.
6		Alma ordained elders.
	A commandment to meet often.	Commanded to meet often.
8	Alma sees an angel.	Alma saw an angel.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
10		Amulek saw an angel. Lawyers' questioning Amulek.
11	Names of money.	Coins named. Zeezram the lawyer.
12	Zeezrom trembles.	Zeezram trembles.
13		Election spoken of.
	The priest-hood of Melchisedek.	Melchizedek priesthood.
14		Alma and Amulek stoned.
	The scriptures and people burned.	Records buried.
	A great earthquake.	Prison rent.
15	Zeezrom healed.	Zeezram healed & baptised.
16		Nehor's desolation.
17	The Lamanites converted.	Lamanites converted. Flocks scattered at Sebus.
17		Ammon smote off arms.
18		Ammon and king Lamoni.
	King Lamoni falls, being overcome by the Spirit.	King Lamoni fell.
19		Ammon and the Queen. King and Queen prostrate.
20	Ammon and Lamoni met Lamoni's father.	
21	Account of Aaron and his brethren.	Aaron, &c. delivered. Jerusalem built. Preaching in Jerusalem.
22	Lamoni's father converted. Lamoni's father falls.	Lamoni's Father converted.
23		Land Desolation and Bountiful.
	They take the name of Anti-Lehi- Nephi.	Anti-Nephi-Lehi's.
24	Death of Lamoni's father.	
		General council.
	They bury their swords.	Swords buried.
	Massacre of the Anti-Lehi-Nephi's.	1,005 massacred.
25		Lamanites perish by fire.
26	Ammon rebuked by Aaron.	
27		Slavery forbidden.
	Ammon falls upon the earth.	
	The Anti-Lehi-Nephi's remove to Jershon.	Anti-Nephi-Lehi's removed to Jershon, called Ammonites.
28		Tremendous battle.
	Great mourning among the Nephites.	
30	Korihor the Anti-Christ.	Anti-Christ, Korihor.
	Korihor struck dumb.	Korihor struck dumb. The devil in the form of an angel.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
31	The Zoramites worship Idols. do do preach election. Alma laid hands on his brethren.	Korihor trodden down. Alma's mission to Zormaites. Rameumptom (holy stand).
32	do description of faith.	Alma on hill Onidah.
33	Words of Zenos the prophet. do do Zenock do do	Alma on faith. Prophecy of Zenos. Prophecy of Zenock.
34	Alma's knowledge of Christ	Amulek's knowledge of Christ. Charity recommended. Same spirit possess your body.
35		Believers cast out.
36	do instruction to Helaman.	Alma to Helaman.
37	The directors spoken of.	Plates given to Helaman. 24 plates, and directors. Gazelem, a stone, (secret). Liahona, or compass.
38	Alma's instruction to Shiblon.	Alma to Shiblon.
39	do do do Corianton. The unpardonable sin spoken of.	Alma to Corianton. Unpardonable sin.
40	The resurrection spoken of.	Resurrection.
41	do restoration do do	Restoration.
42		Justice in punishment. If, Adam, took, tree, life. Mercy rob justice.
43		Moroni's stratagem. Slaughter of Lamanites.
44	Moroni's speech to Zerahemnah. The prophecy of a soldier.	Moroni's speech to Zarahemnah. Prophecy of a soldier. Lamanites covenant of peace.
45	do do do Alma. Alma's strange departure.	Alma's prophecy, 400 years after Christ. Dwindle in unbelief. Alma's strange departure.
46	Persecution of the Church. Moroni's curious standard.	Amalickiah leadeth away the people, destroyeth the church. Standard of Moroni. Joseph's coat rent. Jacob's prophecy of Joseph's seed. Fevers in the land, plants and roots for diseases.
47	The wonderful plot of Amalickiah.	Amalickiah's plot. The king stabbed. Amalickiah married the Queen; & acknowledged king.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
48	Forts built by Moroni.	Fortifications by Moroni.
49		Ditches filled with dead bodies.
		Amalickiah's oath.
50		Pahoran appointed judge.
		Army against kingmen.
51	Amalickiah killed by Teancum.	Amalickiah slain.
52		Ammoron made king.
53		Bountiful fortified.
		Dissentions.
	The two thousand young men.	2000 young men.
54		Moroni's epistle to Ammoron.
		Ammoron's answer.
55	The Lamanites made Drunk with wine.	Lamanites made drunk.
		Moroni's stratagem.
56	Moroni's stratagem.	Helaman's epistle to Moroni.
		Helaman's stratagem.
		Mothers taught faith.
		Lamanites surrendered.
57		City of Antiparah taken.
		City of Cumeni taken.
		200 of the 2060 fainted.
		Prisoners rebel, slain.
58		Manti taken by stratagem.
60	do complaint to the chief Judge.	Moroni to the governor.
61	The Judges reply.	Governor's answer.
62		King Pachus slain.
		Cords and ladders prepared.
		Nephihah taken.
	Teancum slain.	Teancum's stratagem; slain.
		Peace established.
		Moronihah made commander.
		Helaman died.
63		Sacred things; Shiblon.
	Death of Moroni.	Moroni died.
	A great emigration by water.	5400 emigrated north.
	Ships built by Hagoth.	Ships built by Hagoth.
	Death of Shiblon.	Sacred things committed to Helaman;
		Shiblon died.
HELAMAN		
1	Assassination of Pahoran the chief Judge.	Pahoran died.
		Pahoran appointed judge.
		Kishkumen slew Pahoran.
		Pacumeni appointed judge.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
		Zarahemla taken. Pacumeni killed. Coriantumr. Lamanites surrendered. Helaman appointed judge.
2	Gadianton the robber Death of Kishkumen.	Secret signs discovered and Kishkumen stabbed. Gadianton fled.
3	Cement houses built. The Nephites became Lamanites. A great addition to the church. Death of Helaman.	Emigration northward. Cement houses. Many books and records. Helaman died. Nephi made judge. Nephites become wicked.
4		Nephi gave the judgment seat to Cezoram.
5	Nephi confers the judgment seat to another. Eight thousand Lamanites converted. Nephi and Lehi cast into prison.	Nephi and Lehi preached to the Lamanites. 8,000 baptised. Alma and Nephi surrounded with fire. Angels administer. Cezoram and son murdered.
6	Assassination of Cezoram the chief Judge.	Gadianton's robbers. Gadianton's robbers destroyed.
7		Nephi's prophecy.
8		Gadianton robbers are judges.
9	The chief Judge Murdered by his brother.	Chief judge slain.
		Seantum detected.
10	Nephi hears the voice of God.	Keys of the kingdom.
	do taken up by the Spirit.	Nephi taken away by the spirit.
11	A famine in the land. The Gadianton band destroyed. The famine removed. The reappearance of the robbers.	Famine in the land. Gadianton's band destroyed. Famine removed.
12	The hearts of the people hardened. The movement of the earth.	
13	The prophecy of Samuel the Lamanite. The wicked spared for the righteous' sake. The hiding of riches in the earth.	Samuel's prophecy.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
	The people complain of their fathers. The precepts of men received.	
14		Tools lost. Two days and a night, light. Sign of the crucifixion.
16	They cast stones at Samuel.	Samuel stoned, &c. Angels appeared.
3 NEPHI		
1		Lachoneus chief judge. Nephi receives the records. Nephi's strange departure. No darkness at night.
	The strange departure of Nephi. The sign of the birth of Christ. They contend about the law of Moses.	
2	The curse of the Lamanites taken off.	Lamanites became white.
3	An epistle of Giddianhi to Lachoneus.	Giddianhi to Lachoneus. Gidgiddoni chief judge.
	The Nephites gather into one place.	
4	The death of Giddianhi the robber.	Giddianhi slain. Robbers surrendered.
	Zemnarihah hanged.	Zemnarihah hanged.
5		Mormon abridges the records.
6		Church began to be broke up.
7		Government of the land destroyed.
	Destruction of the government.	Chief judge murdered. Divided into tribes.
	The dead raised to life.	Nephi raised the dead.
8	The crucifixion of Christ. The three days of darkness.	Sign of the crucifixion. Cities destroyed, earthquakes, darkness, &c.
9	The end of the law of Moses.	Law of Moses fulfilled.
11	Christ appeared to the Nephites.	Christ appeared to Nephites. Print of the nails. Nephi and others called.
	The manner of baptism. The doctrine of Christ.	Baptism commanded. Doctrine of Christ.
15	The end of the law of Moses. Christ spake of other sheep.	Christ the end of the law. Other sheep spoken of.
16	A blessing to the Gentiles on conditions.	Blessed are the gentiles.
		Gentile wickedness on the land of Joseph.
	A promise to the Israelites. Quotation from the bible.	Isaiah's words fulfilled.
17	Christ healed their sick. Christ spake words that could not be written.	Jesus healed the sick.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
		Christ blessed children. Little ones encircled with fire. Christ administered the sacrament.
18	Jesus administers the sacrament. The example of prayer. A commandment to meet often. Open meetings set forth. Unworthy members forbidden the sacrament.	
19	Names of the twelve disciples. The twelve baptized. Christ appeared the second time. The twelve made white.	Christ taught his disciples. Names of the twelve. The twelve taught the multitude. Baptism, Holy Ghost, & fire.
19		Disciples made white. Jesus came, second time. Faith great.
20	Christ breaks bread again. A curse upon the Gentiles. The New Jerusalem spoken of. The coming in of the Jews. Quotation from the bible.	Christ breaks bread again. Miracle, bread and wine. Gentiles destroyed (Isaiah).
21		Zion established. From gentiles, to your seed. Sign, Father's work commenced. He shall be marred. Gentiles destroyed (Isaiah). New Jerusalem built. Work commence among all the tribes.
22	Quotation from the bible.	Isaiah's words.
23		Saints did arise.
24	The prophecy of Malachi written.	Malachi's prophecy.
26	Our faith tried by the book of Mormon. The children's tongues loosed. Christ raised a man from the dead.	Faith tried by the Book of Mormon. Children's tongues loosed. The dead raised. Baptism and Holy Ghost.
	They had all things common.	All things common.
27	Christ appeared the third time. The name of the church. The gospel of Christ.	Christ appeared third time. Moses's church.
28		Three Nephites tarry.
	A peculiar blessing on the twelve.	The twelve caught up. Change upon their bodies.
30	A great blessing upon the Gentiles.	

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
4 NEPHI		
	They had all things common.	Disciples raiseth dead. Zarahemla re-built. Other disciples ordained in their stead.
	They were all Nephites.	Nephi died; Amos kept the records in his stead.
	The Lamanites arose again.	Amos died and his son Amos (records).
	The three disciples cast into prison.	Prisons rent by the three.
	The Gadianton robbers again.	Secret combinations. Amaron hid records.
MORMON		
1	Amaron hid up the records. The three disciples taken from them.	Three disciples taken away. Mormon forbidden to preach.
	Their treasures become slippery.	
2		Mormon appointed leader. Samuel's prophecy fulfilled. Mormon makes a record. Lands divided.
3		The twelve shall judge.
4		Desolation taken. Women and children sacrificed. 647 Women and children sacrificed to idols.
	Mormon dug up the plates from the hill Shim.	Mormon took the records hid in Shim.
5		Mormon repented of his oath, and took command. Coming forth of records.
6	Mormon hid up the records in the hill Cumorah. The Nephites destroyed from off the land.	Records hid in Cumorah. 230,000 Nephites slain.
8		Shall not get gain by the plates. These things shall come forth out of the earth.
9		The state of the world. Miracles cease, unbelief. Disciples go into all the world and preach.
	The language of the book.	Language of the Book.
ETHER		
1		Twenty-four plates found. Jared cried unto the Lord.
2	Jared and his brother driven out.	Jared went down to the valey of Nimrod.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
		Deseret, honey-bee.
		Barges built.
	Restrictions of those who live on this land.	Decree of God, choice land.
		Free from bondage.
		Four years in tents at Moriancumer.
		Lord talked three hours.
	The barges built.	Barges, like a dish.
3	The sixteen stones were moulten.	8 vessels, 16 stones.
		Lord touched the stones.
		Finger of the Lord seen.
		Jared's brother saw the Lord.
	The Interpreters given to the brother of Jared.	Two stones given.
6		Stones sealed up.
		Went aboard of vessels.
		Furious wind blew.
		344 days' passage.
	They arrive to the promised land.	34 arrived on the promised land.
		Orihah anointed king.
7		King Shule taken captive.
		Shule's son slew Noah.
8		Jared carries his father away captive.
	The wickedness of the daughter of Jared.	The daughter of Jared danced.
9		Jared anointed king by the hand of wickedness.
		Jared murdered, and Akish reigned in his stead.
	The names of animals.	Names of animals.
	The poisenuous serpents.	Poisonous serpents.
10		Riplakish's cruel reign.
		Morianton anointed king.
		Poisonous' serpents destroyed.
11		Many wicked kings.
12	Moroni's discourse upon faith.	Moroni on faith.
		Miracles by faith.
	The mountain removed.	
13	The New Jerusalem spoken of.	Moroni saw Jesus.
		New Jerusalem spoken of.
		Ether cast out.
		Records finished in the cavity of a rock.
		Secret combinations.
		War in all the land.
14		King shared murdered by his High Priest, the High Priest was murdered by Lib.
		Lib slain by Coriantumr.

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C O N T E N T

BOOK/ CHAPTER	<i>References to Book of Mormon</i> (1835?)	<i>Index to Book of Mormon — 1st European</i> Edition (1841)
		Dead bodies cover the land and none to bury them.
15	The people of Jared destroyed.	2,000,000, of men slain. Hill Ramah. Cries rend the air. Slept on their swords. Coriantumr slew Shiz. Do fell to the earth. Records hid by Ether.
MORONI		
	2	Christ's words to the twelve.
	3	Manner of ordination.
	4	Order of sacrament.
	6	Order of baptism.
	7 Moroni's discourse upon faith, hope and charity.	Faith, hope, charity.
	8 Mormon's epistle to Moroni on baptism.	Baptism of little children.
	9 Mormon's second epistle.	Women fed on their husbands' flesh. Daughters murdered and eat. Sufferings of women and children. Cannot recommend them to God.
10	Moroni's exhortation.	Moroni to the Lamanites. 420 years since the Sign. Records sealed up (Moroni) Gifts of the spirit. God's word shall hiss forth.

Joseph Smith and Process Theology

Garland E. Tickemyer



In 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 Tickemyer, 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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The Emma Smith Lore Reconsidered

Linda King Newell



Several years ago an unsigned *Church News* editorial on “Two Great Women” praised Emma Hale and her mother-in-law, Lucy Mack Smith, for their loyalty to Joseph Smith: “They never hesitated to valiantly defend him, never recanted, never denied their testimonies of his work.” While somewhat overstating the case (Emma was “*always* by his side, *always* loving, and *forever* brave”), the editorial concluded with the accurate assessment that Emma “made an invaluable contribution to the coming forth of the Church in these last days.”¹

Excepting only a few paragraphs in a 1933 *Relief Society Magazine*,² this short (500-word) *Church News* essay marked the first time in nearly a century since Emma’s death that any article had appeared on her in an official Church periodical.

Yet even this generalized praise drew the ire of readers steeped in conventional lore on “the elect lady.” One reader went so far as to send in nineteen notecards of quotations dating from 1863 to 1955 which “documented” Emma as a selfish shrew, guilty of burning the revelation on plural marriage, attempting to poison Joseph (with supporting citations from Brigham Young), conspiring in Joseph’s death, usurping Church property, attempting to gain the leadership of the Church for herself, and, finally, failing to measure up to the valiant Mary Fielding.³

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¹ “Two Great Women,” *Church News*, 16 Sept. 1978, p. 16.

² “Emma Smith, The Prophet’s Wife,” *Relief Society Magazine* 20 (April 1933): 237–41.

³ Dennis “C” Davis to the First Presidency, 19 Sept. 1978, copy in possession of author used with permission of Davis. The historical quotations below are found in Orson Pratt, *The Deseret News Weekly*, 18 (20 Oct. 1869): 439; Brigham Young Address, 9 Aug. 1874,

These charges, of course, were not new. They have been quoted often, enhanced, elaborated upon, even intentionally fictionalized and then repeated as fact. Seldom if ever have readers traced these stories to their origins or asked the obvious questions that would place them in context. What were Emma's circumstances? In what setting and context was the statement made? Certainly it is relevant that the earliest cited sources date from a series of public and private outcries against Emma following the arrival in Utah of the first RLDS missionaries in September 1863. Is there other information that might add to our understanding? This essay will examine the popular myths describing Emma during that crucial decade of her life in Nauvoo, from 1840 to 1850 as a heritage of the early Utah period.

OPPOSITION TO PLURAL MARRIAGE

Emma's opposition to plural marriage is well known, as is a temporary embracing of it when she gave Joseph permission to marry at least four women of her own choosing.⁴ However, few know the circumstances in which Emma learned of plural marriage. Unlike Joseph's careful, usually private and intensive instructions to selected members of the Twelve and the women he took as wives, available evidence suggests that Emma first learned of Joseph's departure from monogamy in Kirtland when he took his first known plural wife, a young hired girl named Fanny Alger. William McLellin, then a member of the Twelve, reported that Emma missed Fanny Alger and Joseph one day and went to the barn where, peering through a crack in the door, she witnessed the "sealing."⁵ Apparently, she treated it as a one-time incident, but later in Nauvoo rumor and innuendo about such unconventional marriages began surfacing. In the spring of 1842, Emma was unaware that Joseph was taking plural wives. She first thought the stories came as a result of John C. Bennett's spiritual wifery practices, and went before the Relief Society to warn

The Deseret News Weekly 2 (2 Sept. 1875): 488; Joseph F. Smith to William F. McLellin, M.D., 6 Jan. 1880, Personal Letterbooks (Book 2), Historical Department Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City; hereafter LDS Church Archives; Brigham Young Conference Addresses, 7 Oct. 1863, 7 Oct. 1866, both Brigham Young Collection and LDS Church Archives; Charles Smith, Diary, 7 Oct. 1866, p. 155, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University; Charles L. Walker, Diary, 17 Dec. 1876, p. 31 and 12 Nov. 1897, p. 31, LDS Church Archives; *Juvenile Instructor* 23 (15 March 1888): 86, 5 (5 Feb. 1870): 21, 22; Benjamin F. Johnson, *My Life's Review* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1947), pp. 102, 107; Joseph F. Smith, "Comments of the Day," *The Contributor* 7: (March 1886): 238-39; Melvin J. Ballard, Address, *Conference Report*, 1 June 1919, pp. 69-70. For Brigham Young's attitude, see Valeen Tippetts Avery and Linda King Newell, "The Lion and the Lady: Brigham Young and Emma Smith," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 48 (Winter 1980).

⁴ Lucy Walker Kimball, in Joseph F. Smith, "40 Affidavits on Celestial Marriage," LDS Church Archives; Charles A. Shook, *The True Origin of Polygamy* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1914), p. 137. See also Emily Dow Partridge Young, "Incidents in the Early Life of Emily Partridge," typescript, University of Utah Marriott Library, Special Collections.

⁵ See William McLellin to Joseph Smith III, 10 Jan. 1861, and n.d. July 1872, RLDS Library Archives, Independence, Mo. See also Oliver Cowdery to Warren Cowdery, 21 Jan. 1838, Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California.

of “a great evil creeping into the church,” admonishing the women to “use every honorable means to combat it and protect the sanctity of their homes.”⁶ Only when someone told her that Joseph had married other women did she realize that she had been preaching against her own husband.⁷ That Emma was hurt and angry when she learned the truth is not surprising; that she was later condemned for those feelings is.

Given this context, even the impulsive act of pushing her friend and unexpected sister-wife, Eliza R. Snow, down a flight of stairs, might seem more understandable, especially when one remembers that Eliza had lived with Emma in Kirtland, taught her children, been her Relief Society secretary, accompanied her to see the governor of Illinois to plead for Joseph’s safety from the Missourians, acted as her personal scribe, and finally, when Eliza had no place else to go, had been invited by Emma to live in her home.⁸ Emma apparently discovered by chance that her husband and trusted friend had perpetrated what most women would regard as the ultimate deception. In that flash of sudden awareness, Emma would also have realized that the marriage had most likely been consummated. Emma, who was known by her friends and family as even-tempered and fair, would be characterized by future writers as being a shrew, primarily because of her predictable, human responses to unusually stressful circumstances.

Lucy Mack Smith, who lived either with or near Emma through most of the seventeen years of Emma and Joseph’s marriage, left a much different view. In the privacy of Emma’s home, Lucy had seen her daughter-in-law respond to a variety of situations and had admired her: “I have never seen a woman in my life, who would endure every species of fatigue and hardship, from month to month, and from year to year, with that unflinching courage, zeal, and patience, which she has ever done; for I know that which she has had to endure — she has been tossed upon the ocean of uncertainty — she has breasted the storms of persecution, and buffeted the rage of men and devils, which would have born down almost any other woman.”⁹

BURNING THE REVELATION

The summer of 1843 was an unsettling time for both Emma and Joseph. In July, he dictated the revelation on plural marriage, and Hyrum, confident he could win Emma’s acceptance of it, received only a tongue-lashing.¹⁰ Then, according to William Clayton, “two or three days after the revelation was

⁶ Minutes of the Nauvoo Female Relief Society, [date of quote?], Microfilm, Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives.

⁷ Joseph Smith III, *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration*, ed., Mary Audentia Smith Anderson (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1979), pp. 263–64.

⁸ See Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Linda King Newell, and Valeen Tippetts Avery, “Emma, Eliza, and the Stairs,” *BYU Studies* 20 (Winter 1980): 51–62.

⁹ Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith The Prophet and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), p. 169.

¹⁰ William Clayton statement, (*italics added*), *Historical Record*, 9 vols. (Salt Lake City: 1887), 6:226.

written Joseph related . . . that Emma had so teased and urgently entreated him for the privilege of destroying it, that he became so weary of her teasing, and to get rid of her annoyance, *he told her she might destroy it* and she had done so, but he had consented to her wish in this matter to pacify her, realizing that he knew the revelation perfectly and could rewrite it at any time if necessary.”¹¹ Isaac Skeen, editor of the *Saints Herald*, also wrote in 1860 that Joseph “caused the revelation on that subject to be burned.”¹² Other accounts involve Joseph even more directly in the destruction of this document. William McLellin visited Emma in 1847 and questioned her about the incident. In 1872, he wrote on the basis of that conversation that after Emma and Joseph discussed the document they retired for the night. Joseph “wished her to get up and burn the revelation. She refused to touch it even with tongues [tongs]. He rose from his bed and pulled open the fire with his fingers, and put the revealment in and burned it up.”¹³ Emma herself in an 1856 interview, said, “The statement that I burned the original of the copy Brigham Young claimed to have, is false, and made out of whole cloth, and not true in any particular.”¹⁴ But Emma’s oldest son pursued the question long after his mother’s death. His diary entry for 20 April 1885, reads: “Visited James Whitehead had chat with him. He says he saw the Rev. — about 1 page of foolscap paper. Clayton copied it and it was this copy that Mother burned.”¹⁵ Apparently the incident was later discussed in the larger Smith family, for Samuel Smith’s daughter wrote to Don Carlos Smith’s daughter: “I suppose you have heard that Aunt Emma burnt the revelation — which I suppose was so — I have heard my Aunt Lucy [Joseph’s sister] say that Emma would not touch it with her fingers but took the tongs to put it in the fire.”¹⁶

These accounts raise several questions. Did Joseph burn the plural marriage revelation or did Emma? Did Emma deny that she burned a piece of paper with the revelation on it or was she denying that the paper she burned did not contain an authentic revelation? One conclusion seems safe: If Emma destroyed the document, she did so with Joseph’s permission.

William Clayton’s Nauvoo diary entries in particular seem to portray Emma as an unreasonable, difficult woman, but between the lines we can also see the human struggle on all sides of complex issues. For example, when Emma returned from a business trip to St. Louis in early August, she discovered that Joseph had solicited support of the Nauvoo High Council for the revelation on plural marriage. William Clayton reported her reaction in his journal:

This A.M. Joseph told me that sin[c]e Emma came back from St. Louis, she had resisted the P[rinciple of plural marriage] in toto, and he had to tell her he would

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Isaac Sheen, “The Early Revelations” *True Latter Day Saints’ Herald*, 1 (March 1860): 64.

¹³ William E. McLellin to Joseph III, July 1872, RLDS Library Archives.

¹⁴ Edmund C. Briggs, “A Visit to Nauvoo in 1856,” *Journal of History* 9 (October 1916): 445–62.

¹⁵ Joseph III, Diary, 20 April 1885, RLDS Library Archives.

¹⁶ Mary Bailey Smith Norman to Ina Coolbrith, 27 March 1908, RLDS Library Archives.

relinquish all for her sake. She [had] said she would give him E[liza] and E[mily] P[artridge] but he knew if he took them she would pitch on him, & obtain a divorce & leave him. He however told me he should not relinquish anything.¹⁷

A few days after hearing that Joseph would “relinquish all,” Emma found two letters in his pocket from Eliza R. Snow, then living at the Morley Settlement. Emma, seeming “vexed and angry,” asked William if he had delivered the letters to Joseph. Clayton denied it.¹⁸ His report of the incident may have been colored by his own apprehensions.

Two days later, William Clayton again reported Emma in another situation, where she appears unreasonable and petty. The 23 August entry reads:

Prest J. told me that he had difficulty with E. yesterday. She rode up to Woodworths with him & caled while he came to the Temple. When he returned she was demanding the gold watch of F. he reproved her for her evil treatment. On their return home she abused him much & also when he got home. he had to use harsh measures to put a stop to her abuse but finally succeeded.¹⁹

William Clayton did not include the full details. Still smarting from her discovery of Eliza’s letters, Emma went for a short carriage ride with Joseph. He attended to some business at the temple while she called on the Lucian Woodworth family. Emma was unaware that the Woodworth’s sixteen-year-old daughter, Flora, had been Joseph’s plural wife since spring.²⁰ What probably began as a casual social visit exploded when Emma discovered that Joseph had given Flora a gold watch. The implications of such a gift were obvious since he had also given one to Eliza.²¹ Joseph returned as Emma “was demanding the gold watch” from Flora and reprimanded her. Once in the carriage, however, Emma undoubtedly vented her own anger at discovering yet another unsettling situation, continuing what William Clayton called “her abuse” until Joseph must have lost his temper and employed “harsh measures” to stop Emma.

THE POISONING

Joseph won a respite with Emma over plural marriage when she received the Church’s highest ordinance, the second anointing, on or shortly before 28 September 1843. She had received her endowment and been sealed to Joseph for eternity the previous spring.²² But by November marauders on the outskirts of the city had begun looting, burning, and whipping. Emma and

¹⁷ William Clayton, *Diary*, excerpts in possession of author, 16 Aug. 1843. Used with permission of Andrew F. Ehat.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 21 Aug. 1843.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 23 Aug. 1843.

²⁰ *Historical Record*, 6:225.

²¹ The watch Joseph gave Eliza is in possession of the LDS Church. For more information on Eliza’s watch, see Mary Belnap Lowe, statement, Ogden, Utah, 12 May 1841, LDS Church Archives.

²² See Andrew F. Ehat, “Joseph Smith’s Introduction of Temple Ordinances and the 1844 Mormon Succession Question,” M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1982, pp. 61–63, 94, 95.

Joseph's relationship again showed signs of intense stress and they both suffered from ill health. In an 1866 conference address, Brigham Young told this story:

[Joseph] called his wife Emma into a secret council, and there he told her . . . of the time she undertook to poison him, and he told her that she was a child of hell, and literally the most wicked woman on this earth, that there was not one more wicked than she. He told her where she got the poison, and how she put it in a cup of coffee. . . . When it entered his stomach he went to the door and threw it off.²³

The story seems bizarre. How could Joseph think such a thing? But if he said it, the reasoning goes, it must be true. How could Emma have done such a thing? The evidence strongly suggests that Joseph indeed made the accusation but that he was wrong in concluding that Emma tried to poison him. The episode needs a larger context. Joseph's diary entry of 5 November 1843, describes becoming suddenly ill while eating dinner and vomiting so violently that he dislocated his jaw and "raised fresh blood." He believed he had been poisoned, but recovered enough to attend a "prayer meeting in the hall over the store" that evening.²⁴ This was a meeting of the "quorum of the anointed" — those who had received their endowments — and most likely the "secret council" in which, according to Brigham, Joseph accused Emma of trying to poison him. Joseph's diary records that he and Emma did not dress for the prayer circle that night. Significantly, members did not customarily participate in the prayer circle if they had hard feelings against anyone else in the group.

Joseph would subsequently experience periodic bouts of sudden nausea and vomiting. Many ailments could cause such symptoms, including acute indigestion, food poisoning, ulcers, gallstones, but only poisoning, bleeding ulcers, or (rarely) food poisoning would have led to such an acute episode. Moreover, the 1844 poisons strong enough to cause hemorrhaging in the stomach as rapidly after ingestion as Joseph's diary indicates, would not leave the victim well enough to attend a meeting just a few hours later.²⁵

According to Joseph's diary, "domestic concerns" kept him busy the next morning.²⁶ Perhaps Emma was able to convince her husband that she had not attempted to poison him. The previous evening, according to Brigham, Emma had cried when Joseph lashed out at her. Tears rather than an open defense are in keeping with at least one other occasion when she endured a public rebuke from Joseph.²⁷ When Joseph was suffering from violent vomiting the next month, he reported that Emma "waited on me, assisted by my scribe,

²³ Young, conference address, 7 Oct. 1866.

²⁴ Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978), 6:25.

²⁵ "Poisons and Poisoning Appendix," *Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary*, 12th ed., rev. and ed. by Clayton L. Thomas (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Co., 1973), pp. 108–28. Valeen Tippetts Avery also interviewed George Yard, M.D., and Corwin DeMarse, M.D., of Flagstaff, Arizona, concerning Joseph's symptoms during this time. Although both physicians said they could not give an absolute diagnosis 140 years after the patient's death, ulcers were the most likely diagnosis considering Joseph's stress during this period.

²⁶ *History of the Church*, 6:66.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 2:304.

Willard Richards, and his brother Levi, who administered some herbs and mild drinks. I was never prostrated so low, in so short a time, before; by evening was considerably better.”²⁸

If Emma had convinced Joseph of her innocence in the earlier incident, Joseph apparently did not tell the others at the meeting and Emma remained forever guilty in their minds. Aroet Hale, who heard the accusations later in Utah, wrote in her defense:

a grate meny of the Saints in these Days think that the Prophet wife Emma Hale Smith was a bad Woman that she tried to Poison the Prophet. Their never was a more Dutiful woman than Emma Smith to her husband till after the Prophet had made publick the revelation on Seelestial marriage. He begun to take to himselve Other Wives. This proved a grate trial to her. How meny women is there in Our Day after 30 or 40 years . . . that it Dose not try to the Hartsbare. The prophet Joseph Said that She was a good woman. . . . Emma wood & did go before Judges Rulers and Govenors to Plead for her Husband. She would have Lade her life down for him.²⁹

COMPLICITY IN JOSEPH'S DEATH

Accusations that Emma was responsible for Joseph's return from safety in Iowa and hence for his death at Carthage are also better evaluated in the context of June 1844 rather than of the Utah period. When Joseph crossed the Mississippi River to seek safety the night of Saturday, 22 June — five days before his death — he told Stephen Markham to send his and Hyrum's horses across the river at eight o'clock the next (Sunday) morning.³⁰ He later told Porter Rockwell, who had rowed him across the river, to take the horses across Sunday *evening*. Rockwell returned to Nauvoo early Sunday morning and reached Emma's first. He delivered a letter to her from Joseph and presumably told her about Joseph's instructions to obtain the horses that evening.³¹

When Markham appeared at the Mansion at nine *A.M.* (an hour late) he found the barn door locked. Emma, who was unaware of Joseph's contradictory instructions concerning the horses, had good reason for safeguarding them: the night before, just after Joseph left, a posse had ridden into Nauvoo looking for him, promising to return the next day.³² When she would not give Markham the key, he threatened to chop down the door with an ax. Emma told him to carry out the rest of Joseph's orders and “rest contented that they [would] get the horses.”³³

Stephen Markham recalled leaving Emma at the Mansion and walking toward the center of town where he found Alpheus Cutler, Reynolds Cahoon, Hiram Kimball, and several others who told Markham they believed Joseph should return to stand trial. Fearful that the mobs would “break up the place

²⁸ Ibid., 6:16 and Joseph Smith Journal, 15 Dec. 1843. Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives.

²⁹ Aroet Lucius Hale, Journal, p. 3, LDS Church Archives.

³⁰ Stephen Markham to Wilford Woodruff, 20 June 1856, LDS Church Archives.

³¹ *History of the Church*, 6:548.

³² *History of the Church*, 6:548–49.

³³ Stephen Markham to Wilford Woodruff, 20 June 1856.

and lessen the value of property [and] also ruin a number of men" if Joseph left, they tried to persuade Markham to be part of a committee to invite Joseph to come back. Markham refused and departed.³⁴

The group then broke up and two of the more determined, Reynolds Cahoon and Hiram Kimball, headed toward the Mansion House, en route meeting Wandle Mace and his brother. Kimball and Cahoon were "very much excited, and thought it was absolutely necessary that Joseph should return," Mace related in his journal. The Mace brothers watched them stop outside Emma's gate, then lean on the fence, absorbed in deep conversation. "We . . . both felt the impression that they were going to persuade Sister Emma, Joseph's wife, to write to him and prevail on him to return, this feeling came upon us so forcibly, we were very uneasy."³⁵

James W. Woods, Joseph's trusted attorney, had arrived earlier with a pledge from Governor Ford for Joseph's safety and assurance of a fair trial.³⁶ Emma knew Joseph was in danger, but he had always surmounted threatening obstacles before. In this climate of mixed concern, she heard Cahoon and Kimball out, then penned a letter to Joseph. She asked her nephew, Lorenzo Wasson, to go with the two men to find Porter Rockwell, who would take them across the river immediately.

That afternoon, Joseph read the letter, then handed it to his brother Hyrum. "I know my own business," he said firmly.

Reynolds Cahoon snapped back in anger, "You always said if the church would stick to you, you would stick to the church, now trouble comes and you are the first to run." Hiram Kimball chimed in and the two men called Joseph a coward, reminding him that if mobs destroyed their property, they would all be homeless.³⁷

Joseph turned first to Rockwell, then to his brother Hyrum, "What shall we do?"

³⁴ Ibid., Henry G. Sherwood, who was with Alpheus Cutler on that morning, said Emma wanted him and Cutler to bring Joseph back to Nauvoo, but he refused. Henry G. Sherwood statement, Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives. Markham, on the other hand, said the group of men, Cutler included, solicited *his* help in getting Joseph to come back to Nauvoo. Two of the group, Kimball and Cahoon, would later answer to Brigham Young for their part in Joseph's surrender at Carthage, and apparently said Emma made them do it. Sherwood may have taken a similar position and signed his own statement against Emma to vindicate himself. The direct quotations are taken from Markham's statement.

Cutler and Cahoon's overriding interest in property is corroborated by a statement attributed to Joseph in the *History of the Church* 6:42: "Alpheus Cutler and Reynolds Cahoon are so anxious to get property, they will all flat out as soon as the Temple is completed and the faith of the Saints ceases from them &c." *History of the Church* 6:238 relates a conflict between Joseph and Hiram over ownership of the wharfs where the riverboats docked.

³⁵ Journal of Wandle Mace, LDS Church Archives; typescript BYU.

³⁶ William Holmes Walker, *The Life Incidents and Travels of Elder William Holmes Walker*, published by Elizabeth Jane Walker Peipgrass, (n.p.) 1943.

³⁷ The *History of the Church*, 6:549 says Wasson joined in the name-calling with Cahoon and Kimball. Joseph's reliance on him in the following days and other evidence suggests that Wasson was implicated falsely in this incident, perhaps because he was Emma's trusted relative. He had no property in jeopardy for he owned only a small lot — 6×22 rods — that he had purchased from Brigham Young earlier that year.

"Let's go back and give ourselves up, and see the thing out." Hyrum may have had an added incentive — his daughter was to be married that night, and he wanted to perform the ceremony.

Joseph replied, "If you go back I will go with you, but we shall be butchered."³⁸

Most historians have assumed Emma's letter caused Joseph to return to Nauvoo, yet no one but Joseph and Hyrum seemed to have read the letter. No account quotes it, even in part. William Clayton's diary says only: "Emma sent messengers over the river to Joseph & informed him what they intended to do and urged him to give himself up inasmuch as the Gov. had offered him protection."³⁹ In crises, Emma typically informed Joseph of circumstances, sent him the opinions of others, and added her own assessment of the situation. She probably did so now. But whatever she told him, it was not her letter alone that changed his course. Hyrum Smith's desire to be at home coupled with Cahoon and Kimball's name-calling were also influential, and it must not be overlooked that Joseph himself made the final decision. Brigham Young's opinion was that Joseph had lost the spirit of the Lord and therefore returned to his death.⁴⁰

Obviously, Emma had not expected him to return for she later told a friend, "When he came back I felt the worst I ever did in my life, and from that time I looked for him to be killed."⁴¹

Although Joseph's return deepened Emma's anxiety, others in the city interpreted it differently. Vilate Kimball wrote to Heber, "Joseph went over the river out of the United States, and composed his mind, and got the will of the Lord concerning him, and that was, that he should return and give himself up for trial. . . . My heart said Lord bless those Dear men, and presurve them from those that thirst for their blood."⁴²

THE STRUGGLE FOR LEADERSHIP

After Joseph's murder, Sidney Rigdon claimed authority to act as "guardian" of the Church while Joseph III was still young. Some writers have

³⁸ *History of the Church*, 6:549–50.

³⁹ James B. Allen notes on the diary of William Clayton, 23 June 1844, used by permission.

⁴⁰ Brigham Young addressed a special meeting in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on 21 March 1858, saying: "If Joseph Smith, jun., the Prophet, had followed the Spirit of revelation in him he never would have gone to Carthage . . . and never for one moment did he say that he had one particle of light in him after he started back from Montrose to give himself up in Nauvoo. This he did through the persuasion of others," (Salt Lake City, 1858), pp. 3–4, pamphlet in Frederick Kesler Collection, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, as quoted in D. Michael Quinn, "Joseph Smith III's 1844 Blessing and the Mormons of Utah," *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT* 15 (Summer 1982): 77. See also A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson, *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, 2 vols. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1980), 1:25.

⁴¹ Edmund C. Briggs, "Visit to Nauvoo in 1856," *Journal of History* 9 (Oct. 1916): 453–54, RLDS Library Archives.

⁴² Vilate Kimball to Heber Kimball. The entire letter was written over a period of three days: 9, 16, and 24 June 1844, LDS Church Archives.

assumed that Emma encouraged this plan. There is little evidence to support that assumption. In the spring of 1845 she told James Monroe, a young man employed by her to run a school for children, that she did not believe that Sidney Rigdon was the one to lead the Church.⁴³ Nor is there evidence that Emma raised her sons to become leaders of any church. That view, created by the RLDS Church, is one which LDS members have helped perpetuate. As Edmund C. Briggs recalls, Emma said in 1856, "I have always avoided talking to my children about having anything to do in the church, for I have suffered so much I have dreaded to have them take any part in it. . . . But I have always believed that if God wanted them to do anything in the church, the One who called their father would make it known to them, and it was not necessary for me to talk to them about it."⁴⁴

EMMA AND MARY FIELDING

The two years following Joseph's death were emotionally taxing and difficult for Emma. The same can be said, of course, of Hyrum's wife, Mary Fielding Smith.

Some writers have suggested that Emma suffered a mental breakdown at the time of Joseph's death and was a changed person thereafter or that she became a "hollow shell."⁴⁵ No one has suggested that Mary went into "deep depression" or had a mental breakdown, yet the two women actually reacted similarly. Dr. B. W. Richmond, a paying guest at the Mansion House at the time of Joseph and Hyrum's death, left a moving account of the grief-stricken women viewing the bodies of their dead husbands which shows them both in almost uncontrolled anguish.⁴⁶ Emma fainted and Mary did not, but Emma was pregnant. In the months that followed, the widows greeted friends and other mourners in much the same way. Sometimes they gave close friends a lock of hair or a cane made from the oak coffins used to carry the brothers' bodies from Carthage to Nauvoo.

Mary's courage and faith are well chronicled in Mormon history, and rightly so, but two crucial differences set Emma apart from Mary as a widow, which make comparisons of the two women inappropriate. First, Emma's public position was inescapable. Her personal and financial affairs were intertwined with those of the Church in ways that Mary's were not. Second, Emma stood unalterably opposed to plural marriage. Mary had not only approved when Hyrum married her widowed sister, Mercy Fielding Thompson, and other wives, but she, herself, would soon become a plural wife of Heber C.

⁴³ James Monroe, Diary, Yale University, microfilm copy, Utah State Historical Society, (24 April 1845).

⁴⁴ "A Visit to Nauvoo," p. 453.

⁴⁵ Erwin E. Wirkus, *Judge Me Dear Reader* (Idaho Falls: Erwin E. Wirkus, 1978), p. 32-33; Keith Terry and Ann Terry, *Emma: The Dramatic Biography of Emma Smith* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Butterfly Publishing Inc., 1979), p. 121.

⁴⁶ B. W. Richmond, in "The Prophet's Death!" *Deseret News*, 27 Nov. 1875, reprinted from the *Chicago Times*.

Kimball. These factors determined the separate paths the two women would follow.

THE STRUGGLE OVER CHURCH PROPERTY

Joseph left no will. When the Saints had first arrived in Illinois the First Presidency, Joseph, Hyrum, and Sidney Rigdon, used their personal credit to buy land on which Church members would dwell. Joseph also involved himself in other partnerships and business opportunities such as stores and steamboats. In the winter of 1840–41, he sought to separate his personal property and the Church's and was consequently elected sole trustee-in-trust for the Church. At that time the Twelve approved of Joseph's attempts to provide an inheritance for his family as well as "his father's household," and so he deeded some land to Emma, the children, and others.⁴⁷

In spite of Joseph's desire to provide security for his family, as Emma knew, Nauvoo lands had been purchased on long-term credit and the debts were still outstanding when her husband was killed. In 1866 Brigham Young, reflecting back on this time, responded to Emma's son's accusations against him and the Twelve:

Alexander [Smith] stated when here, that the Twelve robbed his mother of 'the last second shirt to her back.' Now, I want to tell this congregation what we did for his mother. . . . Instead of the Twelve robbing her she goes and takes these [rings and possibly a portrait of Hyrum] from her sisters. She was not satisfied yet. . . . She complained about her poor, little fatherless children, and she kept up this whine until she got the farms she wanted, and besides these farms she owned city property worth fifty thousand dollars. . . . We gave her all she asked for.⁴⁸

The family's cash reserves had been so low before his death that Joseph had borrowed \$300 and given Emma and Mary Fielding each \$50.⁴⁹ Five days after his death, Emma gathered together \$300 to pay the debt, probably leaving her with very little operating money.⁵⁰ On the Fourth of July, William Clayton and Joseph's lawyer, James W. Woods, whom Emma had retained after her husband's death, met at Emma's home and examined Joseph's finances. Afterwards Clayton acknowledged that Emma's situation was indeed bleak. Most of the assets were in Joseph's name as trustee-in-trust; the liabilities, however, were in his name as private citizen.⁵¹ By Joseph's own account, he still owed approximately \$70,000 when he and Hyrum were murdered. In 1984 dollars the debt would be well over \$500,000. Because the

⁴⁷ Dallin H. Oaks and Joseph I. Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process: In the Wake of the Steamship *Nauvoo*," *BYU Law Review*, 1976, No. 3, pp. 750–66, reprinted in *BYU Studies* 19 (Winter 1979): 167–99.

⁴⁸ Young, conference address, 7 Oct. 1866.

⁴⁹ Statement of John A. Wolf, 22 June 1844, 2 July 1844, Wilford Wood Collection, Microfilm Reel 7, LDS Church Archives.

⁵⁰ Emma clearly did not want further debts adding to her financial burden. Willard Richards had recovered \$25 of the \$100 Joseph took to Carthage, and he paid Emma about half of that. Mary returned the \$50 Joseph had given to her, which helped Emma pay John A. Wolf, the man from whom Joseph had borrowed the \$300.

⁵¹ William Clayton, *Diary*, excerpts, 4 July 1844.

courts granted Hyrum bankruptcy a year and a half earlier, Mary was relatively unencumbered; but Emma's legacy was a debt that would plague her for years.⁵²

Three weeks after Joseph's death, the court appointed Joseph W. Coolidge to administer the estate. His settlement on behalf of Emma and her children was less than generous. She got her "household goods, two horses, two cows, her spinning wheels and one hundred and twenty-four dollars a year" for the support of her family.⁵³

Emma used a letter Joseph had written to her from the Iowa side of the river on 23 June as a guide in pursuing her claims with the Twelve, who had possession of Joseph's papers — both business and private. In that letter Joseph told Emma, "You may sell the Quincy Property—or any property that belongs to me . . . for your support and children & mother."⁵⁴ Emma pushed for the deed to the Quincy property, which was also known as the Cleveland farm. Brigham later said she offered to trade the Bible containing Joseph's "new translation" for the farm. "She got the deed," he said, but when Willard Richards asked her for the Bible, she told him "she was not ready to give [it] up yet."⁵⁵ Brigham did not mention — nor did anyone else — his refusal to let Emma's lawyer examine the paper concerning Joseph's estate three days *before* Richards asked for the new translation.⁵⁶ Her failure to make the trade must be understood in this context. She also felt a special "guardianship" over the Bible, for "it had been placed in her charge."⁵⁷

In addition to the farms the Twelve deeded to Emma, Brigham claimed she "owned city property worth fifty thousand dollars." This apparently refers to the Hugh White purchase which Joseph had deeded to her before his death; but a review of land sales records of Nauvoo before the martyrdom indicate that most of that land had already been sold before Joseph's death and Brigham's estimation of the remainder of Emma's property was inflated far beyond its real value even at 1844–45 prices.⁵⁸ Of course, Brigham's judgments about Emma's wealth were made from the perspective of securing equity the Church so desperately needed in the move West. In fact, by the time Emma paid her taxes in 1847, her land was worth only slightly over eight thousand dollars. Additionally, she owned \$650 worth of personal property and five wells valued together at \$200.⁵⁹ Joseph's estate, however, was not settled in the courts until 1850–52.

⁵² For a list of the debts and a full discussion of the bankruptcy case, see Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and the Legal Process," pp. 750–67.

⁵³ Joseph Smith III, *Joseph Smith III*, pp. 86–87.

⁵⁴ Joseph Smith, Jr. to Emma Smith, 23 June 1844, original in RLDS Library Archives.

⁵⁵ Brigham Young Address, 1 April 1867, Liverpool, England. See also his conference address, 7 Oct. 1866.

⁵⁶ William Clayton, *Diary*, excerpts, 15 Aug. 1844.

⁵⁷ Joseph Smith III, *Joseph Smith III*, p. 86; Emma Smith to Joseph Smith III, 2 Feb. 1866 [1867], RLDS Library Archives.

⁵⁸ See Nauvoo Land Records, Nauvoo Restoration Papers, LDS Church Archives.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* See also 1847 and 1849 tax receipts, Lewis Bidamon Collection, RLDS Library Archives.

On 9 August 1850, the new United States Attorney in Illinois filed a complaint to recover a debt Joseph Smith owed from the 1840 purchase of the steamship *Nauvoo*. The judge upheld the Illinois law that no church could legally hold more than ten acres of property, but he also ruled that all the property which exceeded the allotted ten acres that Joseph held either personally or as trustee-in-trust after 1842 must be sold to pay the creditors. This included all the other property Joseph had conveyed to Emma or the children after that time.⁶⁰

As surviving spouse, Emma was entitled to a one-third dower interest in what her husband owned, and this took precedence over other claims. But because of Emma's age, the court valued her widow's rights at only one-sixth of Joseph's estate. The court, however, did exempt from the sales the Mansion House, the Homestead, and the Nauvoo House.

The sale proceeds totaled \$11,148.35. The United States Government received \$7,870.23, which was full payment for the steamship debt plus court costs and interest. An additional \$1,468.71 apparently went to pay legal fees. The widow's share of Joseph's estate, therefore, was a mere \$1,809.41. The rest of the creditors, with one exception, got nothing. Phineas Kimball, land speculator and brother to Hiram Kimball filed another state-court judgment against the estate in March 1852 for \$500. On 5 June he received \$3,000 from a judicial sale of the same property the court had earlier exempted.⁶¹ Thus, Emma had to use the dower money plus over \$1,000 more to buy back the Mansion House, the Homestead, the Nauvoo House, and the farm. Acting in her behalf at the federal sale, her lawyer, George Edmunds, Jr., had purchased another piece of land for \$255. Kimball got the state court to agree to resell that property, and Edmunds purchased it a second time for Emma, paying seven hundred dollars.⁶²

Brigham Young probably never fully realized Emma's financial plight, the final outcome of Joseph's estate, or its effect on her. Instead he discoursed publicly on Emma's wealth, giving the impression that she had usurped most of it from the Church. But while the Church did not gain anything from the final settlement of Joseph's estate, even the property Brigham thought he and the trustees had given Emma had to be repurchased with the money she received from the court. Both Emma and the Church trustees had sold lands between 1844 and 1848 with most of those sales taking place during, and shortly after, the Mormon exodus from Nauvoo. In 1847, Emma sold approximately \$2,600

⁶⁰ By the end of 1849, thirty-one creditors had filed claims totaling \$25,023.45 against the estate. The administrators of the estate had earlier paid approximately \$1,000 for additional small claims and funeral costs. Four claimants asked for \$21,500 or 82 percent of the total. They were Phineas Kimball, who had notes from Joseph amounting to about \$2,800; Halstead Haines and Co. for a debt left over from the Kirtland days totaling \$7,349; Almon Babbitt acting in behalf of the Lawrence sisters' estate, \$4,033.87; and the United States Government which asked for \$5,184.31 for the boat debt. See Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," p. 769.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 768–69, 778–80, and notes. See also Record of the United States Circuit Court for the District of Illinois, No. 1603, 18 June 1841 through 17 July 1852, Federal Records Center, Chicago, Ill., copy in the BYU Archives, Mss/SC 174.

⁶² Record of United States Circuit Court.

worth of property. The trustees for the Church sold considerably more.⁶³ When much of this same property fell under the jurisdiction of the court sales, no Church trustees remained in Nauvoo to witness the frustration of the people who had bought the land in good faith and found they no longer had title to it. But Emma was there, and it was a difficult time for her when innocent people lost their property. Many of the new citizens had become her friends.

Emma spent her remaining years far removed from the associates who had helped shape the events of that first decade of the Nauvoo period. Like those around her, she did not always react rationally nor did she always make decisions in those trying years that others would have wished her to make. She alienated some of her friends and they similarly alienated her. Emily Partridge no doubt expressed the sentiments of many who knew Emma when she wrote, "I hope the Lord will be merciful to her, and I believe he will. It is an awful thought to contemplate the misery of a human being. If the Lord will, my heart says let Emma come up and stand in her place. Perhaps she has done no worse than any of us would have done in her place. Let the Lord be the judge."⁶⁴

⁶³ Oaks and Bentley, "Joseph Smith and Legal Process," pp. 780–81; see also Nauvoo land records, Nauvoo Restoration Papers.

⁶⁴ Emily Dow Partridge Young, "Incidents in the Early Life of Emily Partridge," typescript, University of Utah Marriott Library, Special Collections.

Emma Smith Through Her Writings

Valeen Tippetts Avery



Emma Hale Smith's adult life spanned more than a half century from the 1820s to 1879. During this period the social and political institutions that would stamp the developing nation with a distinctively American character became either codified by law, accepted by custom, or imposed by the upheaval of events such as the Civil War, the settling of the American West, and the emerging of a diverse and complex national character. Many of these changes affected the social and legal status of women (the first Seneca Falls conference was in 1848 when Emma was forty-four), but notions of correct behavior for women were both formally and informally accepted by church members and described in manuals and pronouncements of the LDS and RLDS churches. These conventions provided a ready-made set of labels when it came to evaluating her. By focusing on the accepted role of Victorian women as repositories of all virtue and particularly as guardians of sexual morality, the Reorganized Church assigned her a role as the embodiment of female religious righteousness. But women were also expected to be true and constant followers of male leadership in the Mormon Church and Emma's refusal to follow Brigham Young to the West made her an example of perfidy.

Perhaps the time for judging her in these extreme contexts is past. The angry pronouncements of the 1860s and 1870s can be laid to rest; the defensive postures of the post-polygamy era from the turn of the century through the Second World War sound stilted; the reactionary conservatism of the 1950s belongs to a generation now fading. With much less rancor, we can listen to and learn from Emma Smith's own words as she addressed the issues that confronted her and thus reveal much about the dimensions of her personality.

In 1869, for example, ten years before her death, Emma wrote to her son, Joseph Smith III, apparently in the context of the granting and exercise of suffrage, the excitement surrounding the reform movement, and the public

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speaking of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Anna Howard Shaw: "I am not one of those strong-minded [women]. I have always found enough to do to fill up all my time in doing just what was very plainly and positively my duty without clamoring for some unenjoyed privilege which if granted would be decidedly a damage to me and mine."¹ The connotation of "strong-minded" to Emma was negative; but her self-assessment reflects her cultural view of women's place. Emma was strong and her strength came from two main sources, both documented in her own words: her ability to love, and her faith in God. In the course of illustrating these character traits, other delightful aspects of her attitude and personality come to the fore in her letters.

Emma was in love with Joseph Smith and she developed many roles in her relationship with him. In addition to being his wife, she was also his confidante and partner in business, his bill collector, his legal advisor, his intercessor in troubles with the law, his doctor, his nurse, and his conscience. But first and foremost she loved him. On 25 April 1837, she wrote from Kirtland, Ohio, to Joseph who was hiding from his enemies. "Dear Husband, Your letter was welcomed both by friends and foes, we were glad enough to hear that you was well. . . . I cannot tell you my feelings when I found I could not see you before you left, yet I expect you can realize them, the children feel very anxious about you because they don't know where you have gone. . . . I pray that God will keep you in purity and safety till we all meet again."²

A week later Emma wrote again, "Ever affectionate husband, myself and the children are well," but she worried about the health of her little boys and feared they would catch the measles from a young man she was harboring in her house. "I wish it could be possible for you to be at home when they are sick, you must remember them all for they all remember you and I could hardly pacify Julia and Joseph when they found out you was not coming home soon. . . . adieu my Dear — Joseph."³

Joseph returned home safely, but the Mormons were soon forced from the area. In Missouri, Joseph suffered in Liberty Jail, while Emma and the children fled east over the icy winter roads to cross the Mississippi River on foot. From Quincy, Illinois, Emma wrote eloquently to Joseph:

Dear Husband

Having an opportunity to send by a friend I make an attempt to write, but I shall not attempt to write my feelings altogether, for the situation in which you are, the walls, bars, and bolts, rolling rivers, running streams, rising hills, sinking vallies and spreading prairies that separate us, and the cruel injustice that first cast you into prison and still holds you there, with many other considerations, places my feelings far beyond description. Was it not for conscious innocence, and the direct interposition of divine mercy, I am very sure I never should have been able to have endured the scenes of suffering that I have passed through. . . . but I still live and am yet willing to suffer more if it is the will of kind Heaven, that I should for your sake. . . . No one but God,

¹ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 1 Aug. 1869, RLDS Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

² Emma Smith to Joseph Smith, 25 April 1837, Historical Department Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah: hereafter LDS Archives.

³ Emma Smith to Joseph Smith, 3 May 1837, LDS Archives.

knows the reflections of my mind and the feelings of my heart when I left our house and home, and almost all of everything that we possessed excepting our little children, and took my journey out of the State of Missouri, leaving you shut up in that lonesome prison. But the reflection is more than human nature ought to bear, and if God does not record our sufferings and avenge our wrongs on them that are guilty, I shall be sadly mistaken.⁴

Joseph survived the winter in jail, arrived in Illinois in the spring of 1839, and subsequently traveled to Washington where he negotiated fruitlessly with President Martin Van Buren for compensation. Emma regretfully concluded a lengthy letter: "I must reserve my better feeling until I have a better opportunity to express them."⁵

Two years before Joseph's death Emma wrote in 1842, answering his request to leave Nauvoo and go north with him to escape the charges arising from the shooting of Missouri Governor Lilburn Boggs.

Dear Husband: — I am ready to go with you if you are obliged to leave and Hyrum says he will go with me. I shall make the best arrangements I can and be as well prepared as possible. But still, I feel good confidence that you can be protected without leaving this country. . . . If it were pleasant weather I should contrive to see you this evening, but I dare not run too much of a risk, on account of so many going to see you. . . . Yours affectionately forever, Emma Smith.⁶

No later letters from Emma to Joseph survive but Joseph's letters, including one written on the day he was murdered, continued to reflect the couple's affection for each other.

While Emma's children were small they received excellent care and that same concern was extended to them as adults. Concerned over her youngest son, David, she wrote to her eldest son, Joseph:

As for David, I am as much at a loss what advice to give as you can possibly be, and I shall submit the matter to yourself and him. Your letter speaks of his being a teacher. I would ask of what, of music or painting or both? I would like to have him know something about legal lore, as you call it, if he could obtain it without too much sacrifice of other things. I believe a little knowledge of common law helps a man sometimes to keep out of the limbos [doubtful]. I know very well that if your Father had been a little acquainted with the laws of the country he might have avoided a great deal of trouble. and yet I have a horror of one of my children being entirely dependent upon being a lawyer for a living. But let you and him decide as best you can and then leave it to his steady and faithful perseverance and the kind blessing of our Heavenly father and I think it will be all right in the end.⁷

Emma, at sixty-three, commented:

If there is any thing in this world that I am or ever was proud of it is the honor and integrity of my children but I dare not allow myself to be proud, as I believe that pride is one of the sins so often reproved in the good book. So I am enjoying the better spirit, and that is to be truly and sincerely thankful and in humility give God

⁴ Emma Smith to Joseph Smith, 9 March 1839, LDS Archives.

⁵ Emma Smith to Joseph Smith, 6 Dec. 1839, LDS Archives.

⁶ In Preston Nibley, *Joseph Smith, The Prophet* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Deseret News Press, 1944), p. 418.

⁷ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 11 Oct. 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

the glory, not trying to take in comparing my sons with others, and them too that has had fathers of their own to guard them. . . . God bless you all is the prayer of your mother.⁸

Repeatedly Emma's letters end with such phrases as "God bless my children," and "May heaven's blessing be with you." It was this ability to create a mutual affection and reciprocal concern that provided strength in Emma's life.

Another love also sustained Emma. In 1847 a newcomer to Nauvoo who supported the Mormon cause courted Emma. She married Lewis Bidamon on 23 December 1847 when she was forty-three. Many Mormons were shocked that Emma did not live out her life as a lonely sentinel to Joseph Smith, but Emma undoubtedly married Lewis Bidamon for the same reason she married Joseph: she loved him. Bidamon spent a brief period in the gold fields of California, and her letters from that period cannot be interpreted as other than tender:

My dear Lewis I have scarcely enjoyed any good things since you left home, in consequence of the constant terrifying apprehension that you might be suffering for the most common comforts of life. I never have been weary without thinking that you might be much more so. I never have felt the want of food without fear that you might be almost, or quite starving, and I have never been thirsty without feeling my heart sicken with the reflection that perhaps you were sinking, faint, and famished for want of that reviving draught that I could obtain so easy, and use so freely, and I very much feared that the heat of the sun on those burning plains might seriously affect you, but now those anxieties are over, and some may think that I might be content, but I am not, neither can I be untill you are within my grasp, then, and not till then shall I be free from fears for your safety, and anxieties for your welfare. . . . but *when* O! *when* can I begin to think about your coming home. . . . No more at present only that I am ever yours wholly.⁹

Lewis returned in the early 1850s. Their marriage survived the birth of Lewis's illegitimate son in 1864 and lasted thirty-two years until Emma's death in 1879.

Emma was certainly not incapable of anger or bitterness, but in the sum of her extant writings she spoke harshly about only one person, Brigham Young. Then she was as angrily irrational about Brigham and his motives as he was about her. They had been friends until just before Joseph Smith's death in 1844. Joseph himself had injected tension by criticizing Emma in church councils and in private conversations for her opposition to plural marriage. The attempts to settle Joseph's tangled estate made Brigham and Emma adversaries as they each tried to preserve their own legitimate interests.¹⁰ With memories of those encounters apparently still fresh in her mind and worried about her son Alexander's reception in Utah while he proselytized for the RLDS church, Emma warned Joseph III in 1866:

Now you must [not] let those L.D.S.'s trouble you too much. If they are determined to do evil, they will do it, and such as are anxiously willing to make you trouble are

⁸ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 3 Feb. 1866 [1867], RLDS Library-Archives.

⁹ Emma Smith Bidamon to Lewis Bidamon, Jan. 1850, RLDS Library-Archives.

¹⁰ Brigham and Emma's friendship and its subsequent deterioration are discussed in Valeen Tippetts Avery and Linda King Newell, "The Lion and the Lady: Brigham Young and Emma Smith," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 48 (Winter 1980): 81-97.

not worth laboring very hard to save from the dogs. You may know that you are not the first one who has been misunderstood or misapplied, or misquoted and misrepresented in every way, and in every conceivable space, neither is it certain that you will be the last afflicted one. If you bear affliction well [the] Evil One will perhaps let up on you a little and go vex on someone else a while.¹¹

A few months later she reverted to the same theme:

As for Alexander doing much with the Smiths at Salt Lake is a doubtful question with me. I think it might be right for him to go and discharge his duty to them and leave them without excuse. I look upon their case as a hard one. I believe that God is able to do all that is for his glory and the good of those that truly serve him, and may be that God will consider them in their ignorance and convict and convert them and cleanse them from their abominations and make them fit for more decent society. I hope he will, that is those who were taken there when too young to know any better. . . . It is time to get supper, so I must bid you good-bye and may Heaven's blessing be with you is the prayer of Your Mother Emma Bidamon.¹²

Three years later in 1869 Alexander and David Smith were both in Salt Lake City as RLDS missionaries, called by their brother Joseph. Emma wrote him:

I have received one letter from Alex and two from David since they got to Salt Lake City. I tried before they left here to give them an idea of what they might expect of Brigham and all of his ites, but I suppose the impression was hardly sufficient to guard their feelings from such unexpected falsehoods and impious profanity as Brigham is capable of. I hope they will be able to bear with patience all the abuse they will have to meet. I do not like to have my children's feelings abused, but I do like that Brigham shows to all, both Saint and sinner that there is not the least particle of friendship existing between him and myself. How long do you expect the boys to stay in Utah?¹³

Emma did not have or seek a public forum for her feelings about Brigham, but he did not similarly restrain himself. As a result, to members in the western church, the image of an uncommitted and faithless Emma became widespread. As revealed by her own writings, however, her religious feelings in general ran deep. The earliest letter extant from Emma to Joseph, written in 1837, states, "I verily feel that if I had not more confidence in God than some I could name, I should be in a sad case indeed, but I still believe that if we humble ourselves, and are as faithful as we can be we shall be delivered from every snare that may be laid for our feet, and our lives and property will be saved and we redeemed from all unrenderable encumbrances."¹⁴ A week later she wrote again, "I hope that we shall be so humble and pure before God that he will set us at liberty to be our own masters in a few things at least."¹⁵

At the age of sixty-two she wrote Joseph:

How often I have been made deeply sensible that my pilgrimage has been an arduous one and God only knows, how often my heart has almost sunk, when I have reflected

¹¹ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 19 Aug. 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

¹² Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 11 Oct. 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

¹³ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 1 Aug. 1869, RLDS Library-Archives.

¹⁴ Emma Smith to Joseph Smith, 25 April 1837, LDS Archives.

¹⁵ Emma Smith to Joseph Smith, 3 May 1837, LDS Archives.

how much more arduous and trying your work was to be. I have often thought that I know as well as any other person just how St. Paul felt, when he said, "If only in this life we have hope, we are of all men most miserable."¹⁶

A year later Emma confided again to her son:

I often find I have to yield my will to surrounding circumstances, so I am daily trying to learn St. Paul's lesson, but it is a hard one to keep in mind all the time, to be contented with our *condition*, to pray always, and in *all things* to give thanks. Well, I can try every day to be contented. I can pray let me be doing what else I may have on hand. I can pray and work in the kitchen or in the cellar or up stairs. My heart can not prevent prayers, but to be *thankful*. I have to confess I have not learned to put in practice yet, but I live in hopes that I shall be able to learn that in time, for I have a promise that my last days shall be my best days, and according to the years that is allotted to mankind. Those days are not very far distant, as I am now fast living out my sixty-fourth year. Well if kind Heaven lets my children, or some of them live either with me or near me I shall begin to see some of the good I am living for. . . . I do not want to be rich only when I think of your circumstances and Alex's and the church. Then I would like to straighten our all indebtedness and put the Bishop in possession of means to send out all on missions that are fit to go, then I feel I would willingly continue to keep tavern [inn or boarding house] a long time yet.¹⁷

In 1869 Emma reflected: "Joseph, I have seen many, yes very many trying scenes in my life in which I could not see any good in them, neither could I see any place where any good could grow out of them, but yet I feel a divine trust in God, that all things shall work for good, perhaps not to me, but it may be to some one else, and I am still hoping and praying, trusting that you will not be hindered in the great and good work you are doing."¹⁸

Although this essay samples only a few of the personal documents extant of Emma's, we would wish for many more. Not only would her perceptions of early church history be a valuable record from one uniquely placed to record it, she was herself a force to be reckoned with — not only from her relationship to Joseph but because of her own loving nature and strong faith.

¹⁶ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 19 Aug. 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

¹⁷ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 27 Dec. 1867, RLDS Library-Archives.

¹⁸ Emma Smith Bidamon to Joseph Smith III, 17 [no month] 1869, RLDS Library-Archives.

Refracted Visions and Future Worlds: Mormonism and Science Fiction

Michael R. Collings



Although science fiction and religion both attempt to define possible or probable future states, they often seem incompatible. Critics of science fiction frequently argue that including religion in science fiction vitiates the power of the imagined world; and since, as James Gunn has stated, "religion answers all questions that science fiction wishes to raise . . . science fiction written within a religious framework . . . turns into parable."¹ Readers of science fiction accept the ground rules of the imagined universe, even when they are a-religious or anti-religious. When one enters the arena of science fiction, it is as if religion ceases to function. James Blish's *A Case of Conscience* (New York: Ballantine, 1958), Walter Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* (Philadelphia:

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¹ James Gunn, *The Road to Science Fiction: From Gilgamesh to Wells* (New York: New American Library, 1977), p. 3. See also Robert Scholes and Eric Rabkin, *Science Fiction: History, Science, Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 42-43, 49. George Scithers, former editor of *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* instructs authors not to include gods and angels in any stories submitted to him; such stories, he contends, are not science fiction.

This paper emphasizes novels which refer to particular religions (in most cases Mormonism) or to particular doctrinal points. For the far broader subject of general religious themes, motifs, or images developed within science-fiction novels, see Frederick Casey, *The Future of Eternity: Mythologies of Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); David Ketterer, *New Worlds for Old: The Apocalyptic Imagination, Science Fiction, and America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974); Frederick A. Kreutzer, *Apocalypse and Science Fiction: A Dialectic of Religious and Secular Soteriologies* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982); and Patricia Warrick and Martin Harry Greenberg, *This New Awareness: Religion Through Science Fiction* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1975), which includes a brief bibliography of science-fiction novels with religious themes.

Lippincott, 1950), or Piers Anthony's Planet of Tarot trilogy are among the few novels to incorporate contemporary religions *qua* religion into a science-fictional framework. More often, religion in science fiction functions as metaphor, myth, or structural device. For example, Roger Zelazny's *Lord of Light* (New York: Avon, 1969), contains characters who have assumed the names and symbolic functions of Hindu gods. Most references to specific religions — at least to Western religions — are limited to Catholicism,² Judaism, and, curiously enough, Mormonism. The first two are not surprising — Catholicism because of its long history and influence on modern Christianity, and Judaism because of its long tradition of wandering and "otherness," its sense of estrangement which Darko Suvin defines as singularly appropriate to science fiction.³ To find overt references to LDS thinking and theology, as in the Anthony novels, is surprising, since Mormons are numerically inferior to most major religious denominations and are little known beyond a superficial awareness of some of their more unusual doctrines and practices.

In another sense, however, it seems fitting that science-fiction writers, particularly American writers, refer to what has been called the only indigenous American religion. In discussing Robert Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*, Robert Scholes and Eric Rabkin state that "Heinlein's Smith is as American as the Mormon Joseph Smith, and Heinlein knows it."⁴ But most references to Mormonism in science fiction are limited to superficialities in plot and based on equally superficial attitudes. Heinlein's use of Mormonism as a stereotype in *Stranger* seems fairly representative. The Church provides a general backdrop, as Scholes and Rabkin argue, and a ready source of clichés for easy moral judgment. One character in *Stranger* notes, for example, that the Fosterites have gotten away with "much more than Joseph Smith was lynched for"⁵ — that is, for indulging in polygamous relationships. Here, Heinlein oversimplifies a complex issue by creating a cause and effect equation which is obviously incomplete as an explanation. Underlying theology is less important than stereotypic actions.

This pattern also occurs in other works. John Varley's *Wizard* (New York: Berkeley, 1980) alludes twice to Mormonism, both times as a quick evaluation of characters or situations. In one, a witches' coven is referred to as having "changed from just another forgotten dethlehem into a religion rich enough to stand beside the Catholics, the Mormons, and the scientologists" (p. 15).

² In "Cathedrals in Space" (in *Turning Points: Essays on the Art of Science Fiction*, ed. Damon Knight [New York: Harper, 1977], pp. 144-62), James Blish, writing as William Atheling, Jr., discusses why almost all religious science fiction takes Catholicism as its starting point. He points to a "chiliastic panic, . . . so that the choice of the most complex, best organized and oldest body of Christian dogma as an intellectual background seems only natural" (p. 150).

³ Darko Suvin, *Metamorphosis of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 3-16. Much of the text is devoted to his definitions of *cognitive* and *estrangement*.

⁴ Scholes and Rabkin, *Science Fiction*, p. 57.

⁵ Robert Heinlein, *Stranger in a Strange Land* (New York: Berkeley, 1971), p. 315. The novel originally appeared in 1961.

Later, a character enters the hub of the sentient planet Gaca and passes through a maze of structures copied from terrestrial models, including the "Zimbabwe Mormon Tabernacle" (p. 38). Varley thus relies primarily on immediate, obvious, surface characteristics of Mormonism.

The pattern found in Varley and Heinlein seems consistent with the uses of Mormonism in other science-fiction novels. Ian Watson's *The Embedding* (New York: Bantam, 1977) and Dean Ing's *Systemic Shock* (New York: Ace, 1981) both contain stereotypical references to Mormonism, with little expression of doctrine. Watson describes two saboteurs as "clean-cut out of cemetery marble, Mormon evangelists" (p. 147). Later he returns to the image: "Pilot and passenger had the same clear-cut Mormon uniformity of the Soft War Corps" (p. 191). A few paragraphs further, Watson uses the proper noun as an adjective: "'That's about it,' the mormon salesman nodded" (p. 192). There ceases to be any substance to the references at all; they exist merely as tags to identify stereotypes. And the stereotypes do not fulfill any further function in plot, development, or characterization. Such references to Mormonism are entirely divorced from doctrinal considerations.

In the post-cataclysmic world of Ing's *Systemic Shock*, Mormonism is the only surviving social structure capable of controlling an America divided and devastated by attack. Ing refers frequently to prophets and scriptures, but rarely allows Mormon beliefs to influence the narrative. In general, he simply relies on stereotypes of social structure, discipline, and order.

Philip Jose Farmer's *Flesh* (New York: Signet, 1968) does, on the other hand, incorporate specific Mormon teachings, even though he does not identify them as such. One character is named Nephi Sarvant. Sarvant's church, the "Last Standers," were a "peculiar people," ardent proselytizers for the "Book of the Church." During both his eight-hundred-year star-flight and his brief return to the DeeCee (Washington, D.C.) of a future earth, Sarvant inflexibly denounces the immorality he perceives around him and contends that his church — which has entirely disappeared during his absence — was, is, and will be the only true religion. Sarvant serves as a one-dimensional commentator on morality, religious philosophy, and sexual practices in Farmer's future society. Offended by offers of alcohol and overt sexual discussion early in the narrative, he abruptly leaves the dinner table, alienating his host and embarrassing his companion crew-members. He stalks out of the house and is immediately treed by a lioness which has been patrolling the grounds. Farmer thus satirizes Sarvant and his superficial pretensions to martyrdom. One of the characters holds the lioness by the collar and tells Sarvant to come down: "It's not yet time to throw a Christian to the lions." Sarvant is put to the test and fails comically. Farmer's references to lions and Christians emphasize Sarvant's shallowness.

Shortly thereafter, Sarvant, forced to find work, becomes a sweeper in the Temple of Gotew, where infertile women hope to become pregnant through their faith in the goddess and the good offices of male volunteers. As Sarvant slowly discovers what happens in the temple, he is righteously indignant. Then, as Sarvant becomes enamored of one of the "unfortunate ladies," his moral

indignation is revealed as repressed lust. He approaches the woman, who agrees to go with him, thinking that he is merely performing his duty to the goddess. When he rapes her, raving about his *own* true religion, he is dragged from the temple and hanged.

Again, Farmer systematically reduces Sarvant's religion to a series of clichés: the fanatical missionary proselytizing out of his "Book"; the religious extremist insulting those who drink alcoholic beverages; the sexually repressed personality who seeks release in extravagant sexuality. In Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*, Joseph Smith's damning sin was polygamy; in *Flesh*, Nephi Sarvant's is rape. But in the latter novel, we also witness the gradual removal of Sarvant's doctrinal supports until he is isolated from his own religion. In Farmer's alternate future, a religion such as Mormonism is not only invalid but inimical to life.

Perhaps the most extended portrayal of Mormonism — and the most explicit — in recent science fiction occurs in Piers Anthony's Planet of Tarot trilogy. In the three novels — *God of Tarot* (New York: Jove, 1979), *Vision of Tarot* (New York: Berkley, 1980), and *Faith of Tarot* (New York: Berkeley, 1980) — Brother Paul of the Holy Order of Vision is dispatched to the colony on the Planet Tarot to discover, if possible, the true God of the planet. The colony, composed of tiny enclaves of extremist sects, had been subjected to a series of "animations," hallucinatory recreations of the colonists' beliefs, dreams, and nightmares.

In *God of Tarot*, Brother Paul undergoes a series of personal visions, each relating to a major card of the Tarot deck, which result in a culminating vision of the human soul as no better than compost. Convinced that the answer to his quest cannot come from within, he decides to test the religions by entering animations which reveal the essence of each. He is accompanied in his quest by a number of colonists, including Lee, a member of "the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints."

In *Vision of Tarot*, Anthony's interest in Mormonism becomes more explicit. Lee does not use face cards (p. 4); he notes that polygamy, which he calls "plural marriage," is (not *was*) an option rather than a requirement (p. 6); and he appears as Christ in an animation which traces apostasy growing within the Church as the Apostle Paul systematically alters Christ's original teachings. Suddenly Lee exclaims, "Perhaps they are doing better in America" (p. 192). He lifts Brother Paul and the two pass through the air, as Lee explains about the Nephites and the Jaredites. (Significantly, Anthony does not, like many, refer to the Book of Mormon as a history of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel.) During the flight, the two argue over the LDS stand excluding blacks from the priesthood, and Lee is enraged when Paul reveals his own one-eighth black ancestry. In his fury, Lee angles toward earth, with Brother Paul following. Their speed increases until they are "slanting in toward the land" at 35,000 kilometers per hour:

They skimmed the ocean, leveled out, and approached the coastal mountains. . . . Collision!

“And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year . . . there arose a great storm . . . behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempests and the whirlwinds and the thunderings and the lightnings, and the exceeding great quakings of the whole earth. . . .” (pp. 195–96)

The destruction accompanying Christ’s appearance in the Americas, quoted from the Book of Mormon, results from Lee’s racism, which, since Lee represents Christ, shifts the emphasis from salvation to a particular doctrinal point.

Despite a generally positive portrait of Lee in other passages, he appears as a schismatic in an animation of Dante’s *Inferno*. He accepts this charge without question, agrees that his church is both polygamous and plagiarized (a reference to the Spaulding controversy) and identifies himself as a descendant of John D. Lee (p. 231). Brother Paul asks, “Did the Mormons defend Lee’s actions?” and Lee answers “No . . . He was tried and condemned. But —” The final incomplete phrase suggests that Lee does in fact hold the Church as a whole guilty and also hints that the other charges against the Church are also true.

Only after Lee has divested himself of adherence to the peculiar doctrines of the LDS Church can he emerge as a truly righteous man. Brother Paul concludes:

Maybe the origins of the Mormons are suspect, or maybe it is all a great libel. It doesn’t matter. What matters is what the religion is *today*. Many worthy religions have foundered when their adherents forgot their original principles — but here is a religion that became greater than its origin! The Mormons today constitute one of the most powerful forces for good on Earth. Their uprightness stands in stark contrast to the hypocrisy of so many of the more conventional religions. Therefore, there is no crime in this man who has faithfully honored the fine principles of his faith. Let us crucify no more people for being better than *we* are. (p. 232)

Within this apparent compliment to Mormonism (and in the context of the novel, Brother Paul is sincere) is an inherently dangerous attitude toward the Church. Lee is exonerated primarily because he has divested himself of Mormonism’s historical and doctrinal claims as a revealed religion. But Lee is wrong, and so is Brother Paul. Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, plural marriage, and the earlier teachings on blacks and priesthood are essential to Mormonism; without them it would cease to differ from “more conventional religions.”

Yet it is precisely this background that Brother Paul aids Lee in rejecting: “‘What *is*,’ Lee repeated. ‘I have been haunted by what *was*.’ Then his face glowed — literally. ‘We have no further business in Hell,’ Jesus said. ‘Hell itself has no business existing’ ” (p. 233). With that, Lee leads Paul and an entourage of animation-shadows out of the hell of their own imaginings.

In the final volume, *Faith of Tarot*, Brother Paul descends with Lee into an animated-Hell to confront Satan himself. References to Mormonism diminish, since Lee has shed many of his “flawed” characteristics — all related to LDS doctrines. He now represents a purified Christianity. Brother Paul observes that Therion, a devil-worshiper, had, “in his fashion, just been tested as crucially as Lee had been in Dante’s Hell — and profited as much” (p. 10).

Yet Lee's only profit was his rejection of his past — the theological and historical backgrounds of Mormonism — in favor of a rootless, modern "righteousness." The few remaining allusions to Mormonism revert to stereotypes: Mormons disapprove of laughter; Mormons are polygamous; and Mormons see sex as simultaneously to be desired and to be repressed.

Ultimately, in spite of his obvious knowledge of Mormon teachings and his respect for Lee as a character, Anthony presents as lopsided a portrait of Mormon thinking and doctrine as the other writers. He says little about Joseph Smith or revelation. Polygamy and the Church's earlier stand on the blacks become flaws in Lee's character; but to remove them necessitates denying the Church's claim to revelation and consequently makes of Mormonism just another conventional religion. In short, Mormonism is treated stereotypically. References exist primarily to elicit programmed responses in readers. Given the theoretical framework of science fiction, this attitude is perhaps understandable and self-propagating.

Science fiction assumes that the future is yet undetermined and is therefore an appropriate subject for speculation. It rests, as Darko Suvin argues, on what can be known objectively and rationally: science and technology, the changes they engender in human societies, factual knowledge and extrapolations from that knowledge.⁶ Even the generally accepted name for the genre suggests this emphasis on the rationally knowable. Suvin defines the *science* as the element of cognition, while the *fiction* is the element of estrangement — that which sets science fiction apart from mainstream literature.

Mormons who choose to write science fiction are partially limited by this perception of its purposes and functions. Unless they concentrate on theology to the detriment of fiction, they must tacitly accept the assumptions of science fiction and introduce religious motifs tangentially or symbolically. The recent television series, *Battlestar Galactica* suggests Mormon elements throughout, as with the ongoing search for the planet Kobol. Yet there is little specifically related to LDS doctrines and teachings in the series. Sandy and Joe Straubhaar, in "Science Fiction and Mormonism: A Three-Way View," refer to Larson's productions as "wholesome family entertainment which don't betray many Mormon ideas except on the level of detail."⁷ They note, for example, the Council of Elders and a Quorum of Twelve, even though these officials have no particularly religious functions. Beyond this, there is little to identify the series with LDS thinking; it remains essentially popularized science fiction.

Orson Scott Card, a Mormon who has attained some prominence as an author of science fiction, illustrates the uncomfortable exchange between science fiction and Mormonism. Other than generalized analogues in *Capitol* (New York: Ace, 1979), and *The Worthing Chronicles* (New York: Ace,

⁶ In their definitions of science fiction, Suvin, Gunn, Scholes and Rabkin, and Tzvetan Todorov (*The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, trans. Richard Howard. [1970; reprint ed., Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980]) have all emphasized the importance of technology and technological change. Gunn, for example, considers the rise of technology as one of four preconditions to the formulation of the genre.

⁷ Sandy and Joe Straubhaar, "Science Fiction and Mormonism: A Three Way View," *Sunstone* 6 (July/Aug. 1981): 56.

1983), and references in stories such as “Quietus” (in *Unaccompanied Sonata and Other Stories* [New York: Dial, 1981] pp. 120–33), there is little specifically Mormon material in his novels and short stories. His writing is overt science fiction — extrapolative and speculative. Yet he has been accused of not being Mormon enough, of ignoring the moral and theological potentials of his background and of being “deviant” in his writing. One Mormon reader rejected *Songmaster* (New York: Dial, 1980) because Card includes a brief (and, in terms of the developing narrative line, necessary) homosexual encounter. Similarly, the Straubhaars “find it regrettable that a skillful author whom we would like to be proud of as a fellow Saint . . . has not consistently written more that is recognizably religious and thematically ‘Mormon.’”⁸ They emphasize the religious possibilities in science fiction, rather than the science fiction Card has actually produced.

Another recent work of science fiction clearly illustrates the opposite danger Mormon authors face when they write science fiction. Gerald Lund’s *The Alliance* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983) is a book with a message, and to the extent that the message is relayed, the novel succeeds. To explore what seems a particularly LDS viewpoint — the free agency of all human beings to make moral decisions — Lund uses the conventions of science fiction.

Set in Montana eighteen years after the “termination of civilization” through widespread warfare and the resulting devastation, this novel presents a new perspective on our world. New technologies are metaphors for developments beyond (yet to a degree within) our times: silicon-chip implants control the brain and its impulses; computer watches provide constant, 1984-style monitoring of all citizens and cause their deaths should they act counter to the interests of the Major and his ostensibly utopian Alliance. Through the eyes of protagonist Eric Lloyd we see ourselves as we are and as we may become.

As Lloyd leaves his valley village, he confronts the complexities of the Alliance of Four Cities and moves toward open conflict with the electronic monitoring systems. Thus far, the novel seems straightforward science fiction, yet an undercurrent, present from the first pages, suggests that Lund has purposes other than merely creating an alternate future. He has essentially reversed the process noted in Farmer, Anthony, and the others. Where they used LDS doctrine as stereotype, Lund now uses science fiction itself as stereotype.

The narrative begins with the virtual destruction of human civilization. The opening sentence reads simply: “Before the world ended, the place was known as Star Valley, Wyoming” (p. 1). Although the villagers have remained totally isolated from outside contact for eighteen years, Lund does not develop the vision of nuclear catastrophe or apocalypse. The landscapes are lush and verdant rather than devastated. In one instance, a particular location had sustained a direct nuclear hit — yet it is now, after less than two decades, supporting life and being farmed. While it might be possible to reconcile both visions by speculating about the nature of future weaponry, Lund does not do so.

⁸ Ibid.

Lund's computerized watches and silicon-chip implants seem as complex as Anthony Burgess's "Reclamation Treatment" in *A Clockwork Orange* (New York: Norton, 1962) or Piers Anthony and Robert Margroff's surgical implants in *The Ring* (New York: Ace, 1968). In each of these novels, the technological advancement or device played a key role in defining the theme of the novel.

Burgess's treatment cures his character of a propensity for violence; yet the cure itself must be reversed because the new, reformed Alex cannot survive in his society without recourse to the violence that has become the norm. Anthony and Margroff's hero, Jeff, succeeds in removing the device from his finger, but spends the rest of the novel discovering that, given humanity's fragmented knowledge of circumstances and emotional inability to think clearly and directly, we *need* controlling devices. The original ring had been flawed in its programming; the "Ultra Conscience" unilaterally forbids any violence. But Jeff discovers that some violence is necessary. The ring becomes a symbol of freedom which Jeff willingly resumes: "My armor will be the ring. . . . A ring that knows when to restrain *itself* as well as the wearer. An impractical morality never did anyone much —"; Jeff breaks off, but the implication is that the phrase would end with "good" (p. 253).

By comparison, Lund's implants and watches seem largely stereotypic. They are never fully explained, nor does he present any detailed history of their development. More critically, when the time comes, Eric and his friend Cliff Cameron remove them with notable ease — from which point, the devices simply fade away as Lund moves into an action-packed conclusion based on reprisal and violence. Toward the end, the heroine is threatened with implant-generated torture, but the threat is never realized.

As science fiction, *The Alliance* is stilted, largely because the novel seems less concerned with speculation and extrapolation than with assertion. Its thesis is clearly drawn from LDS doctrine: "Even God, with all his incredible majestic power and infinite knowledge, chooses not to force men to be good. And the reason is clear. When man has no choice but to do good, there's no point in calling him moral. Men cannot be good without making that choice themselves. They can be made to act in good ways, but they cannot *be* good" (pp. 128–29). This sentiment is repeated almost verbatim several chapters later: "Even infinite power cannot make men *be* good. You can make them *act* in good ways, but to really *be* good, an individual must choose good things freely. It's man's most basic and sacred stewardship — to serve as the guardian of his own behavior" (p. 181). The thesis is undeniably LDS — but its overt introduction, couched in the language of religion, limits the novel as science fiction.

Instead of extrapolative, speculative, often painful probing into the possibilities of human character, such as we find in Burgess or Anthony and Margroff, Lund simply asserts. In *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Ring*, the writers create a sense of discovery; the thesis develops gradually throughout the novel until the final, conclusive awareness. The reader — like the characters — must discover the "message" of the novels. Lund, on the other hand, identifies his thesis early and devotes the rest to its support. However powerful *The Alliance* may be as theological statement — and the dust jacket declares that it "makes

a stunning statement about free agency in a gripping and entertaining way” — it falters as science fiction.

It appears, then, that Mormon writers who approach science fiction frequently find themselves either subordinating the conventions and structures of science fiction to more open philosophizing about theological principles (which is in some senses antithetical to the nature of science fiction) or condemned for writing within the framework of their chosen genre and subordinating theological or doctrinal considerations to it. Yet there are essential differences between science fiction (which represents what Todorov classifies as the “scientific marvelous,” that is, technological and mechanical marvels)⁹ and religious writings, which incorporate what is traditionally called the “Christian marvelous,” a world view compatible with the workings of divinity in human affairs. To expect an author to blend such variant forms, just because he happens to be a Mormon, may be unfair.

Mormonism, of course, openly espouses the “Christian marvelous.” Not only is Mormonism based on subjective foundations, but it has also replaced, perhaps more than any other major denomination, a scientifically postulated future with an age built upon the revelation and restoration of true religion. Science may play a part in that future; the Church is noted for encouraging scientific study and for incorporating technology into its work. But within the framework of Mormon perception, science as a mode of knowing is subordinate to revelation. Computers and microfilm replace hand-written documents, not because they are inherently superior but because they increase the potential of the Church to accomplish its work. Science is important among members, but not as an ultimate end. The “scientific marvelous” that characterizes science fiction is subordinate to revelation.

Additionally, because of its basis in on-going revelation, Mormonism can know much about the truths of the future. Science fiction, conversely, has not seriously claimed to be a prophetic literature for several decades. Most contemporary critics and writers see its role as monitory and adaption-promoting, rather than predictive. They are concerned, not with what *will* be, but with what *might* be, given specific circumstances. They also frequently extrapolate from the present, creating possible futures which in turn reflect back to and comment directly on that present. Ursula K. LeGuin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness* (New York: Walker, 1969), for example, does not prophesy that in our distant future we will contact a race of perfect androgyns, like those on her planet Gethen. Instead, she creates a science-fictional world where sexual classification becomes literally a matter of choice. Into that world, she intrudes one of us, a human whose sex is permanently fixed. By doing so, she creates not prophecy but metaphor, and the novel becomes a means by which she can investigate sexual stereotyping within our own society.

A further complication arises because, if science fiction is to succeed, the reader must accept the reality of the world portrayed. For many Mormons — and for many religious readers in general — nothing “unreal” can be permitted to interfere with “reality.” If the reader cannot willingly enter into the

⁹ Todorov, *The Fantastic*, p. 56.

fictive world and share in what Tolkien has called sub-creation, or William Irwin the “game of the fantastic,”¹⁰ then to that extent science fiction fails. A reader disturbed by Anthony’s overt restructuring of Book of Mormon history and equally overt sexual references in the Tarot trilogy may find it difficult to understand his underlying purposes and thesis. After all, the novels are already “false,” so what would be the purpose in reading them?

Given these assumptions, science fiction and religion — and Mormonism in particular — seem essentially incompatible. One asks the questions, as Gunn says, while the other answers them. Based as it is upon revelation and prophetic insight, Mormonism’s absolutist stance is bound to color the responses of a genre like science fiction. The only ways such a literary form can deal with such a religion is to reduce it to stereotypes as did Watson and Ing, or to strip it of its claims to being a unique mode of knowing, as Anthony did. In either case, the result is the same — allusions that provide easily accessible images for short-cut representations of ideas and attitudes outside the realm of science fiction.

On the other hand, in order to assimilate science fiction, Mormonism seems either to subordinate the fictive forms to the larger purposes of salvation and alter the genre into something else (Gunn argues for “parable,” in its theological sense), or to entertain momentarily and imaginatively perspectives drawn from other worlds. Readers must agree, for the duration of the reading experience, that although such futures will not exist, given the principles of revelation and prophecy they *could* exist.

In *The New Awareness: Religion Through Science Fiction*, Patricia War-rick and Martin Harry Greenberg juxtapose the twin modes of science and religion: “Each serves a similar function: to help man shape his universe enough to make it comprehensible. Religion has its poetic or intuitive language, using myths to express its images of the universe. Science uses hypotheses and models. To ask which is true is a meaningless question. Each is a different way of perceiving the cosmos, of shaping reality.”¹¹ The more critical question, they suggest, is “Does the myth or model function? Does it provide a guide that makes life meaningful and significant?” In the novels I have discussed, the answers seem to be that one or the other can function fully within the fictions — but not both. If the province of science fiction is extrapolation and speculation about future states, then it cannot approach Mormonism from the direction of doctrine and teachings, since those are the precise elements of Mormonism which reveal the future that science fiction wishes to explore. And since Mormonism is a revelatory religion, it reduces science fiction itself to the level of cliché and stereotype, and subordinates the open speculation — the “cognitive estrangement” — essential to science fiction.

¹⁰ W. R. Irwin, *The Game of the Impossible: A Rhetoric of Fantasy* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976). See also Scholes and Rabkin, *Science Fiction*, p. 7.

¹¹ P. xii. The editors note that the collection of stories will explore “the fundamental questions asked by various religions.” The book purposely does not provide answers, for “the hope of the editors is that out of the dialogue the reader carries on with the ideas of the stories, he will develop his own answers. Self-created answers are, finally, the only sustaining answers” (p. xi). Their stated purpose is to suggest ways in which contemporary man can face the complexities of his world by holding both views simultaneously — the scientific and the religious — indicating that for the moment at least, the two seem incompatible.

Remarks at Chase's Missionary Farewell

Douglas H. Parker

Sunday, 25 April 1982



There is an apparent rule, honored in some wards as often in the breach as in its observance, that talks given at missionary farewells are not to be devoted to eulogizing the departing missionary. I enjoy the sentimental personal sharing that attends eulogies and do not mind meetings that deal in personalities, but I will follow the rule and devote my remarks to gospel subjects. This is difficult to do because I am very proud of my son and have deep feelings of gratitude and joy relating to the mission experience that awaits him and his readiness for it. I hope he will sense this as I share some advice concerning missionary service.

The first matter I wish to discuss concerns the scriptures, and the Bible in particular. I would suggest to missionaries that the books of the Bible be read and studied as whole books and that the epistles of Paul and other apostles should be read and understood as whole letters. Missionaries often memorize a number of isolated passages without a knowledge of the epistle or the book from which the passages are drawn. This constrictive interest in and narrow use of the Bible is sometimes referred to as the proof-text approach to the scriptures. The Bible is viewed as a text of proofs on various theological topics. This approach serves the limited objective of convincing others of the correctness of some point of doctrine and may, if not corrected, cripple a person's spiritual understanding for life. Occasionally the person whom the missionary is seeking to teach, will have his or her own proof-text collection of scriptures, and the Bible will be demeaned as passage is pitted against passage until the score becomes five to four in someone's favor.

The Bible has truly been the world's greatest book, and it cannot be understood by the proof-text approach. Nor can one come to love it and find ever continuing refreshment in it by such abuse. The truth is that the Bible has

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incorporated within it a number of views of God, a number of views of sin, retribution, punishment, redemption, love, and justice. The dogmatic theologian who must somehow try to harmonize all contradictions and elicit a unitary point of view sets out to teach the Bible rather than to let the Bible teach him or her and has undertaken an impossible task.

I would like my son to know that interpretation of the Bible is not a simple matter. If the search for meaning is approached only in terms of relevance for today, or meaning is sought only in light of the nature of today's human relationships, the search will be deflected down a hopelessly wrong road. With respect to ancient writings, as distinguished from modern scriptures, relevance is only a second-cousin to meaning.

Of course, present-day relevance is a matter of ultimate importance, but it should be deferred until one has sought the original meaning in its historical and cultural context. One should never simply ask of a passage, "What is its meaning?" The first and proper question is, "Meaning for whom?" The original meaning is the meaning the ancient writer sought to communicate with urgency and anxiety in his day and in the light of the nature of human relationships in his day. Ancient Bedouin chieftains, moved upon by God, should not be thought of in terms of Utah County stake presidents projected back in time; nor should an Old Testament comparison of the relationship of a husband (God) to a wife (Israel), be thought of in terms of today's Latter-day Saint marriages. Wives, anciently, were obtained by purchase or conquest, sometimes while still children, and often occupied a semi-servile status. The prophet Hosea bought a wife for fifteen pieces of silver.

It is after we have sought after and tentatively determined the original meaning that we should move on to the more important question of relevance and ask, "What is the meaning of the original meaning for me?"

I would recommend that missionaries embark upon their first serious encounters with the Bible by reading each epistle or book as a whole, by seeking to know the problem to which the epistle was addressed, and the historical context in which it was written. Memorize and know and use the biblical passages that have confirming value for the truths that have been restored, but underwrite their use with a grasp of the context from which they are taken. More important still, do so with a knowledge that it is from the restoration, the actual appearance of God and His Son, and the visitation of other heavenly messengers, and from the confirming witness of the Holy Ghost to the missionary's humble account borne of these events that our message and its convincing power have their source. We cite biblical passages, following witness borne of the heavens' new opening, for the confirming delight they convey by the discovery that truth restored harmonizes with instances of revelation and inspiration from the past. But latter-day revelation and the Holy Ghost are the real source of proof of our message concerning the nature of God, and of the organization, government, and ordinances of his church, not some passage of the Bible selected over others.

The third idea that I would like to touch upon is the distinction between theology and religion. Theology is identified with institutional creeds and doc-

trinal beliefs and is not the same as religion, which is identified with personal faith, behavior, and the religious life. Theology refers to descriptive thought-statements concerning the spatial, temporal, and moral nature of deity, and the relationship between the members of the Godhead and their relationship to humankind; it extends to descriptive statements about the past, about pre-mortal life, about the future and the nature of the resurrection, about ends and goals and purposes of human existence, and about commandments, revelations, and visitations of personages that occurred on specific dates, times, and places.

Religion is identified with kindness, gentleness, thoughtfulness, unselfishness, and love unfeigned; with control of one's temper, discipline of one's appetites, with not listening to gossip, with generosity, compassion, holiness, and charity. The criteria for determining whether one theology is more correct than another are different than the criteria for determining whether one religion or religious life is better than another.

Many missionaries, I suppose, view themselves as being on their missions primarily to share restored doctrinal and theological truths. Theology and doctrine are very important. They provide structure and system. They inform and enlighten personal belief; and personal belief moves on to matters of faith and hope, and from faith to behavior, and from behavior to comfort, consolation, and understanding. My belief that I will see and be reunited with my father, mother, and sister, all of whom have passed away within the last two years, is deeply comforting to me.

But practicing religion is more difficult than understanding theology. Einstein, when asked why progress in human relations and governmental relations had not kept pace with advances in physics, said, "Because politics is harder than physics." I may understand more about theology and doctrine than my wife, Corene, but she is far sweeter and kinder, more unselfish, accommodating and thoughtful than I. And by the same token, the fact that missionaries may be ahead, so to speak, of many people in matters of restored doctrinal truth and in priesthood authority does not mean being ahead of them in matters of religious behavior. Missionaries in their relationships with their companions often act in unkind, thoughtless, impatient, or jealous ways. Chase, you will find some investigators — and some who may not care to become investigators — who may lack correct theological views, but whose lives are filled with overwhelming kindness, unselfishness, compassion, goodwill, and love. When you do, appreciate what you can learn from them and stand in some awe of the wondrous and different ways in which men and women of different beliefs bear a resemblance to God — in some instances a more striking resemblance than our own.

A fourth recommendation is that as a missionary, Chase, you should prepare yourself to share your message with other people on their ground, as well as upon your own ground. Do not require your relationship with others and the accompanying sharing to be centered in a one-directional willingness on their part to take an interest in your religious, cultural, and institutional garden. Paul said, "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a

Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law . . . To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some more.” You will be more effective in giving to others that which you have if you will know and appreciate what they have.

But this makes knowing and appreciating the grounding of other people’s lives a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. Granting the merit of the reason Paul gives for meeting others on their ground, there has to be a higher reason. In Romans 1:14, he states: “I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise.” The J. B. Phillips version of that passage reads, “I feel myself under a sort of universal obligation, I owe something to all men, from cultured Greek to ignorant savage.” By not always requiring others to take or to leave what you have to give, you become willing to learn as well as to teach, willing to receive as well as to give, willing to appreciate as well as be appreciated; and you will share with others a wider knowledge of and indebtedness to God.

A further suggestion to you, Chase, and to any missionary, is that you not give up your identity. Your call from the Lord came addressed to Chase Parker, not to “Dear Brother.” A mission is an influential period in a young person’s life. He or she not only leaves home for the first time, but also gives up his or her first name for the title of “brother” or “sister” and dons the equivalent of a polyester, Swedish-knit uniform. Less visible than this new suit are certain attitudes concerning positions, offices, and honor, and also certain attitudes and perceptions concerning oneself and the world that are sometimes associated with a stereotyped role.

I do not deny the value of roles to which, with freedom neither lost nor surrendered, we partially conform our lives. But Christ came to set us free and to invite us to the use of some nonconventional freedom. A person can serve the Savior best if he or she serves as a person rather than a role player. We have sometimes heard it said that “the office makes the man”; and in saying this, we usually have in mind some great office or role — which is what a mission is. We sometimes see a man, perceived by some to be of mediocre talent and of obvious personal limitations, appointed to an important office such as Supreme Court Justice. Whereas without the office he would have continued in his mediocrity, he now surpasses everyone’s expectations. This obviously says a lot for office, but I hope it states only one-half of a two-directional truth. Persons should be spurred upward by worthy offices, but offices and roles should also be informed and shaped by the person. Roles, as well as persons, need and ought to be susceptible to change and to growth, and this will occur only if each informs the other. Paul, Christianity’s greatest missionary, was more a person than he was the inheritor of a role when he went about serving his Friend and Master. Offer to the Holy Ghost a *person* in the service of the Lord.

My advice to keep your individuality, Chase, can and should be followed within the mission rules. Keep the mission rules, and encourage others to do so. If you do not, you will be confiscated by them and clearly you cannot then

exercise the freedom I just mentioned. There is a higher use to which freedom can be put than breaking rules. Rules vary from mission president to mission president within the same mission, and from mission to mission. The work and its attendant joy, and assistance from on high, are more important than impatience with the rules. Furthermore, your mission president needs your love and support. No matter what you may think of a given mission rule, your mission president is a man willing to dedicate his time, often at great personal sacrifice, to a heavy but glorious responsibility. He is doing his best. A mission staffed with 200 kids straight out of high school or their first year of college, in varying states of self-discipline and immaturity, needs rules. Let your life be occupied with the spiritual refreshment that comes from seeking and serving the Savior. Every mission president prays for at least a handful of missionaries who will be spiritual catalysts for the rest, missionaries who will lift and set the tone for the mission.

The Talmud states, "A man must love his wife at least as much as himself, but should honor her more than himself." I would like this to apply to companionship relationships. Treat your companion as though your relationship will not end in four months and will instead last forty years. Some of mine have. Do not be captive to the world's method of dealing with problems, failings, and shortcomings in others. Be supportive of those with whom you work. Take pride in their abilities, in their achievements, and in their recognition, and find the joy that comes from loving them. Do not be embarrassed by times of spiritual and emotional sharing.

In closing, let me state to you, Chase, my faith, hope, and conviction that Jesus is our Savior, that His God and Father is the Father of us all, and that we are brothers and sisters to all men and women of all times and places. Many small, close-knit religious bodies, crippled by the fact the world did not understand or appreciate them, have anticipated with a vindictory spirit the prophesied events involving God's dealings with the earth. They looked forward to the world's being set in its place and to their own special role's being vindicated at last. Such views have clouded the vision of some covenant people who first looked forward to a Messiah's coming, as they surely cloud the view of many who now look forward to a second coming.

After the fact, Paul sought both in theology and in missionary effort to extend the primary purpose and reason for the Messiah's first coming to include those who had been excluded from the limited scope held in mind by His covenanted people. Let us, you and I, before the fact of his second coming, overcome the emotional and psychological difficulties that stand in the way of our universalizing the one Messiah and the one Father. Let us give respectful reverence to the efforts of others to worship them and take delight in a belief and hope that God responds to their sincere strivings and answers their real petitions though addressed to him in names and methods strange to us.

A glorious restoration has occurred. Not to share it through missionary work would be a denial of it, a denial of the love for others for which we strive and the love of God which was the restoration's initiating cause.

A Physician's Reflections on Old Testament Medicine

Roderick Saxey



Later-day Saints demonstrate a perennial interest in health issues of all kinds, from the dietary role of meats to the therapeutic use of herb teas. At least some of this interest can be attributed to Mormon appreciation of the Old Testament, a feeling of kinship with the Jews, and a belief that the Law of Moses included a strict health code akin to the Word of Wisdom.¹

Of course, no attempt to draw parallels between such fluid cultural elements as health and diet can claim to be exact, particularly over millennia. Nevertheless, certain general patterns can be observed in Hebrew concern for health which went far beyond the dietary portions of the Law of Moses and led ultimately to moral principles that helped lay the foundation for modern medicine. The gospel view of human beings as allies of God, in the quest for solutions to life's problems has been particularly fruitful in the patient-physician relationship.

This essay is not meant to be a comprehensive account of health issues among the Hebrews and their contemporaries, nor is it strictly chronological. Rather, it is a summary of certain major themes by a physician interested in the enduring consequences of earlier traditions.

Stories of plague, pestilence, and other medical problems dot the biblical record, both as significant events in the lives of those affected and as examples of the Lord's intervention. Plagues of lice, boils, and fatalities of Egyptian firstborn preceded the liberation of the Israelites (Exod. 8–13). Jacob's wrestle with divinity left him with a permanent limp (Gen. 32:25). On one occasion, Israel's enemies were struck blind and destroyed by plague (2 Kings 6, 2 Chron. 32). The experiences and metaphors of illness and healing have close

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¹ W. D. Davies, "Israel, the Mormons, and the Land," Truman G. Madsen, ed., *Reflections on Mormonism: Judaean-Christian Parallels* (Salt Lake City: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1978), pp. 79–97.

ties with Israel's spiritual health as well.² The Israelites saw illness as both the natural result of mortality and as punishment for sin. God was the supreme physician, sending both sickness and cure in response to sin and repentance. "I kill and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand" (Deut. 32:39). At the time of the Exodus, he reassured them: "I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exod. 15:26). He also spelled out the conditions for health and illness: "If I send a pestilence among my people; if . . . [they] shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:13-14).

While individual and collective righteousness were enjoined, mortal efforts at healing were required too. Under Mosaic law, if one inflicted harm, "he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed" (Exod. 21:19). In Talmudic tradition, this passage authorized physicians to practice medicine, even if their prescriptions conflicted with the laws of the sabbath and of kosher diet.³

The Bible only rarely gives specifics of ancient illness. Thus, King Asa was "diseased in his feet" (1 Chron. 16:12), but it is not clear whether this was gout (the traditional interpretation), gangrene, or something else. Job's "sore boils" may have been one of several ailments. The Pentateuch makes elaborate differentiations between ritually unclean and clean skin eruptions, and the leprosy of the Old Testament is generally believed not to be the same disease we know by that term today.

Folk medicine included bandages, splints, oils, poultices, and a variety of herbal remedies such as Balm of Gilead, which may or may not be related to the soothing unguent of the same name used in the United States in the late eighteenth century.⁴ The hyssop plant, commonly colonized by *penicillium* mold, was employed.⁵ Classical times saw the spread of panaceas like the Great Theriac, a complex concoction containing snake flesh, symbol of healing power.⁶

Egyptian influence on Israelite medicine was significant not only because of the two peoples' association during centuries of bondage, but because the Nile culture enriched the known world. As recently as Dickens's time, quacks could attract crowds by claiming the title, "Doctor of Egypt." Even now physicians adorn their prescription pads with *Rx*, meaning "take thou," a sym-

² Julius Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, Fred Rosner, trans. and ed. (1911; reprint ed., New York: Sanhedrin Press, 1978), pp. 141-42. This principle is reaffirmed for modern Israel by Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), p. 346.

³ *Ibid.*, Preuss, p. 25.

⁴ Leon Goldman, "The Balm of Gilead," *Archives of Dermatology* 112 (June 1976): 881.

⁵ S. Levin, "Job's Syndrome," *Journal of Pediatrics* 76 (Feb. 1970): 326.

⁶ Christopher Lawrence, "The Healing Serpent — The Snake in Medical Iconography," *Ulster Medical Journal* 47 (1978): 136.

bol identified with the Roman Jupiter, but ultimately derived from the "Eye of Horus," another early symbol of healing.⁷

Among the oldest Egyptian writings is the Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus, a rational document that denies magic, describes diseases by means of case histories, and recommends manual therapy, rest, diet, and the judicious use of medicines.⁸ Though our earliest copies date from shortly before Moses, this papyrus may be derived ultimately from Imhotep, a third dynasty physician and architect (c2700 B.C.) who later was deified as the Egyptian god of healing, equivalent to the Greek Aesculapius.⁹ He also combined the roles of astronomer, philosopher, and sage with that of high priest, thus setting a pattern for the practice of medicine, a combination of medicine and religion that flourished until the rise of Greece.

Egyptian physicians also established such specialties as internists and surgeons, while others specialized in certain diseases or single organs. One result of Egypt's national interest in medicine was a world-wide acclaim for health and long life, but this was relative success. Autopsies of mummified remains reveal such diseases as rheumatoid arthritis, spinal tuberculosis, bladder and kidney stones, and arteriosclerosis.

Theories of disease etiology centered on a poisonous substance believed to emanate from decaying fecal material and other waste products.¹⁰ The enema was an Egyptian invention; purges were common remedies; fastidious cleanliness was routine, including daily baths and washings, sanitation services, and the use of soaps. Nevertheless, witchcraft and exotic folk medicines also flourished and the early brilliance of Imhotep and the Edwin Smith Papyrus was not repeated.

Twelve to fifteen hundred years after Imhotep, when Moses lived in Pharaoh's family, Egyptian medical practice had become a complex blend of reason and superstition. The temple schools of the time taught the basics of hygiene, sanitation, and nutrition and perhaps constituted his foundation. The exclusion from the Law of Moses of medical sorcery and most forms of bizarre treatment is very striking when compared with such Egyptian practices as treating severe pediatric illness by ingestion of skinned dead mice or fevers with incantations, amulets, and potions which were sometimes more toxic than the disease.¹¹ Instead, Mosaic health practices focus on prevention, a gigantic conceptual leap, whether conscious or not. For instance, the Mosaic stress on cleanliness included frequent washing, especially before meals, the cleansing of

⁷ Otto L. Bettman, *A Pictorial History of Medicine* (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1956), pp. 1-7.

⁸ John A. Wilson, *The Culture of Ancient Egypt* (Chicago: The University Press, 1951), pp. 56-58.

⁹ Peter Tompkins, *Secrets of the Great Pyramid* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971); Bruce Lawrence Ralston, "I Swear by Imhotep the Physician," *New York State Journal of Medicine* 77 (Nov. 1977): 2148-52.

¹⁰ Robert O. Steuer and J. B. de C. M. Saunders, *Ancient Egyptian and Cnidian Medicine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 54.

¹¹ Bettmann, *Pictorial History*, pp. 1-7.

cooking vessels or their destruction (Lev. 11:33), sanitation and proper waste disposal even during the nomadic period (Deut. 23:12–14), and, during the urban period, houses to be kept free from mold and mildew or be dismantled.¹² Of course, the context of these laws was one of ritual purity. For example, the reason given for camp sanitation was “for the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp” (Deut. 23:14).

The Hebrews had many dietary laws, especially regarding meat. Offerings were to be eaten the day of sacrifice or the next but no later; carrion was forbidden; consumption of blood was not allowed (Lev. 7:15–17; 17:10–15; Exod. 22:31). Although the Mosaic prohibitions against pork and eating meat cooked in milk are sometimes interpreted as health matters, there is no indication in antiquity of any conscious association between these practices and illness. Since pork figured prominently in Egyptian and Babylonian sacrificial meals, and the Canaanites seethed their sacrifices in milk and drank blood, it seems more likely that these laws were to separate Israelites from idolatrous neighbors.¹³

A modern rabbi lists spiritual health, holiness, and purity as secondary reasons for keeping a kosher diet, the primary one being to keep Israel “separated . . . from the nations.” He then notes among the benefits not only physical health, but also sensitivity to cruelty, subduing of desires, and acknowledgment of God’s goodness.¹⁴ Many of these same reasons are clearly applicable to keeping the Word of Wisdom as well.

Another spiritual law with medical benefits was the turning from the mundane to the spiritual—something modern doctors applaud as a means of relieving tension and preventing stress-related disease. Keeping the sabbath holy required scripture study, prayer, attendance at devotional meetings, and carrying out others of the 613 commandments of the Torah, a third of which had to do with health in one way or another.¹⁵

Portions of the Law of Moses and later scriptures prohibited magic, astrology, and witchcraft, all of them linked in various ways to quack medicine. (Deut. 18:10–11. See also Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27; Isa. 47:13–14; Exod. 22:18; Mic. 5:12.) In Babylon, Canaan, and Egypt, the black arts flourished. If demons caused disease, then magic was an appropriate treatment, up to and including human sacrifice.

An important part of Babylonian medicine was divination or foretelling the future. One form involved having the patient breathe into a sacrificial animal’s nostrils, then studying the form and condition of its liver for signs of the

¹² Lev. 14:35–48. See also R. Schoental, “A Corner of History: Moses and Mycotoxins,” *Preventive Medicine* 9 (1980): 159–61.

¹³ Louis Evan Grivett and Rose Marie Pangborn, “Origin of Selected Old Testament Dietary Prohibitions,” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 65 (Dec. 1974): 634–38. See also M. Katz, “The Jewish Dietary Laws,” *South African Medical Journal* 50 (Nov. 1976): 2004–5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Katz, pp. 2004–5.

¹⁵ Gerald N. Weiss, “The Jews’ Contribution to Medicine,” *Medical Times* 96 (Aug. 1968): 798.

patient's disease and fate.¹⁶ The Babylonian invention of astrology, heavily health-related, was uniformly and vigorously condemned by Old Testament and Talmud authors.¹⁷

Indeed, in the demon-filled world of ancient Near East beliefs, Israel's theology was peculiar in asserting that illness involved simply the patient, God, and the natural world of mortality, even though belief in demons as a disease etiology was a widespread folk belief in Israel from earliest times, with increasing acceptance after the sojourn in Babylon.¹⁸

Jewish physicians seem to have upheld the theological view. The author of the apocryphal *Ecclesiasticus*, Ben Sirach, praises the use of medicines and the skill of doctors: "The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth; and he hath given men skill, that he might be honoured in his marvellous works, . . . of the most High cometh healing" (Eccles. 38:2-7). It is true that Tobit and Josephus, in Jewish apocryphal writings, mention exorcism, Jesus cast out evil spirits, and John 5 records belief in a pool of healing water. Still, as a prominent Jewish physician notes, compared with other cultures, "Jews have evinced little interest in irrational treatments such as the exorcism of demons and healing shrines, waters, and relics."¹⁹

Unlike the physician-priest of Egypt and Mesopotamia, physicians in the Talmud were considered messengers from God and instruments in the accomplishment of the divine will. Levites were responsible for declaring what was clean and unclean; they did not engage in medicine in a therapeutic or even a diagnostic capacity, for their declarations pertained to ritual purity. Thus, according to the Mishnah, "anyone can decide whether a skin eruption is unclean or clean: the priest shall only pronounce the word 'unclean' in the case of uncleanness."²⁰ Lay healers were even called upon to treat sick Levites.

Prophets were not physicians either, although some performed dramatic cures (including healing the sick and raising the dead). Elisha healed the Shunammit boy by placing "his mouth upon his mouth" in a manner similar to today's artificial resuscitation and Elijah the Tishbite may have used this same method, though Jesus quite clearly did not in any of his raisings of individuals from the dead.²¹ Isaiah healed King Hezekiah of boils with the aid of

¹⁶ Note the structural similarity between this and the recent common pregnancy test in which a woman's urine was injected into a rabbit and the effect on its ovaries examined. For a general discussion of religious symbolism in science, see Roy Branson, "The Secularization of American Medicine," (monograph) *Hastings Center Studies*, 1973, pp. 17-28.

¹⁷ Jer. 10:2, "Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven." See also Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, pp. 140-41.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ S. Levin, "Jewish Ethics in Relation to Medicine," *South African Medical Journal* 47 (June 1973): 929. For a discussion of the Jewish philosophy of learning see Jacob Neusner, *The Glory of God Is Intelligence* (Salt Lake City: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1978), pp. 8-12.

²⁰ Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, pp. 27, 18-19.

²¹ 2 Kings 4:32-35, 1 Kings 17:17-32; Matt. 9:24-25; Luke 7:13-15; John 11:40-44. See also Z. Rosen and J. T. Davidson, "Respiratory Resuscitation in Ancient Hebrew Sources," *Anesthesia and Analgesia* 51 (July-Aug. 1972): 503.

a poultice made of figs, a treatment resembling one prescribed for horses in the Ras Shamra texts.²²

This separation between the priest-prophet and the physician roles, while helpful in establishing the physician's separate responsibility, also means that it was an ambiguous role. A modern physician tabulated thirty-two adjectives commonly used to describe a good doctor, balanced by an equally long list of biting criticisms.²³ Similar lists could have been made by the Israelites at various times, ranging from *pragmatic* to *fatalistic*. The Mishnah excludes doctors from the resurrection and destines "the best physicians" for "hell."²⁴ Even the author of 2 Chronicles says that King Asa "sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians," implying condemnation (2 Chron. 16:12). On the other hand, Talmudic authors considered physicians so important that they forbade living in a town without one.²⁵ Ecclesiasticus 38:1, 12–13 is emphatic: "Honour a physician with the honour due unto him for the uses which ye may have of him: for the Lord hath created him . . . give place to the physician. There is a time when in their hands there is good success." Certainly, Mormon attitudes toward medicine show a similar evolution from the active mistrust of Brigham Young to the almost routine use of complex heart procedures among modern General Authorities. Of course, dramatic changes in the nature of medicine also occurred.²⁶

Several types of medical practitioners were active in ancient Israel, that corresponding to what we refer to as *doctor* being called *rophe*. A *rophe* who for his training and experience was selected as a certified municipal physician was named *rophe umman* ("learned doctor"), rendered expert testimony in court and treated the poor at community expense. Distinction was made between physicians who were theoreticians, arriving at their medical principles by deduction, and those who were natural scientists, employing empiricism and experimentation. However, this was not the specialization of Egypt — there was not even a separate military physician, nor was there any division between medicine and surgery, otherwise universal in antiquity.²⁷ It is interesting that *rophe* derived from a root meaning to *alleviate* or *assuage*. Elsewhere the physician's title was related to words meaning *magic* or *knowledge*.²⁸ It suggests that the Israelite doctor made medicine more than a craft or a solitary

²² J. B. Hardie, "Medicine and the Biblical World," *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 94 (Jan. 1966): 35.

²³ Fielding H. Garrison, "The Evil Spoken of Physicians and the Answer Thereto," *Contributions to the History of Medicine* (New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1966), pp. 545–57.

²⁴ Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, p. 23.

²⁵ S. Levin, "Jewish Ethics," p. 928.

²⁶ For a good discussion of this development, see N. Lee Smith's review of *Medicine and the Mormons: An Introduction to the History of Latter-day Saint Health Care* by Robert T. Divett, in *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT* 17 (Spring 1984): 157–59; and N. Lee Smith, "Why Are Mormons So Susceptible to Medical and Nutritional Quackery?" *The Journal of Collegium Aesculapium* 1 (Dec. 1983): 29–43.

²⁷ Preuss, *Biblical and Talmudic Medicine*, ch. 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

pursuit of obscure learning. The eloquent sixth century A.D. Oath of Asaph, no doubt had roots in Old Testament times:

And now, trust in the Lord your God, the God of truth, the living God, for He puts to death and brings to life. He smites and He heals. He bestows understanding to man and teaches him to serve. He wounds in righteousness and justice and heals in mercy and loving kindness . . . He causes healing plants to grow and puts skill to heal in the hearts of sages . . . for He was their creator and . . . apart from Him there is no Saviour.²⁹

A faith that encouraged empiricism and practicality made medicine an appealing profession, especially when many countries refused to let them own land. Jewish doctors grew so famous that, in the sixteenth century when Francis I of France fell ill, he specifically requested a Hebrew doctor. The man appeared but admitted he had become a Christian. "Take him away," shouted the ailing king. "Bring me a Jewish physician." Half of medieval rabbis made their living as physicians, and even now a disproportionate number of Jews go to medical school.³⁰

The Old Testament contribution to medicine is thus much more than lists of diseases and dietary rules, stories of prophetic cures and obsolete therapies. It embodies an affirmation of life and the importance of healthy bodies as mortals relate to God. The Old Testament teaches a reason for compassionate service and reverence for life by recognizing the divine in human beings.

²⁹ Sussman Muntner, "Hebrew Medical Ethics and the Oath of Asaph," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 205 (Sept. 1968): 928.

³⁰ S. Levin, "Jewish Ethics," p. 927.

Childlike, Not Childish

Maggie Smith



Three floors up, Frank and I sat on our apartment balcony one early morning, blowing bubbles — huge, soapy bubbles that rose and fell like floating balloons. We were trying out a new, round wire contraption Frank had fashioned for the grandchildren. Having a dandy time. Below, people went to work, and we watched them from our perch, as we often did. How marvelous that we no longer had to go to work — in the conventional way.

“You old codgers having a good time up there?” a well-dressed, middle-aged man called to us.

I looked at Frank. “He thinks we’re childish!” I gasped in mock amazement.

“We’re not childish,” he said gently. “We are child-like. There’s a big difference.”

As a couple of retired Americans approaching eighty, Frank and I are detached from our former life. Once you realize you are old, it is almost like having your house burn down, taking in flames your valued possessions. Suddenly you are given the opportunity to look forward to the next house you’ll occupy — free to begin again.

When we become consciously old, we are like children moving into a new neighborhood. At first we stand back and watch. All that activity, all those games being played. If we aren’t invited to participate, we have to plunge in. We linger in the paths we knew as children, yet we are developed to go beyond those paths. When very young we enjoyed what was within the range of our vision, sounds, and senses. In retirement we are free to return to that situation, only with a sharpened awareness. With at least 112 hours a week of do-what-

Three days after Frank’s death, KSL-TV, where Maggie had been a legend before her retirement, called again. Would she? She would. Now she is on Monday’s noon news with a “Good Friends” feature, chatting over the fence of a home in the Marmalade District about interesting people and places. On Friday’s she’s on-camera in the kitchen cooking. “Suicide Fudge” is one of her favorites.

we-want-to-do time, we older ones can take up where we left off in childhood, only better equipped. So becoming child-like is important; recapturing long-ago attitudes and habits, expecting surprises, accepting surprises.

There's time now to take a long, fresh look at every day. Time to discover the extraordinary in the commonplace. Time to develop affection for what we used to quickly bypass. Trees and birds. We've always had bird feeders but small time to watch the birds. Now we have time. We've always heard no two snowflakes are alike. Now we look at them under a magnifying glass. It's true! Our curiosity never ages. At the beginning of each day we are practically overcome at the possible adventures that await us. We respond to anything that catches our eyes. Just as children do. . . .

Frank and I are enchanted by morning mists, landscapes blurred by rain and fog. Every view in early morning is spectacularly glorious. For fifteen cents we can travel on our city bus line for miles and miles around our lovely city. Imagine being able to ride in comfort to the country any time you want for only fifteen cents. Some days we sit on a mountainside and gaze at the great heights and distances, grateful to the inventor and manufacturer who was smart enough to make our spectacles so we can see clearly in our old age. If a country friend offers the loan of a couple of horses, we see the landscape from the back of a horse. We love the constantly changing scene from horseback, car, bus, or train window.

We love to study swallows and the sky games they play in the evening, going to different areas of the sky and regrouping for their carefully plotted stunts. One of our next projects is to save up and join the town Audubon Society chapter. We envision groups of people taking nature walks, knowing what they are looking for and what they are looking at!

We adore marches. We put a good rousing march on the record player every morning. Usually we have a lively dance. If you're grateful to be alive and moving, it is possible to dance to Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever." We love Simon and Garfunkel's "Cecilia," but Sousa is more in harmony with my husband's artificial foot.

We play dominoes and Chinese checkers, go to fairs, auctions, and church suppers. Whenever we find ourselves under country trees, Frank sets up a dart game. He likes archery and horseshoe pitching with his cronies. We walk in blizzards and hailstorms and go barefoot in the mud after soaking rains. If we can get to Heber City (fifty miles away) in the wintertime, we go to dogsled races and chariot races, cheering but not participating! And once a year we try to ride on the Heber Creeper, an antique train with a beautiful, lonesome whistle as it crawls through the meadows of Heber Valley. I would like to ice skate and roller skate, but Frank forbids it. He's afraid we'll break our legs. We didn't ice skate or roller skate when we were young, either. He was afraid then, too, that we'd break our legs.

We guard and treasure our library cards the way we used to guard credit cards. We read aloud to each other. In our quavery voices (in private mostly, since both are tone-deaf), we sing together. We visit art exhibits (our town abounds in art galleries). We attend Shakespearean productions and musical



concerts in the parks during the summer evenings (all free). We go to live theater and special movies every chance we get.

We belong to an Icicle Club, which means that as appreciators of beautifully formed icicles we tour the city seeking out the icicles at the eaves of houses and buildings. We belong to the Hot Fudge Sundae Club. We have fritter fries and pancake breakfasts and big pie celebrations. When some of our friends at the far edge of town raised a pig on table scraps, we had a Pig Roasting Party. That was a grand day! So long as we have our curiosity and our senses, we can make the best of all days.

During the summer months, Frank and I make arrangements to go the following morning and walk in various townspeople's flower gardens. People never seem to mind looking down from their bedrooms a little after dawn and seeing a couple of old ones admiring their garden. (Especially if the visitors have the habit of leaving a box of homemade doughnuts on the gardener's doorstep!)

We belong to the Shade Tree Club, the members mostly aged and retired. (There are so many funerals of members lately that Frank and I often find ourselves the only remaining members.) We intimately know all the trees in our area and make regular visits to them, sketching and studying. Townspeople no longer seem surprised to look out and see us sprawled beneath their beautiful trees, looking intently upward. In time, we hope to find more and more appreciators lying supine and studying from that angle what they may

have never noticed, watching from underneath as the wind flutters the leaves in the top of the tree, while the lower leaves remain motionless. What pleasure!

Few of these enchantments take much money, merely time. And we have time. Nothing seems closed to us, except pregnancy and routine salaried work.

Frank and I always have something to talk about with each other. Often we spend a complete breakfast conversation discussing a current magazine cover. Long ago we developed the notebook habit of jotting down our observations and impressions as we went through the days and later discussing them.

We don't allow much time recalling the past. Too many melancholy sighs in it. The great and the good. The bad and uncomfortable. Let it go! We won't be going that way again. We are on our way to *new* experiences. We can't and don't want to go back. Nor do we try to act or dress younger than we are. Sidestepping both of these tendencies, we save much time that can be spent in much more pleasurable ways.

No one can hurt our feelings because we know we haven't time left for hurt feelings. No one can really disappoint us. We merely turn to doing something else. We edge away from negative people. We are quick to forgive grievances. We have a merry detachment from the unpleasant.

Thank goodness, our minds and bodies serve us well. Gratefully, when ailments develop, the miracles of medical science have been available. We have known for a long time that Frank has a service-connected brain damage; but through the excellent medical assistance of the Veteran's Administration, we have been able to cope with this condition. We figure we have ten years left and would dearly love to see the year 2000 together but know that isn't realistic.

Frank and I are lucky that we are congenial. We know that so long as we both live, we'll each have a good playmate. Having been together so long, we are tolerant of each other's annoyances. I keep bananas under my pillow for midnight snacking. They mellow well there. Frank sometimes sits on the side of the bed and munches crackers and cheddar. More crackers in the bed than out. But no matter — to either one.

We love our children and they love us. They have lively mates. They are all in nests of their own, self-sufficient and happy. We have nine grandsons and nine granddaughters. They come often and we go often. When children visit we invite them to sing. Surprising, the many songs children know but seldom sing aloud unless they are asked.

After a long life of raising a family and doing pleasant work that we enjoyed, we have few worldly possessions. Our clothing and accessories, Frank's art equipment, my typewriter, an old Seth Thomas clock that has been ticking our days away since our marriage so long ago, a few sticks of solid furniture, and four traveling bags. That's about it. With those items and our monthly Social Security checks, Frank and I manage nicely.

Our life is geared to the simplicity of keeping ourselves housed, clothed, and fed, thoroughly entertained and enchanted. We eat well but not elaborately. Our food bill is usually \$200 a month (steadily climbing). Near the end of the month we've never had to cut to graham crackers and milk but we

have had some grand meals of steamed bread, butter, and honey, or a baked fish (locally caught), a piece of fresh fruit, and eight glasses of water. We conserve and enjoy. We know all about simplicities, but every meal is a good memory. We try to be actually hungry before dining. During warm weather we eat every meal possible out-of-doors, sweeping our eyes around and enjoying the sights.


We claim we are happy. Frank and I have heard that being in a state of happiness means going to sleep as soon as your head touches the pillow, sleeping soundly for eight hours, then being so eager to get up and start the day the minute your eyes fly open that you immediately put your feet on the floor. Well, if that is a happiness test, that's us!

10 December 1981. A dreadful specter entered our life. Frank's brain damage evidently resulted in Parkinson's disease. He entered the Veteran's Hospital and from there went to a nursing home. The usual Parkinson's disease symptoms began characterized by tremor, rigidity of limbs, bowed posture, and loss of speech. Now, twice a day, Frank is put into a wheelchair for thirty minutes at a time. Otherwise he is in bed. When he opens his blue eyes, that I have loved for so long, I sense that his mind is far away. I can only hope that enough scenes and experiences have been etched there in his eighty-two years to comfort and delight him.

24 January 1984. I knew if the event didn't happen while I sat by his bedside, the message would come at some time of day or night. The nurse, by phone, merely said, "Mr. Smith left us at 5:15 P.M." I sat and stared for a long time. How could he be content if I wasn't there?

Speaking Up: Two-Way Communication in the Church

Gael Ulrich

 In my journal, I termed it the Sunday Massacre. The disagreement centered on how much money we, the bishopric, could extract in good conscience from our struggling ward members for the stake building fund. I said one thing; the stake president insisted on another. The argument had been festering for months but had suddenly come to a head during a meeting among a few ward and stake leaders between ward conference sessions. I, who had been resustained as first counselor in the bishopric that morning, found myself slated for a release by afternoon. In the process, the stake president relieved me of my temple recommend. As a life-long active member of the Church — a former bishop and stake high counselor — I had disagreed with stake presidents before, but those differences had been resolved peacefully. How had this conflict escalated beyond control? What could I do to resolve it?

In the three years since that sore encounter, I have given serious thought to the dilemma of authority conflicts within the Church. Many members find themselves disagreeing with Church authorities at one time or another. A few dissidents drop out quietly. Even fewer, I would guess, leave with a colorful display of fireworks, demanding excommunication along the way. Most seem to suffer and wait — some silently and others not so silently. Often, a member attempts to register negative feelings by refusing callings or withholding financial contributions. Sometimes, it's simply evidenced by a lack of enthusiasm for Church services.¹ Because the gospel demands Christian love, however, these solutions cannot be considered healthy for the Church or for the individual. I have had several differences with higher Church authority, ranging from mild frustration to this explosive incident about the budget. From them, I have derived three principles for resolving such conflicts. I share them in the

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¹ K. Lynn Paul, "Passive Aggression and the Believer," *DIALOGUE* 10 (Winter 1977): 86–91.

hope that they will be useful to other members who may become involved in similar conflicts.

My first recommendation is: (1) Communicate with leaders in a polite, respectful, but firm manner. (2) Appeal to a higher authority when necessary. We should, indeed, go through prayer to the highest level at all stages of conflicts. (3) Be patient when the problem is not resolved to our satisfaction, even though we feel we have received spiritual support for our position.

The value of communication in ecclesiastical conflicts should be obvious, as it is in marriage. Yet its application (as in marriage) is not always so simple. In my experience, disagreements between members and leaders are more easily resolved at the ward rather than the stake level, simply because people associate more intimately within the ward. At the stake level and with the Church generally, remoteness sometimes magnifies misunderstandings and leads to the stereotyping of leaders both positively and negatively.

Although failure to communicate is sometimes the fault of the leader, it can often be blamed on the follower. Intimidated by the difference in status, we fail to realize that our leaders are real people with their own personalities and problems. When I was in the sixth grade, my school teacher was also my stake president. He was a good teacher and a good man. Nevertheless, one day he became angry with a boy sitting behind me and fired a chalkboard eraser at him. As I heard it whistle past my ear and rebound off the back wall, I gained respect for his temper as well as his throwing arm. I also realized that stake presidents are human. Since then, several of my friends and relatives have become stake presidents and General Authorities, men who obviously have problems at home and at work just as I do. Pressure from both above and below in the Church can strain even the most saintly personality. Further stress results from an awareness that they and their families must constantly act their part. A first step toward better communication with leaders is recognizing their problems and acknowledging their humanness.

Communication is not always easy for me. Shy by nature, I don't look for controversy or say much when it first appears. But when the disagreement reaches a certain stage, I can't restrain myself. When I do speak out, the words come with deep conviction and emotion. Some leaders might interpret my reaction as criticism, especially those who are insecure. Sometimes I do manage to communicate warmly and effectively. When I am successful, the conflict may not be resolved; but unfailingly my personal relationship with the opposing leader is enhanced by the effort.

An instructive failure occurred while I was bishop of a progressive metropolitan ward on the East Coast. Our Sunday School superintendent, trained as an artist, was responsible for the weekly printed program. In reaction to what he called the "dead-hands-holding-a-Bible" art often displayed on ward bulletins, he prepared some original line drawings and invited other artistic ward members to do the same. What followed was a series of interesting, unusual drawings which became quite well known, even beyond stake boundaries. Most comments were favorable, but there was a certain obvious silence from some quarters. Finally, a member of the stake presidency began questioning

me about the programs and suggested we discontinue what "stake leaders" thought was "inappropriate" art.

Being untrained in art myself, I had felt a little uneasy about some of the drawings, particularly one of a chubby free-form angel flying in the air, sweeping the word "JOY" in her wake. It had seemed a little racy to me. When I expressed my apprehension to the Sunday School superintendent, he pulled out the day's program and asked "What does this say?" As I looked at the art and thought about his question, I realized that his programs, of hundreds I had seen, were the only ones I remembered or contemplated. (Fifteen years later, I still remember those drawings.) I acknowledged his point and promised to support his efforts.

Pressure from the stake continued, culminating one Sunday with a visit from the stake president who insisted that the programs be censored. He considered the art irreverent, "modernistic," inappropriate, and distracting. To prove his point he gestured to that day's program and said, "This drawing of a Protestant church on the cover of your program is the last straw." Uncomfortably, I pointed out the identifying caption which he had overlooked: Manti Temple. Undaunted, he insisted that we change to a less controversial cover, and I, intimidated by our hierarchal relationship, complied. Subsequent illustrations had modest, attractive, safe, but much less memorable art. Considering the thought, quality, and love invested in those Sunday programs, I regret the loss. In retrospect I realize that I share the blame for the loss of that artwork because I failed to communicate with the stake president at an effective interpersonal level.

Another experience with the same leader taught me the importance of voicing opinions. A booming student population and other problems associated with our urban location led stake officials to decide, without consulting anyone from the ward, that our building should be turned over to student wards and the LDS Institute. Permanent members were to be housed in a new building in the suburbs. When the stake president told me one Sunday morning about this change, I accepted it reluctantly but obediently. Shrinking from the task of informing ward members myself, I asked if he would meet with the ward council that afternoon. This he did, telling them of his decision. Two members disagreed strongly. Obviously taken aback, the president compromised by asking us to study the issue more thoroughly and recommend our solution for the space problem.

Wrestling through this issue with ward members was one of the highlights of my tenure as bishop. We studied vigorously, held open hearings, and consulted experts on population, transportation, and growth trends. We produced a report which honestly but respectfully disagreed with the stake presidency's recommendation. In my mind, the most compelling argument against the stake's plan was the abandonment of center-city members without automobiles.

The stake president read our report with an open mind and had the self-confidence and integrity to accept its conclusions on the strength of sound arguments. From him and from those vocal ward officers I learned an important lesson: respectful and reasonable disagreement with authority can yield posi-

tive results. I resolved then that in the future I would speak up when I felt strongly about an issue.

Communication on the immediate level is not always enough, and we must appeal to higher authority. This need emerged for me when I faced a significant gospel problem — the Church's black-priesthood policy. For most of my life, that problem had been academic. But when a black man joined our ward, it became more immediate. I learned to know and love this man who was my assistant Scoutmaster. Suddenly, I found myself as his bishop. A local policy, established earlier, prohibited this man from attending priesthood meeting. The brother himself was reasonably understanding and tolerant of the practice, and the ward members were wonderfully supportive. Then another black brother moved into the ward from California where he had attended priesthood meeting "in preparation for the day when he would be ordained." When he arrived, both men approached me and asked if they might attend in our ward. I agreed to pursue the already sensitive issue with stake authorities.

In the months that followed, I discussed the problem directly with two stake presidents (reorganization having occurred) and two General Authorities. I also received indirect answers from two visiting General Authorities through stake presidents. The responses were all negative. Some leaders expressed regret. Others were appalled that I would even question the policy. Later, when official discrimination became so conspicuous that the black men were specifically excluded from an adult Aaronic Priesthood social to which wives were invited, I became even more distressed and spoke out again. Stake leaders acknowledged the unfairness to these men created by their policy but said they were bound by Church-wide practices. I finally expressed my concerns by letter to the First Presidency. The third principle — patience — took root here. My letter, which was hand-carried by a General Authority, was never answered. Meanwhile, I sought and received personal spiritual confirmation that my feelings were righteous and worthy.

A new job and my resultant relocation left the practical problem of accommodating black men in the Church to a successor. But for me the problem was no longer academic. I made my feelings known to my new stake president and he called me to the high council anyway. Patience was rewarded for many of us a decade later when the question was settled by President Kimball. One of the spiritual highlights of my life was sustaining one of my black friends to the Melchizedek Priesthood during stake conference the week of President Kimball's announcement. His revelation resolved the question in such a decisive way that even after a ten-year wait it gave heart to my growing appreciation of lay inspiration. Had those letters to Salt Lake contributed, however modestly, to the change? If so, communication is a two-way process, moving from the members to the general officers as well as in reverse. Not only does that process make members feel appreciated, but it also strengthens the Church. Like a tree, the Church is a growing, changing organism, receiving both nutrients from the roots below and energy from the leaves above.

I had fewer opportunities to practice my principles for dealing with authority conflicts until ten years following my move and release as bishop.

Church life during that period was relatively calm while I served in various teaching situations in a pleasant, congenial, small ward.

This ended when I was called to serve in that new bishopric and ran head-first into my stake president. It didn't happen immediately. We had inherited a substantial debt to the stake building fund due to an expansive stake building program and the limited fundraising success of prior bishoprics. As a bishopric, we decided to mount a four-year effort to wipe out the debt, indicating to stake authorities that additional assessments during that period would not be appropriate given our members' situation. The man who was then stake president agreed. His second counselor didn't. Two years later, that second counselor became the new stake president. I believe he was worthy in other ways, and he was certainly a successful fundraiser, but I found him extremely rigid and intolerant of disagreement. Concerned about the combination of a powerful position and a lack of flexibility, I voted not to sustain him when his name was proposed.

It was a timid vote. Despite apprehensions voiced by friends who held similar views, I did not think this man's name would be proposed. When it was, acting on impulse, I raised my hand in opposition, meekly and briefly. I didn't want my opposition to be acknowledged. I would have been satisfied simply to have left that meeting with my integrity intact. My astonished and embarrassed wife breathed relief when the General Authority went on, not noticing my half-raised arm. Then one of the other men on the stand nudged his neighbor, nodded toward me, and the General Authority was notified. He stopped, acknowledged the negative vote, and asked the dissenter to meet him in the corridor.

Next time, when the danger of such an impulse exists, I will not sit in the center of the congregation. As I rose and exited for all to see, I appreciated one of the assets of passive aggression — anonymity. We went to a nearby deserted stairwell, the only private place available. When asked the reason for my opposition, I said that I didn't think the proposed stake president had personal characteristics suitable for the job. The General Authority took off his glasses, rubbed his eyes, and said, "You may be right. I have recognized problems in his personal relationships during the selection process." He added that this man was the one the Lord wanted but commended me for having the courage to express my feelings. I was amazed at his frankness and was touched by his spirit toward me. I promised to support the new stake president. He then returned to the meeting and announced that the vote in favor was unanimous. After the meeting, I joined the line of well-wishers and told my new stake president that I had been the dissenter and that it was not a personal grievance. He was gracious in his brief exchange and indicated he had not taken it personally.

What could have been a devastating experience for me was inspiring and uplifting because of a sensitive General Authority who recognized and respected the value of communication from the ranks. As for other positive benefits, I know of at least one person (who had survived as a passive aggressor in the past) who has never been the same since. He has even surpassed me in

vigilance at times. It may be significant that I had never before seen a negative vote in the sustaining process but since have seen two in my stake. Whether I was an instrument or just a symptom of change, I do not know.

As far as I could tell, the new stake president worked hard on the personal, as well as administrative, aspects of his job. Our interaction, though limited at the beginning, was also cordial and positive — until the stake building fund resurfaced. Despite our truce with his predecessor, the new stake president insisted that our ward repay all of our debt plus an additional amount within the next year. This would have meant a building fund assessment equal to all of the ward's tithing for that year. As the member of the bishopric responsible for fundraising, I was caught in the middle, forced either to resist the assessment or to pass it on to ward members. Details of what followed are unimportant, but, while others were complaining covertly, I practiced my faith in communication. I wrote to the stake presidency protesting the decision and explaining my reasons. Otherwise, aside from frank discussions in bishopric meetings, I kept my feelings private. There was no response to my letter until that afternoon meeting between ward conference sessions.

My attempt to communicate in that meeting had obviously failed; and after the confrontation, I was emotionally incapable of further efforts in that direction. I (somewhat angrily) applied my second principle. I appealed to higher authority by writing to the regional General Authority, charging my stake president with unrighteous dominion and unchristianlike conduct. (This, by the way, happened to be the same General Authority who had met with me in the stairwell at stake conference.)

Once again the patience principle was tested. Having sent a registered letter to the man, I waited. After a month of silence, I wondered if General Authorities are instructed not to answer letters, especially those involving serious doctrinal or controversial issues. Such a policy would be understandable considering the pressures they experience and their lack of time to research individual issues. But my letter concerned a procedural process, the first step in a judicial action. I was angry and felt that I deserved a response.

Finally, I telephoned the authority, reminding him of my letter. At first he said that he didn't plan to act on my complaint because "we must stand behind our stake presidents." He had spoken by phone to the stake president and two of the stake officials present during our confrontation, and had concluded that I was in error. I expressed my dismay that he would form an opinion without contacting me or my bishop. I asked, "Do you mean that a member has no recourse against unrighteous authority?" I had seldom felt so frustrated. Here I was, a high priest, former bishop, and a stubborn, confident male, and I was not being taken seriously. I felt sudden empathy with many women in the Church.

At this point, the General Authority mellowed. He had now identified me from the stairwell conversation. He began to respond with honest concern to my arguments and promised not only to investigate further but also to communicate with me soon. With his recognition that I had a grievance, I was more willing to exercise patience. He, wisely, was more concerned about recon-

ciliation (and avoiding a nasty Church court action) than about the doctrinal position maintained by the stake president that Church members must pay specified building fund assignments to be worthy of a temple recommend. My bishop and I had wanted the General Authority to mediate between us and the stake president. He agreed to do so, if necessary, but encouraged us to resolve the differences without him. I don't know what he said to my stake president, except that he encouraged the president to resolve the conflict and return my temple recommend. I soon received a call from the president. He suggested that since I had always paid building fund myself, I was worthy of a temple recommend. He noticed that mine, which he still had, had expired and suggested that we do something about getting a new one. I pointed out that I still didn't believe stake building fund was prerequisite to a recommend. I added that I no longer felt supportive of him as stake president and probably did not qualify on that count. Neither of us budged, and we left it at that.

Even though he may not have considered the General Authority's intervention a chastisement, I felt justified and comforted in my doctrinal position. But I doubt that either of us was happy with our feelings. After several weeks of remorse, I asked for a meeting with the stake president, hoping to revive our personal relationship. It was a fascinating conference — one that vividly depicted the conflict outlined by Poll in his sermon on Iron Rods and Liahonas.² The president believed that every policy defined prayerfully by any priesthood authority, including himself, was the will of the Lord. He felt that a member in good standing was obliged to obey whether he agreed or not. His interpretation of *sustain* clearly meant to obey without question. Based on past experience, I had come to recognize and appreciate the fallibility of local and General Authorities. This recognition, supported by Doctrine and Covenants 121, had led me to the more liberal interpretation of *sustain* — “to provide for or succor another.”

When my stake president alluded to my failure to endorse him, I pointed out that the voting process in the Church was originally much more open and thoughtful than it is today.³ I explained that I was really sustaining him more than most members of the stake because of my willingness to voice differences openly, whereas many, despite public acquiescence, were personally and pri-

² Richard D. Poll, “What the Church Means to People Like Me,” *DIALOGUE* 2 (Winter 1967): 107–17.

³ Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1966), 7:458–60. At the last conference of the Church in Nauvoo, when William Smith's name was read for sustaining as one of the Twelve, Orson Pratt arose and disagreed. He spoke at length, telling why William should be dropped from the Council. When a vote was taken, the motion to sustain William Smith lost. The motion to sustain Lyman Wight was also debated. A. W. Babbitt spoke in opposition. Heber C. Kimball suggested that a vote be withheld until Wight could plead his own case. This compromise motion passed. In subsequent action, William Smith was also dropped as Patriarch, and at least one other brother was removed from a leadership position following arguments from both sides and a formal vote. The whole procedure reminds me more of a New England town meeting than the familiar rote process epitomized in the famous J. Golden Kimball motion to move Mount Nebo that received automatic and unanimous endorsement from a benumbed conference congregation.

vately critical. I pointed to the Mountain Meadows massacre as an extreme example of blind obedience and included some of my personal experiences with the issue.

He persisted: we must follow our leaders. He cited some familiar scriptures enjoining obedience. Doctrinally, it was obvious that we were at an impasse. He described my dismissal from the bishopric as necessary to avoid having people in the structure who did not support his policies. Removal of my temple recommend, he admitted, was done in desperation since my "doctrine" on Church contributions was dangerous, and other brethren present during our argument needed to know it could not be tolerated.

The stake president was genuinely surprised when I expressed my philosophy that if I acted according to my own spiritual confirmations, nothing enduring could be taken away from me. I contended that adherence to Christ's teachings was obedience to a higher authority than Church leaders. Even excommunication has only temporary effect and duration if done by one exercising unrighteous dominion. Suspension of a temple recommend, similarly withdrawn, had even less impact. The president, apparently seeing physical possession of a temple recommend as an objective index of worthiness, seemed dismayed at my feeling that I could survive spiritually without one.

During our discussion I asked, "What if the tables were reversed and I were the stake president?" He said, "There would be no problem because I would sustain you, regardless." We both laughed at the irony. Since I would be unlikely to revoke temple recommends, we could live together in peace if not in complete harmony. Communication did not make us agree, but at least we parted on friendly terms.

Patience solved my doctrinal problem in this conflict with amazing speed. Less than two months following the "Sunday Massacre," on 3 April 1981, the First Presidency issued a letter urging "leaders at all levels of Church administration . . . to further reduce financial burdens on Church members for contributions other than for tithing and fast offerings" and giving guidelines for dramatically reducing financial demands on members—including stake building funds. My bishop said, "Gael, that letter sounds as though it were written by you." Five months later, stake boundaries were realigned in northern New England. Interestingly, the General Authority scheduled to make the change was unable to come, and my stairwell colleague replaced him at the last moment. Under his presiding presence I was made a member of the high council in one stake that morning and my adversary was resustained as stake president in the other that afternoon. Since then, under a new bishop and in the new stake, I have again served as a first counselor in the bishopric. It is a testimony to the resilience and strength of the Church that people of diverse opinions can be accommodated in the same structure, even though congeniality is not always assured.

Unfortunately, I see some trends in the Church which promise to create even more distance between the roots and the "branches." No longer, as in my youth, is there a General Authority living "down the block" from most members. Distance creates lack of communication, which brings other hazards.

Assuming that our leaders are infallible is one of the most dangerous attitudes. Joseph Smith warned against this tendency when he said that he was but a man and the Saints must not expect him to be perfect. "If they should expect perfection from me, I should expect it from them," he observed wryly.⁴ Such a statement from the founder of the Church should serve to discourage the worship of leaders, but it is not a popularly repeated quotation in today's authority-conscious Church.

Another dangerous attitude that stems from veneration of leaders is the tendency toward total obedience. Supported by the extreme scriptural examples of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac and Nephi's killing of Laban, the doctrine is often affirmed in testimony meeting when a member declares, "I will do whatever anyone in authority asks me to do; and if, by any chance, the authority is in error, the responsibility falls on him, not on me."

The pervasiveness of these attitudes is indicated by a number of policies and traditions: the ritual of passing the sacrament first to the presiding officer; the recently discontinued practice of forbidding women to pray in sacrament meeting; the general attitude expressed in Church literature that "priesthood correlation" is superior to personal inspiration; conversion success stories where the hero becomes a stake president, bishop, or Relief Society president but seldom a home teacher, Sunday school teacher, or Primary secretary; and the way *elder*, as applied to General Authorities, has assumed an air of elevation above *brother* or *sister*. A clerical costume even appears to be developing in the Church. The higher one progresses up the hierarchical ladder, the more likely he is to be found wearing the Mormon robes of a dark blue suit, white shirt, and dark tie, even when local custom, pure common sense, and comfort dictate otherwise.

These policies and others have in recent years increased the isolation of "The Brethren" from the membership until a permanent gulf threatens. Visiting General Authorities seldom speak intimately and frankly with members. Instead, almost all contact is with leaders or members under controlled circumstances. The attitude, expressed in the episode with my stake president, that the General Authorities must unconditionally support leading local figures reinforces the isolation.

The expansion of a middle bureaucracy, having little decision-making power but much resistance to communication from below, contributes hazardous static to the communication link. Some local authorities even imitate the General Authorities in isolation when distance does not demand it.

The communication problem is aggravated by an unfortunate attitude that it is wrong for lay members to speak up. I believe that harboring a disagreement quietly is an insult to a leader. Such repression assumes that our leaders are close-minded and arbitrarily unwilling to change. It also denies them information they may need to make a correct decision.

Even though communication between members and leaders is sometimes painful and difficult, I feel it is necessary to prevent the development of that

⁴ Ibid., 5:181.

permanent gulf. Christ, an outsider as far as the hierarchical structure was concerned, recognized the legitimacy of that structure by adhering to Jewish principles and practices. Yet he attacked its corruption and sterility. Certainly, we are far removed from such degeneracy in the Church today, but silence or withdrawal can lead to the kind of apostasy and wickedness that Christ attacked.

A medical encounter I had suggests an interesting parallel with the Church. I underwent surgery to correct hearing loss sustained as a child. Recurring ear infections and a lack of adequate medical treatment had calcified the bones connecting the outer drum to the inner nerve. Nerves and their brain connections were fine; but because of immobilized linkage, certain sounds were muffled or inaudible. Like others who are hard of hearing, I was generally unaware of the problem and simply didn't miss many external sounds. The problem, however, was reversed when it came to internal vibrations. Chewing noises conducted directly by the skull bone were unnaturally loud, obscuring dinner-table conversations which were required to pass through the faulty audio linkage. A specialist, aided by trained assistants and modern technology, was able to remove the tiny inner-ear bones, refashion them, free the linkage, and replace them. This restored my hearing more nearly to normal, and now I hear sounds clearly that I had either forgotten or never known.

Within the wards and branches of the Church today, there is vibrant and exciting movement. Significant spiritual events occur continuously among lay members. Conditions are also healthy at the other end. Conscientious leaders, seeking to do the Lord's will, are pushing the Church forward. Yet sometimes the transmission system is calcified — inspiration outside the core is muffled while noises within the bureaucratic structure are magnified. Perhaps surgery is necessary. A little cutting here and buffing there would do wonders to let fresh, once-forgotten sounds vitalize the Church — the body of Christ — once again.

Much of a River

Marden J. Clark



I guess it wasn't really much of a river, only thirty feet wide or so where it had enough fall to ripple over the rocks. Except during the spring runoff. Then it filled and sometimes overflowed a bed fifty or seventy-five feet wide. We knew it was the Weber and that it joined Canyon Creek almost in the center of our valley. But to us it was simply "the river." And it always seemed important on those hot summer days. We would wind, leisurely at first, up through the orchard then around behind the back lots of Morgan, to arrive finally at the widest and deepest swimming hole we knew of, there at the head of the millrace.

Of course we were always running the last hundred yards, with the inevitable "last one in is a nigger baby." (Yes, we used that expression, like everyone else, with a strange blend of ignorance and unaware malice that could sense nothing of how it would feel to a later generation.) We ran, stripping ourselves as we ran. We ran because we were boys, because we always had to be racing, because of rudimentary embarrassment at nudity. We stopped only long enough to finish stripping, then plunged headfirst into water that even in mid-July was chill from its origins high in the Uinta and Wasatch mountains.

I was nearly always the last one in. My short legs had never been able to carry their rather dumpy load anywhere near as fast as Tom Dixon or Harvey Carter or even Blaine Barton, though I sometimes beat Red Williams, who was taller but even fatter than I was. All of them but Red could dive and swim better than I could too — especially Tom, who was my best friend through most of my boyhood years. I suspect now that we were together so much because I fed his ego and he fed my inferiority. Even then I could recognize the beauty of his running dives off the bank and especially of his swan dives and

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somersaults from the board at Como Springs, where we swam in less wild moods if we could scrape up the quarter. He loved the water and was in it every chance he had. He often laughed at my awkward attempts to follow him in one of those dives. But most of the time he encouraged me, even tried to teach me — with appropriate condescension, of course.

He could swim that river, nearly a hundred feet across there at our hole in front of the dam, without coming up for air. I would stand on the bank shivering and admire the strength of his arms and legs moving in beautifully articulated rhythm and propelling him in sharp bursts through the perfectly clear water. Even after swimming that far underwater he would slip to the surface, his arms straight down at his sides, his body slightly arched or perfectly straight, and he would give his head a toss with wonderful élan. I can still hear him calling from across the river, taunting or encouraging as the mood moved him, “Come on, Morgie, you can do it. It’s easy.” Or I can hear almost the same words from the water after he had dived, the perfect swan, from the high platform at Como and left me standing there shivering as I tried to get enough courage to fall off head first: “Come on, Morgie. All ya gotta do is let go.” That *was* all. And I would finally let go, only to feel the water smack my head like a brick and to feel water pressing into my lungs as I sank heavily down and then struggled heavily up.

It was the same when I’d follow him across the river. I could make it two-thirds of the way across in a dogged struggle, but then I’d come up with my lungs burning and my arms flailing, my heavy coughs expelling both water and air. And Tom would stand on the bank taunting, “You can do better than that,” or encouraging, “You almost made it that time.”

But sooner or later we’d settle, all except Tom, to easy swimming or lazy floating. And I could float with the best of them. It was about the only way I was at ease in the water. Tom seldom floated. He would practice diving from the old plank that served as our diving board. Or he’d swim in circles around me. But I loved to just lie there on my back, hardly having to stir myself to keep afloat, looking up at the sky that stretched mountain-valley blue between the great over-arching cottonwood trees that lined both sides of the river at our hole. Just floating. No struggle, no gasping, no burning lungs. I loved it.

I especially loved it on those few days when I had escaped the usual razzing we gave to the last one in, or to any loser — at push-ups or tree-climbing or jumping or any kind of dare-devil, follow-the-leader sport. I don’t think any of us was really cruel, at least not intentionally. But all of us — except the victim — delighted in the razzing. I know that when anyone else had to “run the gauntlet” for losing, I hit the guy as many times and as hard as I could while he was crawling between my spread legs. But I was myself especially sensitive to such things. The extra flesh of my backside made an inviting target but gave little protection from the sting. But it was the humiliation, not the sting, that so often brought first the tears then the sobs from me even though I was nearly always pursued by the same taunting chant:

Cry baby titty mouse
Laid an egg in our house.

No, I guess I loved the calm of floating more on those days when I hadn't escaped. Something about that quiet peace and the strip of blue framed by gray-green leaves made up for the razzing, even soothed the pain, soothed like the softness of my mother's hand across my forehead.

But such calm in the river was made possible only by an annual spring ritual nearly always carried out under my father's ministering, a ritual that for him was entirely practical, a means of assuring enough water both to run the flour mill downstream and to irrigate our bottom lands in the dry heat of summer. For us, though, it was the real advent of the swimming season, even if some of us had slipped up to Como a time or two. *This* was our hole, our river. As rituals should, it always began the same way. Dad would drive around the barn and up the lane with old Bally and Queen hooked to the flat-bed hay rack. He would hitch the reins to the standard, then call from the wagon, "Come on, boys. It's time for a swim!" We would gather, Tom and his brother from next door, I and my younger brother Rex (already taller than I and still skinny), and sooner or later, Harvey, Blaine, Red, and up to a dozen others who might be within earshot of the call.

The first stop was the string of cottonwoods that lined our river-bottom land. We would pick up logs and branches that were big enough to fill any gaps in the dam. Then to the silage stack at the end of the old faded-red pea vinery, where every summer we wandered from wagon to wagon picking off peas and stuffing ourselves with them. It was a glamorous place for us, with all that hum and clank of machinery from a dozen viners working at once. Glamorous, that is, until our own peas came on and we had to help load and haul them. And glamorous even then if we could get to drive the wagon to the viner, though we would have to struggle to help unload them, feeding them in steady small forkfuls into the viner.

Now the vines were only the discards of the silage, the stack itself long since gone to feed the cattle in the valley. Mostly such vines were dry or rotting, but we knew they would regain their toughness the minute they were soaked with water. With the prospects of that swim ahead, it would take only minutes to load the rack and we would be off for the swimming hole, riding high atop the vines.

I still wonder how Dad could get Bally and Queen to go into that water and stand for the hour or so it would take us to repair the dam, moving only often enough to take the wagon to the next section, the water gradually getting deeper as we would plug up holes in the dam, first with the logs and branches, then the silage vines. Bally was tall and gaunt, hardly handsome by any standards, but Queen always seemed beautiful to me, even up to the time she died when I was eighteen. Perhaps I enjoyed them, too, because they were so gentle, in sharp contrast to Lenny, the fractious iron-gray who had run away with me on the hay rake. I still carry the scar just above my left ear where I bounced off on the railroad tracks.

We didn't mind the hard work, as long as we could splash around in the water, our old pants and sometimes our shoes protecting us from scratches by the limbs while we worked first logs then branches then silage into place. It

wasn't just Dad's dam, it was ours too. Our assurance of a decently deep swimming hole for the summer. So we worked hard. When we would get an especially big hole plugged, we'd cheer and splash and chase each other.

Of course, there'd be a lot of fooling around in such an operation too. As the water got deeper we'd splash each other, shove each other, even dunk each other for long seconds. I didn't like to be held under. Tom delighted in jumping onto my back, twisting me off balance, then pushing me under and holding me there. I'd come up gasping and shaking and scared, sometimes losing the struggle to keep back sobs.

During the summer when I turned twelve, I think Dad must have planned our annual ritual for my birthday. He knew how much I enjoyed the excursion even if I wasn't very skilled or comfortable in the water. My mother had often told me how nice it was that my birthday fell on the longest day of the year, when the sun stood still while spring became summer. We had talked about it that morning, especially about the new responsibilities I would be taking on when I was ordained a deacon next week.

The water was a little higher than usual when we reached the dam. And there were bigger holes in the dam. We had to cut some larger limbs from the cottonwoods to fill the holes before we could start the smaller branches, then the silage vines into the irregular webbing of limbs and branches. But the work went well. Maybe even more fun than usual because of the extra water.

We had worked our way clear across the dam and had settled to more or less serious swimming while Dad turned the team around. The water was above their bellies now and creeping higher. I was, for the first time that day, floating on my back, letting the tiredness seep out. I paid almost no attention when I heard Dad call, "Morgie, come here a minute, you and Tom."

But the second call brought me paddling. Dad pointed to a spot near the center of the dam where the water was swirling in a large circle. Something had broken loose toward the bottom of the dam. Tom dived the three feet to see how bad it was, then came up with that graceful arch of his back. "It's nothing much. Only the silage that's washed out. We'll need quite a bit, though." So we busied ourselves cleaning what was left from the rack and gathering any that floated loose at the top of the dam.

When we had enough, I knew I'd have to tramp it into place — somehow I was always left with the real work. Tom had already joined the others swimming. I didn't like this working against the dam when the water had already reached almost its full height. I pushed the silage down with my hands, then tried to get my feet above it to push it into the holes against the limbs. As I worked, the silage became more and more tangled and of course any that had been still dry became tougher and tougher. Finally I had all the silage down, tramping it into place with my feet.

Tom called, "Come on, Morgie. Let's play water tag." But I kept working the silage. Tom suddenly surfaced beside me — one of his favorite tricks. I had last seen him fifteen feet away. "C'mon," he said. "Let's have some fun." He grabbed me by the shoulders and pushed me hard, down against the dam where my feet were still tangled in silage. I felt the whole mass under

me giving way. I cried out and grabbed at Tom, but it was too late. I gasped as I went under, and felt my throat and chest burning with the water I'd sucked in.

What surprises me every time I remember back is the sense of slow motion once my head was under water. I know I was kicking my feet wildly — or trying to in the tangle of silage. Perhaps I *was* being sucked rather slowly down, though I could feel the water rushing through the hole. And then all at once I stopped, lodged astraddle one of the large limbs that acted as a cross piece between the piers of rocks that anchored the dam. My feet were still thrashing, but slower now and becoming more and more entangled in those tough pea vines, which were still clinging to the brush on both sides of me. I knew I was panicking, if only in slow motion. Crazily I remembered putting lighted punk into the pants pocket that still held a whole package of Fourth of July firecrackers and running madly around in circles when they started going off. Water was what I needed and couldn't get then. I had plenty now.

I could feel Tom and my father pulling at me, but knew they couldn't do anything against those pea vines.

But oddly, the thought of those firecrackers began to calm me. I couldn't run in circles here. And tears would be useless with all that rushing water. I knew I'd have to get myself out or drown.

In my first controlled action, I remember doubling up and exploring with my hands the tangle of vines around my lower leg, the one I'd have to get out to let my body be sucked through the hole above. Then I found myself alternately tearing at single vines and rolling or sliding the mass down my leg, as if it were a tight stocking. It wasn't working very well. But between the tearing and the sliding and rolling, it was working. In that ominous desperation of nearly suspended time just before I blacked out, I felt my left leg jerk free and my whole body start slipping through the hole.

Fishing me out had apparently not been too difficult, in fact, not even as difficult as the time I'd dived straight down off the board into the pond above the mill the year before and stuck my head solid into the sticky clay at the bottom. I don't know which of the older boys pulled me out then. But it was Tom this time. He had pulled himself up over the wired-in piers of rocks and was down into the turbulent water below the dam almost as soon as I was, they told me. He pulled me over to the bank, where his older brother and another boy showed off their recently acquired Scouting skill at artificial respiration. In fact, my first awareness, other than a vague sense of people talking, was of the firm pressure of those two hands pushing hard on my back, then being released. It had only taken a minute or two, they said. And I would probably have been all right even without the first aid. But I was grateful for the birthday present.

When I finally turned over, that long stretch of sky showing between the cottonwoods was bluer and more beautiful than I had ever seen it. It almost cost me my breath again.

Not much of a river. But it had almost got me. I had been under it much longer than I had ever been trying to swim in it. Long enough, Tom said, to

swim across it twice. And I got myself loose. My first impulse when I became aware of Tom looking at me with intense concern and distress was to bawl out, "Why'd ya have to go and push me?" But I didn't. Instead, I felt a strange soft calm settle over me. I smiled at Tom and took his relieved smile in return, then at Dad, then at everyone within smiling distance.

After he could see that I was all right, Dad left me sitting against a tree, and took some of the others to get more branches and silage. I was still weak when they came back, contented just to sit and watch the activity. But the water looked different, and felt different even without my touching it. It had its own force, its own life. I was seeing it with a new respect, even if it wasn't much of a river. I didn't think, though, that I'd be quite so scared the next time anyone pushed me under. And I knew I'd make it all the way across underwater the next time we came swimming.

I was tired when we got home. But not too tired to enjoy the birthday cake with twelve candles that Mother had waiting for me. Dad must have called to tell her what had happened when we went for the last load of silage, because the cake was bigger than any I had seen her make for any of us kids before. Big enough to feed the whole gang, who seemed not to want to go home.

Aunt Betsy

Jerrie W. Hurd



he was my great-aunt on my father's side and I hated her. She was fat. She used two long crochet hooks to tie her shoes. Everybody knew it. Unless, of course, I was around. Then Aunt Betsy complained of arthritis in her joints and a sore back until I offered to tie her laces for her. I scrubbed nearly raw after touching her shoes or anything else she touched. I was afraid her fatness might be catching.

Her crochet hooks and her high-pitched whiny voice frequently made her the butt of family jokes. Yet right after they laughed, my relatives sobered up, turned to me and said what a good woman Betsy was. "You can't grow up to be any finer," my father said a hundred times if not more. "That's why we named you after her."

Aunt Betsy lived in a little white frame house by the orchard. She loved flowers and grew tall crimson hollyhocks along the fence and marigolds in pots on her porch. I lived with my father, mother, and two older brothers further up the hill in what we called the Big House. It was a two-story, hundred-year-old, farmhouse with a wide front porch. It had been built by my great-grandfather — the same great-grandfather who homesteaded the farm. For four generations, my people raised sheep, wheat, and potatoes on a section and a half of dry ground above the Snake River Valley in southeastern Idaho. Aunt Betsy was seventy years old. She could remember everyone who'd ever lived on that farm.

"You know," she said, "you have the same jaunty walk as your elder cousin Martha Louise. The very same." Or, "You have uncle Edward's eyes" . . . or "old Matthew's jaw" . . . or "Grandma Foster's temper." When I was a little girl, I used to lie awake nights worried those dead people might return and reclaim their parts.

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One day my parents decided to go out of town and leave me with Aunt Betsy. I didn't want to stay with her. I was fourteen years old and quite capable of taking care of myself, except that my parents wouldn't hear of it. "Aunt Betsy's honest, good-hearted, and unassuming," my mother said while I rolled my eyes together in disbelief and tried to focus on my nose. "You can't disappoint her. You know how she loves company."

It was late fall. I got off the school bus by the Big House and walked slowly down the hill dragging my feet in the dust. Halfway there, a black and white magpie hopped on a fence post and mocked me with its squawk, squawk, squawk. "Shut up," I shouted and threw a rock. Aunt Betsy stood outside by her hollyhocks, waiting for me. She waved. I pretended not to notice until she called loudly, "Yoo-hoo, Mary Betsy, hello."

From the moment I arrived, she fussed over me, her hands fluttering through the air, working up an excited sweat. Did I want to take my coat off? Did I want something to eat? Did I need to go to the bathroom?

She pulled out the old photo albums. I sat on the edge of her faded green couch and counted the minutes. The evening wore on. We got past the photo albums, dinner, and dishes. Still there was time left before bed. Aunt Betsy said, "Don't you have a piece of needlework or something?"

I shook my head.

"When I was your age, I always had something tucked away to take up the idle minutes."

"I did a piece of embroidery last summer," I said.

"How'd it turn out?"

"Fine, I guess. Mother made a Bible cover out of it."

"Say now, that reminds me," she said. "Have I ever showed you the family Bible?"

I glanced at the clock. Twenty more minutes.

Aunt Betsy pulled herself out of her chair and motioned for me to follow her into the spare bedroom. It was dimly lit, full of old furniture, and cluttered like the rest of her house with odds and ends. Colored bottles stood along the windowsill. Doilies decorated the nightstands. A crocheted bedspread covered the bed. Aunt moved a pile of quilts off a trunk in one corner and lifted the lid.

"You'll have to help me," she said. "You lift one side and I'll lift the other."

Together we lifted the biggest book I'd ever seen and laid it on the bed. It was bound with a heavy leather backing. The covers were wooden, an inch thick, inlaid with gold, silver, and rubies. Two metal rings protruded from the edges.

Aunt Betsy stepped back, panting from the exertion. She pointed to the rings. "Know what those were for?"

"No."

"Well, I'm not surprised. I'd have never guessed in a million years if your great-grandfather hadn't explained it to me. You see, in the old country where your great-grandfather lived before he came to America, they had only one

Bible for the whole village. They chained it to the pulpit. The chain ran through those rings. Now isn't that interesting?"

I nodded politely.

"Feel how smooth it is. Go ahead. Feel it. That's real fine workmanship."

I reached out and touched the book's surface.

"The clasp is pure gold," Aunt Betsy went on. "The village was poor. Sure, they knew the best part was the words written inside. The gold, I imagine, was their way of adding what value they could — out of respect."

She opened the book. I heard the leather give. The pages smelled musty.

"Look here," she said, pointing to the front page.

I saw a handsome angel with an intricate scroll arched over the print.

"That's hand cut," she said. "Most of the book was done on a press, but some of the pages, like this one, were done by hand."

She went on and on, turning the pages, pointing out other intricate designs and some full block prints. At the same time, she talked about all the wonderful things my ancestors had done to save and preserve that book. How it had been brought across the ocean and hidden from the Indians and dragged from a burning house. There were no clocks in the room. I don't know how long she talked. I only know I kept feeling more and more overcome, smothered. Like my aunt that Bible seemed too large, too good. I stepped back, my hands pressed stiffly to my sides, and said, "I don't feel well. Can I go to bed?"

"Oh, my, what have I done? I've kept you up past your bedtime and on a school night too. Are you really ill?"

I thought quickly. If it was stomach or fever or headache, Aunt Betsy would make me take some of her homemade elixir. "I'm just tired," I said.

"Sure, now. That's it. You help me put this Bible back and I'll get you some warm milk."

I stepped back another step. "Can't we leave it right there? I'll sleep on the other side of the bed. I won't even touch it."

"That wouldn't be very comfortable," Aunt said. "What with my arthritis and sore back, I might never get it moved myself. You'll have to help me. It won't take but a minute."

After that Aunt worried I'd caught a chill. She piled quilts on the bed until I was awake half the night fighting them. When I lay on my back, my toes got smashed. When I rolled over on my stomach, I couldn't breathe. In the morning, she served unsalted oatmeal sweetened with brown Karo syrup. I gagged on every spoonful. She kept saying, "It'll be easy on the stomach. It'll make you feel better."

I couldn't help it. The next night when my parents asked after "poor Aunt Betsy," I fairly exploded, "She's not poor! She's got a Bible worth more than this whole ranch!"

A dead silence followed.

My father was usually easy going. If the crops were good and he could pay his tithing and trade his Buick every other year for the latest model, he was willing to leave things be. That year the crops weren't good. The reason he and my mother went out of town overnight was to seek new financing.

My mother was a worrier. She almost never sat down. She was so thorough in her cleaning, she even dusted the doorknobs. And when she wasn't cleaning, she cooked. When she wasn't cooking, she worried.

Pa said, "My granddad did have an old Bible."

Mother said, "It can't be that valuable, can it?"

By Sunday the whole family gathered at our house. George, Pa's brother, said he'd always thought Grandpa was worth more than his estate had shown. He was an accountant who served in the state legislature and owned half the car dealership where my pa traded. Pa's sister, Eunice, worked at the local bank. She'd never married and never gotten promoted and hardly ever came out to the ranch unless it was to borrow something. She said she thought Aunt Betsy must have deliberately hidden the Bible.

"She's half crazy," Eunice said, tapping her temple with one finger. "I'll bet she thinks that Bible's more junk like the rest of the stuff she's crammed into that house of hers."

"She's obviously not the most responsible party to be guardian of such a valuable artifact," George agreed.

Then Pa and George brought out their copies of great-grandpa's will and decided that although the Bible wasn't mentioned, neither was anything else in particular. All things had been divided equally.

"Well, I believe in a direct approach," Pa said. "Let's tell her the Bible belongs to all of us."

"Don't look at me," said Eunice. "I can't keep her on the same subject with me. You start talking to her and the next thing you know, she's off on great-uncle so-and-so."

"You're the oldest," Pa addressed George.

"Yeah," he answered, "but you're the closest to her. She lives right here."

I was sent to fetch Aunt Betsy. I didn't tell her why she was wanted at the Big House only that we had company and she better come quick or she might miss them. She took her teapot off the stove, put her cat out, and latched the back door. I waited for her to put on a sweater, a jacket, and a coat. She pulled wool socks under her shoes and galoshes over her shoes. She wrapped two scarves and a hat around her head. Forty-five minutes later, she waddled in our back door saying: "I didn't know you had so much company."

"Bessie, we want to talk to you about Granddad's old Bible," Pa began.

Aunt Betsy glanced over at me.

I looked at the floor. I was enjoying this showdown, but I didn't think it was polite to let her see.

"I been meaning to show it to more of the children, but it slipped my mind," she said.

"No," Pa said, "that isn't what I mean."

"Give it to her straight," Eunice said. "Or she won't understand."

"Give me a chance, will you?"

"What?" Aunt Betsy asked. "What is this?"

"We've decided to sell the Bible and split the money. It should have been done at the reading of Granddad's will."

"But what about the children?"

"They have Bibles of their own."

"But it's their past. You can't sell their past."

"We're thinking about their future. Besides paying a lot of bills and keeping this ranch together, the money from that Bible would send most of them to college. With your share you could do some of the things you've always wanted to do. Wouldn't you like that?"

"You sell houses and land and cars and wheat, but you don't sell the family Bible," Aunt Betsy said.

"Bessie, this is the twentieth century. No one can afford to drag the past into the twentieth century. Wouldn't you like to see the kids go to school?"

"Don't you think your grandfather had the future in mind when he came to this country?" Aunt Betsy asked. "Do you know how much baggage he brought with him?"

"No."

"Eighty pounds. Just eighty pounds for a wife and three kids and himself to come to a strange land and start a new life. That old Bible weighs thirty-two pounds, but he brought it with him."

"Listen to her," Eunice said. "She's completely out of touch with the real world."

"Let me tell you this, Eunice," Aunt Betsy said. "The real world ain't inside a bank."

"You want to know something, Aunt?" Eunice retorted. "That house you live in could bring a hundred dollars a month, but you live in it for free."

"I never knew I was charity."

"You're not," Pa said. "You're family."

I was embarrassed for her. I'd never seen her oppose the family, much less grow red in the face and raise her voice. At one point she stomped her foot and rattled the knickknacks on the bookcase.

In the end, Pa told her to get the Bible ready. He would be over the next day to get it. That gave her time to copy the record. Everyone agreed that the births, marriages and deaths ought to be preserved. Aunt Betsy was the person to do it, they all assured her. Then everyone went home.

The next day, Pa took me with him. As we came in the front door, Aunt Betsy turned away to busy herself. She folded back the bright afghans that covered the couch and all her front room chairs.

"Sit down," she said. "Would you like some cake? I made some with cream filling."

"We're not hungry," Pa said.

"Yes, you are. You're money hungry. Oh, I shouldn't say it, but it's true."

Pa said, "I'm worried about the ranch. We could lose it. Maybe you ought to worry too. Where would you go if we didn't have this ranch?"

"Oh, don't give me that." She waved him off with the back of her hand. "Truth is, this place has always been on the brink of disaster. That's the nature of ranching."

"Where's the Bible?" Pa asked.

Aunt Betsy fingered the fringe on an afghan. "Sure you won't have some cream cake? It's awfully good — my best."

"Where's the Bible?" Pa asked.

She looked Pa straight in the eye. "I hid it."

"You what?"

"You're welcome to search my house. You can turn out every drawer and every cupboard. You can tear up the floorboards, if you like, but you won't find it."

"Bessie," Pa said. "Do you know what you're doing?"

"I do."

"A book like that could be easily ruined."

"I wouldn't let anything happen to that Bible," she said. "Four hundred years ago, the Nielsen family was given the responsibility to protect and preserve the village Bible. Sure, a lot has happened since then; but you got to remember, our family had that book before most people could read. That kind of pride will pay more mortgages and carry more kids through college than any number of dollars."

It's been fifteen years since that night my parents went out of town and left me with Aunt Betsy. In that time the family's fortunes have waxed and waned. My brothers run the ranch now, since Pa had open-heart surgery, and they've added two hundred acres. George lost his last bid for the state legislature. Eunice got married. Yesterday the family finally searched Aunt Betsy's house. They didn't find the Bible; just as they didn't find a cheap coffin that would hold her bulk.

For fifteen years Aunt Betsy kept her secret. Then last month as her health failed and I was preparing for my law exams, I received a trunk full of old photographs and a letter charging me with the family responsibility.

The Bible, she wrote, was in a museum. On weekends, whenever I could, I was to take my own children and the other family youngsters there. I was to tell them all about the book and our history. I was to show them the old pictures even if they wrinkled up their noses. I could, however, sweeten the learning with an ice cream, she said.

I don't know how she managed to get the Bible into the safekeeping of a museum. She didn't say. I can only imagine it was with the same determination as those others she admired, who carried it over land and sea. What's more, I don't know how to tell the family where it is. They'll think I helped her, and I wouldn't care, but I'm not worthy to be called her accomplice.

Oil upon Oil

Brooke Elizabeth Smith

Like the sound of laying the warp, whispered names
resonate within the grained, muraled, marble
and curtain walls of this holy place, and veil
the light and air with your form, hands
and face. Mother, sister, friend, I look for you here and hear
your voice in the water's cool promise of oil.

Innocence and experience rainbow in the slow oil,
palmed from the silver ladle, the small bowl. Names,
like holiness, converge to the center place; I hear
them and see your image layered on the marble
partitions; for years now, neither light nor hands
have removed that shadow. Look, you still veil

this place: diaphanous or opaque, the veil
of yourself is warm and scented yet with the oil.
Looking down the rows, I recognize your hands,
or ahead in the lines following Eve, whose names
I breathe, I see the lines of your marble
gestures; if you only whispered, I would hear

our conversations interlacing the covenants we hear,
counterpointing the ordinances we veil.
Fleshed and robed, names rustle toward the curtain of marble
questions, the altars of profound intention, the oil
of the inner sanctuary, and who seals the promise and names
the unspeakable in the true tent made with hands —

before us, the High Priest entered One made without hands;
A lamp mirrors the circle and the water we hear
splashing a bead upon the Silences who name:
Is not this a brand plucked from the burning, who veil:
the tree of life in the mount of granite and the oil
of victory. I will watch here at the marble

wall. I will wait for you to ascend the marble
stair; I will not vision other-world hands
or another day to do this: to taste the oil;
I, too, will not be comforted until I hear:
The day of the righteous is come. I cannot veil:
Here is the last place, now the last time, and ours the last names.

Emma, Joseph, Sarah, Abraham, whose hands part this veil,
whose ears hear the New Song, who soften with oil
the bruised hands and marble feet and wrestle for the Names.

Born Again

Mary L. Bradford

As you enter the water unsinching,
I shall repent eight years
Of watching in the dark and loving
Without turning on the light.
I shall shed my old skin,
Remembering you, pink and new,
Unmarked and gifted, my gift
Undeserved.

I have served
My own unmatched desires, a rift
In God's sequence, my blue
Mondays, my bleak Sundays, all kin
To my unshriven blight.
I have loved and been unloving.
To the font I add my tears
And my own beginning.

MARY L. BRADFORD, immediate past editor of DIALOGUE, has published poetry and personal essays, edited Mormon Women Speak, and is currently engaged in editing a second volume of Mormon women essays.

Expatriate

Jim Walker

The Hawaiians are surprised that we also had beaches.
In their minds we represent one vast igloo
Filled with people anxious to escape
To winter in Hawaii.

They do not wonder that we rank second only to Koreans
In numbers of illegal aliens here.
They only wonder why Canadians become Canadians
Short of the accident of birth
And to be honest, now that I'm away, I wonder too.

No Empire Loyalists, my grandparents, both sides,
Came up from Utah at the century's turn
As if inheriting the rootlessness of Scottish ancestors.
Called by a prophet,
They wintered in tents in South Alberta
To which I only shudder admiration
After thirty-four Canadian winters.

True, I'm glad I no longer have to shovel out ten times a year
The snow's thick packing-in on Dussault Avenue
Where the elegant illusion of our driveway stretched dramatically.
Nor do I yearn for freezing toes and fingers, ice-slicked streets,
Or storms of summer mosquitoes.


But I do miss the drum rolls of "O Canada,"
The weight of blankets on chill winter nights,
Old friends,
And the thirteen hours from Winnipeg to Lethbridge
Across endless summer prairie.

And my children: will they praise or blame me,
Having led them from tundra to this paradise
Where our bleached faces separate us
Into, yet again, a foreign generation?

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A Survey of Current Literature: Selected Bibliography of Recent Articles

Stephen W. Stathis

rom its early years on the social fringe," *U.S. News & World Report* recently told its readers, the Mormon Church "has become America's largest and wealthiest home-grown religion by offering shelter in stormy times." Even the way the "Church regularly flexes its organizational muscle is the envy of governments."¹ Such praise was fairly commonplace in 1983 as Mormons of the Great Basin Kingdom manned the sandbag lines against flood waters that threatened entire communities last spring and summer.

Although Galloway speculates that the possible presidency of Apostle Ezra Taft Benson "could bring the greatest schism" the Church "has seen since polygamy was outlawed in 1890," few other authors have even attempted such speculation. Instead what we have seen are insightful examinations on the physical health of the Saints, and the glamorization of Mormon athletes, artists, and performers.

Equally captivating for periodical writers has been the Church's continuing stand against the Equal Rights Amendment, its dealings with government, law, and politics, and the growing controversy over where scholarship ends and heresy begins. Unfortunately, several fine works had relatively limited audiences because they were published in Mormon-oriented journals. We need not always speak to each other.

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