DIALOGUE

a journal of mormon thought

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Early Mormon Priesthood Revelations: Text, Impact, and Evolution

William V. Smith

Introduction

Joseph Smith's revelation texts carved out a complex system of ranks, offices, jurisdictions, and judicial bodies that implicitly rejected the feminization of Protestantism, while forwarding a selective blend of biblical terminology, Book of Mormon-defined praxis, and antebellum legalisms in organizing an exclusively male "priesthood" structure.[1]

The purpose of this paper is to examine some early Mormon revelation texts on priesthood, to begin to understand those texts in the context of their time and place, and to briefly observe how those texts influenced later Mormonism.[2] The textual foundations of Mormon liturgy are not just the seed of praxis, they also created doctrine, even if some of it was temporary. Joseph Smith's narrative of angelic visits and handbook-like revelations systematized and organized a hierarchy that gradually became self-sustaining even through the shock wave of his own death. His apostolic successors took these durable texts and fading memories of early contexts to form an ever-evolving picture of governmental structure that paralleled reinterpretations of the purposes of that structure.[3]

The essential texts and innovations that outlined and generated this evolution began with the 1830 Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ. This initial text was followed by the ordination of a Church bishop in 1831. The nature of this office and those established in 1830 caused difficulties in understanding

their relative positioning in the hierarchy. A new office, high priest, was introduced in June 1831, and following it in November 1831, revelations provided the beginnings of a skeletal structure that limited the bishop in several ways and formally placed Joseph Smith in a supervisory role. The revelation of November 11, 1831, went through some revision, and I present a possible proto-text for that pivotal revelation to help in understanding how revelations delivered early in 1832 further enriched this structure. The fall of 1832 saw revelation that opened a richer, if intermediate, hierarchical structure. At the beginning of 1835, more offices were added to the Church: the twelve apostles and the seventy. A revelation incorporating these offices in the hierarchy appeared in April 1835. These founding texts are studied in some detail below, together with consideration of how this hierarchy was reinterpreted in the decades after Joseph Smith's death.

Summary of the Article

Specifically, I will treat these texts and developments as they center around what is now Doctrine and Covenants section 107. Sections of the paper and their contents are:

1. *Defining Revelations.* Here I discuss, among other issues, parts of the Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ, an early document now found essentially in section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

2. *High Priesthood–Catalyst for Change*. This section opens the discussion of some of the leadership dynamics between Church officers mentioned above.

3. *A Possible Proto-Text for the John Whitmer Portion of the Revelation of November 11, 1831*. I deliver a close reading of the text of a November 11, 1831, revelation that later became a part of Doctrine and Covenants section 107 (there were at least two, perhaps three revelations delivered on November 11). In this case, I use the Revelation Book 1^4 text redactions to reconstruct a possible proto-text of the first portion of the revelation. This revelation introduced a new hierarch, the president of the high priesthood.

4. *The Beginning of Church Discipline Structures–A Possible Proto-Text for the Oliver Cowdery Portion of the Revelation of November 11, 1831*. This section of the paper notes and contextualizes the seg-

ment of revelation begun in the previous section. Church discipline was outlined in the revelation, responding to a further need for behavioral boundaries in the new Church.[5]

5. *Guarding against Prelate Tyranny.* Church discipline provisions outlined by the November 11 revelation extended to procedures for dealing with a president of the high priesthood. These procedures were important at the time and can be seen in part as responding to Protestant fears of prelate tyranny.

6. *What Did "Priesthood" Mean in 1831 Mormonism?* This section briefly discusses the beginning of an ongoing theme in the paper: how the word "priesthood" evolved from reference to office to category to liturgy. At this point, the reader may wish to consult Appendix 2 of the paper, which lays out by parallel genetic text the relationship between the proto-text of the November 11 revelation and a later manuscript edition found in Revelation Book 2.[6]

7. *Interregnum–The Beginnings of Internal Structure–"Appendages."* The current section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants is a compilation of revelations, beginning with the November 11, 1831, revelation itself. As Appendix 2 and the proto-texts suggest, the November revelation may have been at least two revelation episodes. Between the major manuscripts of the November revelation(s) there exist several important conceptual expansions. These were initiated or at least codified in a September 1832 pair of revelations, now represented as section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Between the November 1831 and the September 1832 revelations, several steps were taken to implement the establishment of the Presidency of the High Priesthood, an important hierarchal step later meshed with practical developments in an April 1835 revelation. The following year further revelation texts expanded the presidency's purpose.

8. *The April 1835 Revelation*. A revelation delivered at the request of the newly ordained apostles reads as a lecture-summary of the way Smith had been thinking about theological foundations of official taxonomy. It became the initial segment of what is now section 107. A close reading of this revelation appears here and captures much of the ongoing use of name/terms such as Melchizedek and Aaronic and relative status of new priesthood

groups, including patrilineal descent narratives for various officers and particular bishops who were now written into a new grouping, the Aaronic order.

9. *Holy Protologies–Holy Descendants*. This part of the paper responds to the mythos announced in the 1832 and 1835 revelations in the context of holy families, a meme that links to both earlier and later revelations, as well as to the adoption theology that expanded in the post-Joseph Smith era.

10. *Eras in Collision–Editing the November 11, 1831, Revelation*. With the decision to attempt another issuance of Joseph Smith's revelations (realized in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants) came the publication of the November 11 revelation, not as an independent text, but as a subtext following the April 1835 revelation. However, the priesthood theories presented were based in different eras of thought and usage in Mormonism. This part of the paper shows how the November revelation was redacted in the attempt to link the two eras.

11. *Kirtland and Missouri Dissent and Canonical Modifications*. Disciplinary procedures for a Church president were encoded in the November 1831 revelation. With dissent at Kirtland, Ohio, those procedures were now in play. Three revelations in 1838 responded to this situation, revamping the original procedures in ways that made it much more difficult for a single arena to decide the fate of the highest Church leaders. The revelations were "canonized" but never became part of Church-published revelation collections.

12. *The Deprecation of the High Priesthood and Its Legacy–A Case Study*. The 1835 publication of the November revelation gave textual authority to the superiority of the High Priesthood among fellow Church offices by making the Presidency of the High Priesthood the textual equivalent of the newly evolved title of First Presidency (see section 7 of the paper). With the death of Joseph Smith, there were several ways for Mormonism to find its new leader. The ascendancy of the apostles carried with it a necessity to read the revelation texts in a different way. This part of the paper discusses some of these developmental issues and offers part one of a case study in Joseph F. Smith's response to

the tensions inherent in Church discourse between 1831 and 1918.

13. *Ordination Practice and the Revelations.* The second part of Joseph F. Smith's impact on ecclesial priesthood is studied here. Smith's views in the 1870s gradually changed as he began to read D&C 107 in a new way, finding in the April 1835 revelation a new liturgical imperative. The effect of Smith's ideas eventually bore fruit in the 1960s as Church liturgy absorbed those ideas on ordination.

14. *The Genesis of Mormon Clerical Structure*. In this part of the paper, I return to the evolution of ecclesial priesthood with an office overview and review of referential change and the meaning and use of "quorums" in rereading the early revelations for the needs, practicalities, and policies of the Church in Utah.

15. *Discipline and a President of the Church*. One of the key points of the November 11 revelation was a provision for recalling the President of the High Priesthood. That provision changed in both text and possible implementation through the next century. I discuss the realities of such discipline in terms of the revelation.

16. *Epilogue: Elijah, Sealing, and a Summation of Successional Realities.* The self-vision of the Mormon leadership is founded in more than the 1830s revelations. Much of the 1840s involved an empirical realization of the theological promise of the 1830s. Several developments set the course for succession after Joseph Smith. These were deeply connected to temple theology and polygamy. The interplay of the revelations and Nauvoo realizations is important in understanding the foundations of current Mormon narratives of why and how present praxis exists.

Appendices. There are two appendices. Appendix 1 is a stemma for D&C 107, illustrating the contributing threads of the section. Appendix 2 compares texts of the November 11 revelation and its later Revelation Book 2 incarnation. The textual changes are intermediate to those found in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants (see section 10 of the paper).

1. Defining Revelations

Section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants[7] has historically played a major role in both defining and proof-texting govern-

ment in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as well as some other manifestations of Mormonism following Joseph Smith's death. It is a remarkable document for many reasons. No discussion of early Mormonism can be complete without an understanding of this and Smith's other revelations that explicate Mormon priesthood; this requires a careful deconstruction of those texts, including their historical context, genesis, and eventual interpretation.

The introduction of a formal "priesthood" and the development of a corresponding ecclesial structure in early Mormonism began with early revelations that took officers called teachers, priests, and elders (the word "apostle" is used, but the new Church's Articles and Covenants defined this as an elder) from the pages of the Book of Mormon.[8] At some early date, perhaps with the text of D&C 20 following Church organization, another office, deacon, was added. There was no division of authority (no "Aaronic Priesthood" or "Melchizedek Priesthood" in later terms), merely named offices with different permitted practice for each one (except in the case of deacon—allowed to do the duties of the teacher, as required). A teacher would head a congregation where no other officers were present. A priest functioned as meeting chair in the absence of elders. In practice, congregations or impromptu meetings often selected the presiding officer or moderator from among the eligible office holders.[9]

Duties of the various offices were close to those found in branches of Protestantism, such as home visiting of members, performing baptisms, administering the Lord's Supper, etc.[10] The basic organizational structure consisted of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery as "first and second elder" together with the mentioned pecking order among the early offices.

2. High Priesthood—Catalyst for Change

In June 1831, the office of high priest was introduced during a multi-day conference.[11] The office was added to the list of those already given, and was regarded as a higher office with duties that had not surfaced previously, particularly in the area of salvation assurance. Previous to this, the office of bishop had been established with certain open-ended duties whose relationship to other Church officers was unclear. Edward Partridge was

ordained a bishop February 4, 1831. Partridge was ordained a high priest in June, but the relationship of his bishopric to that circumstance was not clear at the time. Local groups of Church members selected their leaders from the group, or those leaders were appointed by missionaries preaching in the area.[12] These groups are often referred to as "churches" in the revelations. But priesthood offices were still without a formal internal structure: no architecture like "Aaronic Priesthood," no "quorums," or quorum presidents, etc.

Organization was added in 1831 with a revelation given on November 11, in Hiram, Ohio. The "autograph" of the revelation may be lost, but a very early copy is found in Revelation Book 1.[13] This copy is in the handwriting of John Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery. It was intended for the Book of Commandments; complete typesetting failed by virtue of the destruction of the printing office in Independence, Missouri, in 1833. The revelation was a foundation for D&C 107. Its importance as textual precursor to much of Mormon praxis and both formal and informal administrative thought cannot be overemphasized. Given that importance, I have constructed a version of this text that may be an early form, based on Revelation Book 1.

3. A Possible Proto-Text for the John Whitmer Portion of the Revelation of November 11, 1831

The Revelation Book 1 text of the November 11 revelation appears in the hands of John Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery. The portion immediately below corresponds essentially to the Whitmer text.[14]

A Revelation given at Hiram Portage Co Nov 11th 1831

To the Church of Christ in the Land of Zion in addition to the Church Laws respecting Church business verily I say unto you, saith the Lord of hosts there must needs be presiding Elders to preside over them who are of the office of an Elder: & also Priests over them who are of the office of a Priest; & also Teachers over them who are of the office of a Teacher, & from Teacher to Priest, And also the deacons; wherefore from Deacon to Teacher, & from Teacher to Priest, & from Priest to Elder; severally as they are appointed, according to the Church Articles & Covenants: then cometh the high Priest hood, which is the greatest of all: wherefore it must needs be that one be appointed of the high Priest hood to preside over the

> Priest hood: & and he shall be called President of the ~~hood~~ high Priest hood of the Church; or in other ~~high~~ words the Presiding high Priest ~~hood~~ over the high Priesthood of the Church; from the same cometh the administering of ordinances & blessings upon the Church, by the Laying on of the hands: wherefore the office of a Bishop is not equal unto it; for the office of a Bishop is in administering all ~~things~~ temporal things: nevertheless a Bishop must be chosen from the high Priesthood, that he may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things, having a knowledge of them by the Spirit of truth; & also to be a Judge in Israel to do the business of the Church, to sit down in Judgement upon transgressors upon testimony it shall be laid before them according to the Laws, by the assistance of his councillors whom he hath chosen or will choose among the Elders of the Church.[15]

This portion of the revelation resolves (in part) several of the issues outlined above. It creates a new hierarch, the president of the high priesthood, who would preside over the other priesthood offices of the Church.[16] It acknowledges that the Articles and Covenants (again, essentially D&C 20) did not cover the necessary ground. The high priesthood is designated "the greatest of all." In the ordering of offices in D&C 20, this places the high priest above the other offices—deacon, teacher, priest, elder. That ordering is based primarily on who takes charge in groups. Joseph Smith kept that ordering intact as further priesthood offices were introduced. Even so, the office of high priest still constituted the office that "presides" but it was a status that became less meaningful with the development of bureaucratic structure.[17]

The president of the high priesthood became what the Latter-day Saints later called the "president of the Church." The revelation also partially mapped the office of bishop, an important feature, since Edward Partridge had been a bishop for nearly a year.

The revelation makes clear that the bishop should be a high priest though he may have counselors selected from the elders at this point—it was not until 1877 that bishops' counselors were required in practice to be high priests. By 1877, Church leaders saw the judicial aspects of the bishopric as requiring the high priesthood. In the revelation, the bishop ranks below the president of the high priests, and this resolved an important difficulty in Church administration (i.e., where did the bishop's dictates stand

in relation to Joseph Smith, for example). The revelation introduces the idea of "keys" (in the sense it came to be used decades later) without actually using the word, by designating the president of the high priesthood as the office which controls administration of ordinances, and "blessings on the Church by the laying on of hands" (perhaps a nascent reference to the future office of "patriarch" as well as further defining where the bishop stood in relation to the president).[18]

Two other matters are suggested by the preamble of the revelation. This revelation is an addition to the law of the Church.[19] And it applies particularly to the Church in Zion (Missouri). At least part of the reason for the latter provision was the fact that Bishop Partridge became a resident of Independence, Missouri, months prior to this revelation.[20] Finally, the role of the bishop in Church discipline is briefly outlined. In the second part of the revelation, there is further information on Church discipline and the role of the president of the high priesthood in that.

4. The Beginning of Church Discipline Structures— A Possible Proto-Text for the Oliver Cowdery Portion of the Revelation of November 11, 1831

The November 11, 1831, revelation divides naturally into two segments, properly corresponding to what may have been two separate revelations. The first revelation begins with the portion quoted in the previous section in the hand of John Whitmer and concludes in the Oliver Cowdery portion given below with the word "Amen." This "Amen" terminates judicial discussion of the revelation and begins a discussion of internal official structure. Therefore, if we include the base text of D&C 69 at least three revelations were dictated by Joseph Smith on November 11. When the terms "first" and "second" revelations of November 11 are used below, they do not refer to the base text of D&C 69, but to the combination of the portions of the proto-text given in this section and the previous section of the paper, as separated by the first "Amen" below.[21]

> thus shall he [the bishop] be a judge even a common judge among the inhabitants of Zion until the borders are enlarged, & it becomes necessary to have other Bishops or judges. & inasmuch as there are other Bishops appointed, they shall act in the same office. & again,

verily I say unto you, the most important business of the church, & the most difficult cases of the church, inasmuch as there is not ~~sufficient~~ satisfaction upon the decsision of the judge, it shall be shall be handed over, & carried up unto the court of the church before the president of the high Priesthood & the president of the Court of the high priesthood shall have power to call other high priests, even twelve to assist as counsellors, & thus the president of the high priesthood, & his councellors, shall have power to decide upon testimony, according to the laws of the church; & after this desision it shall be had in remembrance no more before the Lord; for this is the highest court of the church of God & a final desision upon controverses, all persons belonging to the church are not exempt from this court of the church & inasmuch as the president of the high priesthood shall transgress, he shall be had in remembrance before the common court of the church, who shall be assisted by twelve councellors of the high Priesthood, & their desicision upon his head shall be an end of controversy concerning him. thus none shall be exempt from the justice of the Laws of God, that all things may be done in order, & in solemnity before me, to truth & righteousness. Amen. A few more words in addition to the Laws of the church. And again, verily I say unto you, the duty of the president over the office of a Deacon, is to preside over twelve Deacons, to set in council with them, & to teach them their duty, edifying one another as it is given according to the covenants.[22] And also the duty of the president over the office of the Teachers, is to preside over twenty four of the Teachers, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office as given in the covenants. Also the duty of the president over the priesthood is to preside over forty eight priests, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office, as given in the covenants.[23] And again the duty of the president over the office of the Elders, is to preside over ninety six Elders, & to set in council with them, & to teach them according to the covenants. And again the duty of the president of the office of the High Priesthood, is to preside over the whole church, & to be like unto Moses. behold here is wisdom: yea, to be a Seer, a revelator, a translator, & prophet, having all the gifts of God, which he bestoweth upon the head of the chuch: Wherefore now let every man learn his ~~duly~~ duty, & to act in the office in which he is appointed., in all diligence. he that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand. & he that learneth not his duty & sheweth himself not approved, shall not be counted worth to stand; even so: Amen.

The establishment of Church courts begins here. There is a court of common pleas (headed by the common judge), a mimic in terminology and duty of the common law courts of antebellum

America, particularly in Ohio and New York. The word "common" takes its meaning from a standard name for lower state courts of the period (and their British common law counterparts), which heard civil and minor criminal cases.

The bishop is assigned the role of judge in the lower court. There may be a "jury" attached to a case in certain instances. The courts of common pleas typically handled civil disputes, and the bishop's court would do the same. Cases where a Church member had a complaint against another member might be handled by this common court. The name implies that lesser infractions were the province of the bishop and that any Church member had access to this court for redress of complaint.

Following the setup of the lower court system, the revelation continues with the establishment of a superior court structure. The superior court is attached to the president of the high priesthood and functions as both an appeals court (indeed, the court of final appeal at this point) as well as one of original jurisdiction in complex or serious cases. This court may not function without what is essentially an ad hoc twelve-man jury, made up of high priests, who have no permanent status beyond a given court session, at least on paper. Again, this superior (supreme) court handles difficult cases of Church discipline, disputes between Church members, or cases on appeal.[24]

5. Guarding against the Abuse of Authority

As a final provision, the president of the high priesthood may be tried, obviously not by the superior court system, but in the companion lower court, the "common council." This is an augmented common court (i.e., the bishop) with a twelve-man jury (again they are to be high priests). The bishop together with his jury would pass judgment on the president of the high priesthood.[25] One glaring lack in the provision exists. If the president of the high priesthood is disciplined, perhaps removed or even cut off (excommunicated), then how is he to be replaced? It was some time before this gap in the system was addressed. Late in the Kirtland period (1837), the president of the high priesthood would go before the common court. However, by then there was some provision for succession.[26] As the revelation says, "none shall be exempt from the justice of the Laws of God," a phrase

which defines the jurisdiction of these courts as applying to Church matters, or at least involving Church members.[27]

The establishment of the president of the high priesthood changed some provisions in revelations given earlier in the month of November 1831. For example, a revelation given November 1 outlined provisions for selecting new bishops, who were now to be high priests. They were to be selected by a "conference of high priests." The text of that revelation would evolve considerably by the time of its publication in the Doctrine and Covenants (1835). Those changes were deployed largely in response to the establishment of the president of the high priesthood and other provisions of the November 11 revelation.

The last portion of the revelation sets out group organization for existing priesthood offices: deacon, teacher, priest, elder, and high priest. There is no provision for presidencies in the revelation. Each office gets a president. The sizes of these groups ("quorum" would not be used for some time) seem small (twelve for the deacons), but this was not a real issue at the time; most men, when ordained at all, were ordained elders up to the June 1831 conference. Church conferences, where records exist in this period, documented small numbers. The October 25, 1831, conference at Orange, Ohio, noted twelve high priests, seventeen elders, four priests, three teachers, and four deacons. The idea of having multiple quorums of deacons, teachers, priests, and elders is not addressed but is perhaps suggested by the numerical restrictions. In any case, quorum size was not carefully observed. The Kirtland elders quorum grew to 300 members at one point. Quorum membership and leadership were generally a matter of election prior to 1841.[28] The high priests have no numerical restriction, but they form a group as suggested in the establishment of the president. Joseph Smith did become president of the high priesthood, but not until the following year. The establishment of a presidency (counselors) had to wait for several months.

6. What Did "Priesthood" Mean in 1831 Mormonism?

The revelation shows something of the way the early Church used titles. The phrase "Also the duty of the president over the priesthood is to preside over forty eight priests" signals that the

word "priesthood" was used in exactly the same way that "high priesthood" was: priesthood referred to the office of priest. There was no concept of Aaronic and Melchizedek divisions at this point.[29] When Smith quoted John the Baptist saying, "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron" this meant that Smith and Cowdery were thereby made "priests."[30] "Priesthood" was gradually understood differently after 1835 and the original usage was essentially lost by the twentieth century. But in revelations prior to 1835, phrases like "lesser priesthood" (for example D&C 84:30) referred to the office of priest.[31] Reading the revelations without that in mind has generated acontextual readings over time.[32]

The November 11 revelation outlines regulation of the priests group. It was to have a president from among its number. This was modified in 1835: the presidency of the priests group (later, "quorum") would eventually fall to the office of bishop, without the benefit of counselors (see below).

7. Interregnum—
The Beginnings of Internal Structure—"Appendages"

D&C 107 is a compilation of revelations. There are two major parts in the compilation, one from November 1831 that I have briefly considered above, and another from April 1835. In D&C 107 these are arranged in reverse chronological order. It will be apparent later that the 1835 segment has a rather different character than the 1831 segment and may itself be seen as a historical compilation. As these two revelations were combined in the 1835 D&C, still other revelations and regulations were interleaved in these texts to form what we now know as D&C 107. The period between 1831 and 1835 exhibited rapid developments in Mormon leadership structure.

Between the various texts of the November 11, 1831, revelation and the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants text (section 3 of that first edition, 107 of the 1981 edition) there were several developments. Among these were the two important revelations of September 22, 23, 1832,[33] combined as LDS D&C 84. In this text we see the beginnings of a taxonomy of Mormon priesthood, more nuanced than previous classifications, but not yet mature. The

September 1832 revelations review the two "priesthoods" in the Church at this point.

It is useful to recall that:

1. the lesser priesthood (or just "priesthood" in 1831) = the office of priest,[34] and

2. the high priesthood (or occasionally, just "priesthood" in the following text) = the office of high priest.[35]

Within modern Mormonism, it is very common in Church literature and discussion referencing D&C 84 passages to assume that lesser priesthood references the concept of the Aaronic order and high priesthood is the Melchizedek order, but this is incorrect.[36] In 1832 the more refined and paradigm-shifting notions of Melchizedek Priesthood and Aaronic Priesthood had not surfaced yet in any well-defined way. As one can see, this both rationalizes but also changes the currently assigned meaning of passages like this one (D&C 84:31–42):

> 31 Therefore, as I said concerning the sons of Moses—for the sons of Moses and also the sons of Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord, which house shall be built unto the Lord in this generation, upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed—
>
> 32 And the sons of Moses and of Aaron shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, upon Mount Zion in the Lord's house, whose sons are ye; and also many whom I have called and sent forth to build up my church.
>
> 33 *For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods*[37] of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies.
>
> 34 They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.
>
> 35 And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord;
>
> 36 For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;
>
> 37 And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;
>
> 38 And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.
>
> 39 And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.
>
> 40 Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved.
>
> 41 But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it,

and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come.

42 And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you. [Emphasis added.]

"Sons of Aaron" is synonymous with priests, "sons of Moses" is a similar title for those ordained high priests.[38] Thus the "oath and covenant," as this passage is commonly called, really applies to those of the high priesthood. However, consider the more detailed authority architecture introduced by the revelation:

29 And again, the offices of elder and bishop are necessary appendages belonging unto the high priesthood.

30 And again, the offices of teacher and deacon are necessary appendages belonging to the lesser priesthood, which priesthood was confirmed upon Aaron and his sons.

Here, two subgroups of priesthood offices are now defined,[39] one headed by the office of high priest, the other by the office of priest. Other offices are defined as "appendages" to these two—that is, something added to the principal idea or object, but not necessary. We see here the beginnings of the more mature taxonomy to be laid out in 1835. But that reclassification was considerably more radical in a number of ways.

Making the office of elder an appendage to the high priesthood brings the elders, riding the coattails of the high priests, into the covenant cycle mentioned above. The April 1835 revelation (and major contribution to D&C 107) alters this relationship still further.[40] The bishop, while still an appendage to the high priesthood, is different from the elder. No elder is required to be a high priest first, before acting as an elder (whatever that might mean), while the office of bishop began and remained an ordained office, later seen in the September 1832 revelations, as growing out of the high priesthood. But a bishop, both in theory and in practice, must also be a high priest. This duality of ordination eventually made its way into other offices beyond the lesser priests (where the bishop was theologically located in 1835), for example, patriarch, seventy, and, according to Joseph F. Smith, apostle.

The revelation of November 11, 1831, was accepted in Zion (Missouri) as an addition to the law of the Church on July 3, 1832, but remained unpublished to the body of the Church.[41] The office of president of the high priesthood stood vacant until a January 25, 1832, conference at Amherst, Ohio, when Joseph Smith was elected to fill the office. Sidney Rigdon "ordained" Smith at the time (Joseph Smith was ordained a high priest in June 1831). Between that time and March 8, 1832, Smith became acquainted with the idea of having counselors, forming a "presidency" of the high priesthood. A revelation received on March 5, 1832, reads in part,

> unto the office of the presidency of the high Priesthood I have given authority to preside with the assistence of his councellers over all the concerns of the church wherefore stand ye fast claim your priesthood in authority yet in meekness and I am able to make you abound and be fruitfull and you shall never fall for unto you I have given the keys of the kingdom and if you transgress not they shall never be taken from you. Wherefore feed my sheep even so Amen.[42]

On March 8, 1832, Jesse Gause and Sidney Rigdon became Smith's counselors.[43] Gause was the subject of a revelation at the time, which now appears as D&C 81, outlining his duties. At a subsequent conference in Missouri in April, the presidency was also sustained. The establishment of the Presidency of the High Priesthood was interrupted during the summer of 1832 when Gause left on a mission, never to return, and Rigdon had a mental breakdown, in part over his continuing issues with Edward Partridge, and was removed from office for a time.[44] Rigdon was reinstated that fall but no successor to Gause was chosen until 1833.

In January 1833 Joseph Smith received the following revelation:

> Behold I say unto you my Servent Frederick, Listen to the word of Jesus Christ your Lord and your Redeemer thou hast desired of me to know which would be the most worth unto you. behold blessed art tho[u] for this thing. Now I say unto you, my Servent Joseph is called to do a great work and hath need that he may do the work of translation for the Salvation of Souls. Verily verily I say unto you thou art called to be a Councillor & scribe unto my Servent Joseph Let thy

> farm be consecrated for bringing forth of the revelations and tho[u] shalt be blessed and lifted up at the last day even so Amen.[45]

Williams was not formally set apart (ordained—the terminology was fluid) until March 18.[46]

On March 8, 1833, a revelation (D&C 90) was received which directed that Rigdon and Frederick Granger Williams be Joseph's counselors. Moreover, the revelation directed that they hold the "keys" jointly with Joseph. Their role in the presidency was outlined:

> 6 And again, verily I say unto thy brethren, Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams, their sins are forgiven them also, and they are accounted as equal with thee in holding the keys of this last kingdom;
>
> 7 As also through your administration the keys of the school of the prophets, which I have commanded to be organized;
>
> 8 That thereby they may be perfected in their ministry for the salvation of Zion, and of the nations of Israel, and of the Gentiles, as many as will believe;
>
> 9 That through your administration they may receive the word, and through their administration the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth, unto the Gentiles first, and then, behold, and lo, they shall turn unto the Jews.[47]

Rigdon then requested that Joseph do as the revelation stated and on March 18 both he and Williams were "ordained" to stand with Joseph, holding the keys of the priesthood. The meaning of this morphed over time, and that change made it possible for the apostles to send Rigdon packing in the August 1844 succession disputes. Smith used "keys" in a number of ways as temple cosmology came to the forefront of Nauvoo teaching. The Book of Abraham publication in 1842 supported these expansions as did the incorporation of Masonic world-views into Nauvoo rhetoric. Keys were not just associated with hierarchical position. They were also sacred words and signs and other sacral knowledge.[48]

Further evolution in the Presidency of the High Priesthood took place the following year (1834) with the coming of a permanent (standing) council of high priests, the "high council." Members of the presidency were designated as supervisors of the body who in some sense acted as both attorneys and jurors. Organiza-

tional minutes suggest these officers were to give lifetime service, absent removal from the jurisdiction of the council, death, or transgression. In the founding document of the institution, the presidency receives some further refinement in regard to the counselors or assistants as they were sometimes called in Church minutes.[49] They are able to function alone, without the president, perhaps acknowledging the 1833 revelations. Indeed, all three were designated presidents, a tradition that passed to stake presidencies and derived from their essential equality of authority in the D&C 102 minutes.

In the meantime, there was a terminological shift, as well as a succession provision. Early New York convert David Whitmer was identified as successor to Smith, should he fall, and the Presidency of the High Priesthood at Kirtland began to be referred to as the First Presidency. The reason for the change of reference was no doubt the anticipation of other presidencies, like the Zion presidency (July 1834). The identifier "First" left no doubt which group was referred to. A number of documents was back-written to include the new name. All understood that the First Presidency was the Presidency of the High Priesthood (of the Church). However, in this case, the terminology was not applied to Smith's apostolic successors. The apostles were not identified with high priesthood directly (though they were called the traveling high council). Later Church administrations have sometimes ignored and sometimes claimed the title, Presidency of the High Priesthood.[50]

In anticipation of the temple in Kirtland and Joseph Smith's removal to Far West, Missouri, a close cooperation, an interleaving of officers, began between the Missouri and Ohio presidencies and councils. The Ohio high council might operate with any of the presidents or assistants and any twelve of the twenty-four councilors making up the council. With 1837 bringing dissent in both Ohio and Missouri, the cooperative equality disappeared and the term First Presidency was strengthened as the preferred term for the Presidency of the High Priesthood in Ohio. By 1841 the assistant presidents were again called counselors with one final exception, John C. Bennett, where the term now suggested a kind of reduced status.

Joseph Smith's revelation of April 1835 was received at the request of the newly formed Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. This revelation was a shift in the textual landscape of Mormonism and created fascinating terminological fault lines.[51]

8. The April 1835 Revelation

Joseph Smith founded two new priesthood groups early in 1835, the Twelve Apostles and the Seventy. While the apostles had been presaged before the formal organization of the Church (D&C 18), the first ordinations took place in February 1835. After their first attempt at functioning as a "traveling high council" and missionary force, the apostles felt the need for some more detailed direction regarding their standing and duty in the Church and asked Joseph Smith for this direction. Heber C. Kimball reminisced about the experience in his journal: "One evening when we were assembled to receive instructions, the revelation contained in the third[52] section of the Doctrine and Covenants, on priesthood was given to brother Joseph as he was instructing us and we praised the Lord."[53]

The text of the April 1835 revelation takes the form of a lecture, settling different questions, establishing terminology and the ordering of offices, and appealing to both Old Testament- and New Testament-related narratives, a tradition with Joseph Smith, as well as combining several revelatory threads. The text of the revelation was printed as section 3 of the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in August 1835, a project that had been underway for some time. Since it will be more efficient to comment on a text form that is familiar, I will use the form of the currently printed version in the LDS Doctrine and Covenants corresponding to D&C 107:1–57.[54]

> 1 There are, in the church, two priesthoods, namely, the Melchizedek and Aaronic, including the Levitical Priesthood.
>
> 2 Why the first is called the Melchizedek Priesthood is because Melchizedek was such a great high priest.
>
> 3 Before his day it was called the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God.
>
> 4 But out of respect or reverence to the name of the Supreme Being, to avoid the too frequent repetition of his name, they, the church, in ancient days, called that priesthood after Melchizedek, or the Melchizedek Priesthood.

5 All other authorities or offices in the church are appendages to this priesthood.

6 But there are two divisions or grand heads—one is the Melchizedek Priesthood, and the other is the Aaronic or Levitical Priesthood.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this passage in modern ecclesial Mormonism. One hundred and twenty years later, it was still at work as it redefined the liturgy of ordination. Conceptually the revelation establishes two authority "pools" from which all Mormon priesthood offices are drawn. These pools are the Melchizedek Priesthood and the Aaronic Priesthood. This revelation marks the first time this revised architecture appears in detail. The remark about the Levitical priesthood is curious, since it folds the order into the Aaronic pool, while the Old Testament suggests a hierarchical difference. However, it is certainly a nod to the Mosaic era, where the Levites and the family of Aaron formed two different priestly castes. The revelation formalized a trend in the referential struggle to allow a way to speak both of groups of offices as a superset of particular officers and of individual ranks in the system. Terms like "Melchizedek High Priesthood" were being used at this period, along with other hybrids, to get some flexibility of language. Even with the April revelation that language would continue to evolve. Tracing and making useful sense of the way the rank and file spoke of Mormon authority in these early years are a frustrating and probably unhelpful enterprises in trying to draw conclusions about "doctrine." The best that can be said is referential language had not settled into a uniform lexicon. The April revelation represents a codification of developing semantic clusters and, by the beginning of the twentieth century, a restrictive and solidifying scheme, though sometimes exegetes would force seams of historical meaning to appear consistent.[55]

7 The office of an elder comes under the priesthood of Melchizedek.

This short sentence addressed a question resulting from early practice and revelation. It seems familiar from D&C 84, but recall that the system there was quite different. Its import is that the office of elder is no longer a tag-along to the high priesthood. It for-

mally sections out a bit of the reminted category, "Melchizedek Priesthood."

> 8 The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things.
>
> 9 The Presidency of the High Priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek, have a right to officiate in all the offices in the church.
>
> 10 High priests after the order of the Melchizedek Priesthood have a right to officiate in their own standing, under the direction of the presidency, in administering spiritual things, and also in the office of an elder, priest (of the Levitical order), teacher, deacon, and member.
>
> 11 An elder has a right to officiate in his stead when the high priest is not present.
>
> 12 The high priest and elder are to administer in spiritual things, agreeable to the covenants and commandments of the church; and they have a right to officiate in all these offices of the church when there are no higher authorities present.

Some of the important phrases here are "The Presidency of the High Priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek" and "High priests after the order of the Melchizedek Priesthood." By themselves they are not new expressions in Mormon discourse, but in the context of verses 1–5 they take on a new meaning. The high priesthood is no longer the fount from which the offices of elder and bishop spring according to the April revelation, and the high priesthood itself lives under the umbrella of the Melchizedek Priesthood.[56] The ordering phrase suggesting that an elder has the right to officiate when a high priest is not present is an artifact of the official pecking order of D&C 20. This ordering of offices effectively depends on the principle of common consent and later practice seems to negate it. The early Church struggled enough with traveling ministries interfering with local Church administration, reorganizing branches, or contravening the instructions of local officers, to the point where appointed ecclesial leadership often trumped office ordering. That, and the desire to flatten this "latent authority," led to a certain demotion of the high priesthood.[57]

> 13 The second priesthood is called the Priesthood of Aaron, because it was conferred upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations.

> 14 Why it is called the lesser priesthood is because it is an appendage to the greater, or the Melchizedek Priesthood, and has power in administering outward ordinances.
>
> 15 The bishopric is the presidency of this priesthood, and holds the keys or authority of the same.
>
> 16 No man has a legal right to this office, to hold the keys of this priesthood, except he be a literal descendant of Aaron.
>
> 17 But as a high priest of the Melchizedek Priesthood has authority to officiate in all the lesser offices, he may officiate in the office of bishop when no literal descendant of Aaron can be found, provided he is called and set apart and ordained unto this power by the hands of the Presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Here we have a *new* definition of "lesser priesthood." It no longer refers just to the office of priest, as it does in D&C 84 for example, and the offices of deacon and teacher are not styled as appendages to it. Instead, all are now drawn from the pool of the Aaronic order. An important addition here is the office of bishop. It is now a part of the Aaronic order, not an appendage to the high priesthood. Moreover, the Old Testament notion of patrilineal heritage attaches to the bishopric. If a literal descendent of Aaron can be identified, he may officiate without being ordained to the high priesthood (which may still officiate in the other offices). During Joseph Smith's lifetime, no man was identified by the presidency as being in this category. Its meaning was not practical, and its religious value lies in the linkage it creates to the ancient pre-Christian world. In Joseph Smith's view, the "priesthoods" of all former dispensations would be included in this last restoration.

One more item related to the terminology of this portion of the revelation: the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood. This has an interesting connection to the 1832 revelations contained in D&C 84. With the priesthood architecture of the 1832 revelations, the priest is a kind of parent office, the teacher and deacon offices characterized as outgrowths of the priestly office. By the 1870s at least, some had started to use the language of verse 15 above to consider the bishop the "President of the Aaronic Priesthood."[58] This kind of speech is curious. Focusing one eye on 1832 and another on 1835, there is a perfectly rational explanation for such language. But, this bridge between the two worlds is unstable, and then paradoxical, in a broad sense. On the other hand,

crossing that bridge brings into view the office of a functioning bishop in current praxis: he is presiding priest[59] (in 1835, no longer part of the high priesthood) and presiding high priest at the same time. In 1832 "bishop" was seen as an outgrowth of the high priesthood—though Partridge was ordained before the high priesthood was announced. This figures into the 1835 revelations and redactions in complex ways.[60]

> 18 The power and authority of the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church—
>
> 19 To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.
>
> 20 The power and authority of the lesser, or Aaronic Priesthood, is to hold the keys of the ministering of angels, and to administer in outward ordinances, the letter of the gospel, the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, agreeable to the covenants and commandments.

Joseph Smith repeated the quotation from Hebrews 12 in sermons touching on a maturing temple concept and its ritual. In a sense, this passage affirms that the ideas of D&C 84 are still valid, simply expressed in a new context. In an important way, the revelation takes what was once the sole province of the high priesthood, and spreads it out into the new authority pool, the Melchizedek Priesthood. This language is clearly reflective of the book of Hebrews as a whole and Smith saw the book as particularly useful and important in a number of ways.

> 21 Of necessity there are presidents, or presiding officers growing out of, or appointed of or from among those who are ordained to the several offices in these two priesthoods.
>
> 22 Of the Melchizedek Priesthood, three Presiding High Priests, chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church.

The Presidency of the High Priesthood is molded into the new formalism with a new title: the Presidency of the Church or, as it had already become known, the First Presidency.[61] This is both a new and a continuing construct.[62]

> 23 The twelve traveling councilors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world—thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling.
>
> 24 And they form a quorum, equal in authority and power to the three presidents previously mentioned.

While early practice following this revelation evidences otherwise, the language here suggests that we look back to the twelve counselors in the court of the president of the high priesthood. Indeed, so did the establishment of the high council in 1834. In fact, the apostles are a traveling high council as later text announces. The word "quorum" appears again, which now replaces less specialized terms used in earlier revelations. The apostles as a group are equal in authority to the presidency "quorum." The word "equal" here has never been taken seriously, except in terms of succession—with the possible exception of the financial difficulties during the Wilford Woodruff administration.[63]

> 25 The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world—thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling.
>
> 26 And they form a quorum, equal in authority to that of the Twelve special witnesses or Apostles just named.
>
> 27 And every decision made by either of these quorums must be by the unanimous voice of the same; that is, every member in each quorum must be agreed to its decisions, in order to make their decisions of the same power or validity one with the other—
>
> 28 A majority may form a quorum when circumstances render it impossible to be otherwise—
>
> 29 Unless this is the case, their decisions are not entitled to the same blessings which the decisions of a quorum of three presidents were anciently, who were ordained after the order of Melchizedek, and were righteous and holy men.[64]

The seventy are addressed and again the word equal is applied to their standing in regard to the apostles. By transitivity, the seventy are equal to the presidency, but again, the meaning is typically seen as relevant only in terms of succession. The Church presidency is here given an ancient (Old Testament) basis. This meshing of Old and New Testaments was again typical of Joseph Smith's ideas, later characterized by him as "welding" former revelatory epochs into one.[65]

30 The decisions of these quorums, or either of them, are to be made in all righteousness, in holiness, and lowliness of heart, meekness and long suffering, and in faith, and virtue, and knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity;

31 Because the promise is, if these things abound in them they shall not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord.

32 And in case that any decision of these quorums is made in unrighteousness, it may be brought before a general assembly of the several quorums, which constitute the spiritual authorities of the church; otherwise there can be no appeal from their decision.

The judicial character of these groups is hinted at here, and also a new judicial body is founded, the "several quorums." The meaning here is vague and has never been tested, although it could refer to the "solemn assembly" motif. Perhaps it also appears in the approval schemes of new policy or revelation, as in the 1978 priesthood change.[66] A group like this functioned in Kirtland for a time during 1836, where "the several quorums for Church business" constituted a general quorum or council. In that case it included the presidencies of Kirtland and Far West, the two high councils, the apostles (as traveling high council), the two bishoprics, and the seven presidents of the seventies.

33 The Twelve are a Traveling Presiding High Council, to officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church, agreeable to the institution of heaven; to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and secondly unto the Jews.

34 The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve or the traveling high council, in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and then to the Jews;

35 The Twelve being sent out, holding the keys, to open the door by the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and first unto the Gentiles and then unto the Jews.

The authoritative ordering not implied in the earlier text is given here. Functionally, the presidency directs the apostles, who direct the seventies in turn. Actual praxis has never been that pure, however.

36 The standing high councils, at the stakes of Zion, form a quorum equal in authority in the affairs of the church, in all their decisions, to the quorum of the presidency, or to the traveling high council.

The high councils en masse form a quorum. There are possible alternate readings (each high council forms a quorum, etc.), but intentionally, this one is suggested by other revelations discussed later, and text to follow. Never truly tested as an issue of government, it could be interpreted as a safety valve, available if the unthinkable happened.

> 37 The high council in Zion form a quorum equal in authority in the affairs of the church, in all their decisions, to the councils of the Twelve at the stakes of Zion.

This curious passage seems to place the Zion high council on a level, by themselves, with the Twelve Apostles (and it also tends to work against the alternate interpretation for high councils above). Since there is no designated Zion high council at present, the point is moot perhaps, but interesting.[67] Moreover, the apostles, as a body, were, in this era, barred from interfering in stakes. That would begin to change in Nauvoo as Joseph Smith began to trust Brigham Young and the apostles, removing their activity restrictions and placing many of them in his inner circle in terms of liturgy, polygamy, and politics.[68]

> 38 It is the duty of the traveling high council to call upon the Seventy, when they need assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching and administering the gospel, instead of any others.
>
> 39 It is the duty of the Twelve, in all large branches of the church, to ordain evangelical ministers,[69] as they shall be designated unto them by revelation—
>
> 40 The order of this priesthood was confirmed to be handed down from father to son, and rightly belongs to the literal descendants of the chosen seed, to whom the promises were made.

The canonical regulation of Church "patriarchs" is here. Joseph Smith allowed that the New Testament "evangelist" was equivalent to the Mormon office of patriarch. The revelation indicates that they are to be called by the apostles in all large branches of the Church.[70] The patrilineal descent trope already mentioned in regard to bishops reappears here for patriarchs but as a continuance of the Genesis 1–11 ancients. It was never enforced except in the case of descendants of Joseph Smith Sr. relative to the "Patriarch to the Church," a now deprecated office. The text telegraphed more apostolic intrusion in established Church zones.

The patriarchal ordinations created important emotional loyalties. Those loyalties were influential among Latter-day Saints on a social level beyond formal Church structure.

> 41 This order was instituted in the days of Adam, and came down by lineage in the following manner:
>
> 42 From Adam to Seth, . . .
>
> 53 Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.
>
> 54 And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel.
>
> 55 And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever.
>
> 56 And Adam stood up in the midst of the congregation; and, notwithstanding he was bowed down with age, being full of the Holy Ghost, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation.
>
> 57 These things were all written in the book of Enoch, and are to be testified of in due time.

An excerpt here or perhaps a condensation from the Enoch mythos first explored in the early 1830s, the text gives the lineal descent of the ancient patriarchal authority that provides a background mythology for the 1834 office of patriarch. The revelation is linked to a vision of Adam-ondi-Ahman[71] and it suggests the compiled nature of the April revelation. These priesthood genealogies of the Aaronic (D&C 68, 107), patriarchal (D&C 107), and high priesthoods (D&C 84) not only provide for, or subscribe to, the legitimacy of ancientness, they form a part of the narrative of gathering both in holy communities and in the Elijah-mediated chain of salvation.[72]

The effect of the April 1835 revelation is difficult to fully quantify. It gradually changed the discursive world of Mormonism in many important ways. Perhaps the most curious part about the April revelation was not internal, but was the decision of the 1835 editorial committee to include the November 11, 1831, revelation as a continuing text in publication, even leaving in the special directive to Zion (and probably directed to the sometimes re-

calcitrant Partridge in 1831). The semantic tension between the two texts is evident. But there were certain important elements of the November revelation not found anywhere else. Smith was sensitive to charges in the past that he produced revelations at need. Preserving the text of the November revelation was important to all concerned, and useful given the rigid nature of the faith of many.[73]

9. Holy Protologies—Holy Descendants

As noted already, patrilineal descent of bishops had no practical discernible application, so what is its purpose? While it may be interpreted as offering the office of bishop as a restoration from the ancient world, securing Mormon exceptionalism in yet another way, it also offers a look at the way early Latter-day Saints saw themselves. Their religion was not just a reappearance of the ancient order of things. The Saints were descendants of the ancients in body as well as in spirit. The idea that they might be seen as children of Aaron (an image that appears prominently in the September 1832 revelations in both a literal and an adoptive sense) conferred a kind of immortality that was strengthened through Joseph's career. Modern biology tells us that if Aaron's line didn't die out, then we are all descended from him—but patriarchal blessings continue the powerful adoption theology from the earliest years of the restoration.

The 1832 and 1835 revelations each capture within them holy genealogies for Mormon priesthoods and use those protological foundations to regularize and sacralize office. The September 1832 revelations linked the high priesthood to and simultaneously legitimized the Mosaic dispensation by providing a way for the great prophet to fit into an authoritative pathway. Such pathways formed a vital part of the message of Mormonism. Ordination to the ministry was not by the authority of the community—through believer priesthood—but by legal actors legitimized by ordination through a traceable line of predecessors: a line that had either to terminate with the first man, Adam, or God himself. The great Mormon apologists found in this the justification for Mormonism. The linkage to the ancient legal actors was lost. It could only be reestablished through an angelology—the Elias[74] motif—that allowed the ancients to return, bringing with them a restoration of lost con-

nection to the Adamic era, a continuing theme that broadened, solidified, and flowered with the Elijah doctrine. One of the tributaries to the 1835 revelation rewrote the office of priest as Aaronic and the office of bishop as the high priesthood of the Aaronic order, giving the bishopric an ancient legitimacy that simultaneously matched and restructured the 1832 "priesthood" in the office of bishop. The 1834 patriarch, Joseph Smith Sr., found his holy genealogy and legitimacy within the genealogy of Genesis 1–11 as the 1835 revelation read his office back to the Adamic generation.[75] Each of these founding myths and protocols placed the various branches of Mormon priesthood in a landscape that did not simply mimic the King James language of ancient office but provided both justification and legal foundation for the new Mormon revelation. Inevitably this drew on and then emphasized the "priesthood restoration" narratives for angelic encounters with John the Baptist, Peter, James and John, Moses, "Elias" and Elijah.[76] This sets the stage to consider how Joseph Smith and his fellow editors treated the text of the November 11 revelation when they published it as "part 2" of the April 1835 revelation in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.[77]

10. Eras in Collision—Editing the November 11, 1831, Revelation

When D&C 107 was printed (as D&C 3) in late summer 1835, it contained both the April 1835 revelation and the November 11, 1831, revelation conjoined. However the terminology and priesthood architecture of the two revelations were not the same. Meanwhile, the November 11, 1831, revelation was heavily modified in D&C 107 to reflect at least some of the organizational development in the bishopric and president of the high priesthood offices as well as the new office of seventy. But the terminological inconsistencies were not made coherent. The 1835 publication committee felt some urgency in having the November 1831 revelation in print, at least in modified form. It provided direction in a number of circumstances, integrated new priesthood offices (apostles, seventies) with old (Presidency of the High Priesthood), and provided a platform to disseminate several new revelations effecting organizational topology, which were essentially unknown or at least unpublished up to that point.

In the excerpts below, the portions of the D&C version of the November 11 revelation that are new are shown in bold, while omitted portions of the November 11 revelation are highlighted in italics. Pronoun changes and accidentals are generally ignored. To make reference easier, the text and verse numbering from the current (1981) LDS Doctrine and Covenants is used as comparator to the 1831 proto-text.

Proto-Text Nov. 11 Revelation	**D&C 107: 58–100**
	58 It is the duty of the Twelve, also, to ordain and set in order all the other officers of the church, agreeable to the revelation which says:[78]
To the Church of Christ in the Land of Zion in addition to the Church Laws respecting Church business verily I say unto you, saith the Lord of hosts there must needs be presiding Elders to preside over who are of the office of an Elder: & also Priests over them who are of the office of a Priest;	59 To the church of Christ in the land of Zion, in addition to the church laws respecting church business— 60 Verily, I say unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts, there must needs be presiding elders to preside over those who are of the office of an elder; 61 And also priests **to preside** over those who are of the office of a priest;[79]
& also Teachers over them who are of the office of a Teacher, *& from Teacher to Priest,* And also the deacons; wherefore from Deacon to Teacher, & from Teacher to Priest, & from Priest to Elder; severally as they are appointed, according to the Church *Articles & Covenants:*	62 And also teachers **to preside** over those who are of the office of a teacher, **in like manner,** and also the deacons— 63 Wherefore, from deacon to teacher, and from teacher to priest, and from priest to elder, severally as they are appointed, according to the **covenants and commandments of the church.**[80]

then cometh the high Priest hood, which is the greatest of all: wherefore it must needs be that one be appointed of the high Priest hood to preside over the Priest hood: & and he shall be called President of the ~~hood~~ high Priest hood of the Church; or in other ~~high~~ words the Presiding high Priest ~~hood~~ over the high Priesthood of the Church; from the same cometh the administering of ordinances & blessings upon the Church, by the Laying on of the hands:

64 Then comes the High Priesthood, which is the greatest of all.

65 Wherefore, it must needs be that one be appointed of the High Priesthood to preside over the priesthood, and he shall be called President of the High Priesthood of the Church;

66 Or, in other words, the Presiding High Priest over the High Priesthood of the Church.

67 From the same comes the administering of ordinances and blessings upon the church, by the laying on of the hands.

wherefore the office of a Bishop is not equal unto it; for the office of a Bishop is in administering all ~~things~~ temporal things: nevertheless a Bishop must be chosen from the high Priesthood,

68 Wherefore, the office of a bishop is not equal unto it; for the office of a bishop is in administering all temporal things;

69 Nevertheless a bishop must be chosen from the High Priesthood, **unless he is a literal descendant of Aaron;**

70 For unless he is a literal descendant of Aaron he cannot hold the keys of that priesthood.

that he may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things, having a knowledge of them by the Spirit of truth; & also to be a Judge in Israel to do the business of the Church, to sit ~~down~~ in Judgement upon transgressors upon testimony it shall be laid before them according to the Laws, by the assistance of his councillors whom he hath chosen or will choose among the Elders of the church.

71 **Nevertheless, a high priest, that is, after the order of Melchizedek,** may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things, having a knowledge of them by the Spirit of truth;

72 And also to be a judge in Israel, to do the business of the church, to sit in judgment upon transgressors upon testimony as it shall be laid before him according to the laws, by the assistance of his counselors, whom he has chosen or will choose among the elders of the church.

73 This is the duty of a bishop who is not a literal descendant of Aaron, but has been ordained to the High Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

thus shall he be a judge even a common judge among the inhabitants of Zion

74 Thus shall he be a judge, even a common judge among the inhabitants of Zion, **or in a stake of Zion, or in any branch of the church where he shall be set apart unto this ministry,** until the borders of Zion are enlarged and it becomes necessary to have other bishops or judges **in Zion or elsewhere.**

until the borders are enlarged, & it becomes necessary to have other Bishops or judges. & inasmuch as there are other Bishops appointed, they shall act in the same office.

75 And inasmuch as there are other bishops appointed they shall act in the same office.

76 But a literal descendant of Aaron has a legal right to the presidency of this priesthood, to the keys of this ministry, to act in the office of bishop independently, without counselors, except in a case where a President of the High Priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek, is tried, to sit as a judge in Israel.

77 And the decision of either of these councils, agreeable to the commandment which says:[81]

& again, verily I say unto you, the most important business of the church, & the most difficult cases of the church, inasmuch as there is not ~~sufficient~~ satisfaction upon the decsision of the judge, it shall be shall be handed over, & carried up unto the *court* of the church before the president of the high Priesthood

78 Again, verily, I say unto you, the most important business of the church, and the most difficult cases of the church, inasmuch as there is not satisfaction upon the decision of the **bishop or** judge**s**, it shall be handed over and carried up unto the **council** of the church, before the Presidency of the High Priesthood.

& the president of the *Court* of the high priesthood shall have power to call other high priests, even twelve to assist as counsellors, & thus the president of the high priesthood, & his councellors, shall have power to decide upon testimony, according to the laws of the church; & after this desision it shall be had in remembrance no more before the Lord; for this is the highest *court* of the church of God & a final desision upon controverses,

79 And the Presidency of the **council** of the High Priesthood shall have power to call other high priests, even twelve, to assist as counselors; and thus the Presidency of the High Priesthood and its counselors shall have power to decide upon testimony according to the laws of the church.

80 And after this decision it shall be had in remembrance no more before the Lord; for this is the highest **council** of the church of God, and a final decision upon controversies in **spiritual matters.**

all persons belonging to the church are not exempt from this *court* of the church

81 There is not any person belonging to the church who is exempt from this council of the church.[82]

& inasmuch as the president of the high priesthood shall transgress, he shall be had in remembrance before the common *court* of the church, who shall be assisted by twelve councellors of the high Priesthood, & their desicision upon his head shall be an end of controversy concerning him. thus none shall be exempt from the justice of the Laws of God, that all things may be done in order, & in solemnity before me, to truth & righteousness. Amen.

82 And inasmuch as a President of the High Priesthood shall transgress, he shall be had in remembrance before the common **council** of the church, who shall be assisted by twelve counselors of the High Priesthood;

83 And their decision upon his head shall be an end of controversy concerning him.

84 Thus, none shall be exempted from the justice and the laws of God, that all things may be done in order and in solemnity before **him, according** to truth and righteousness

The bulk of the textual changes here have to do with the information on patrilineal descent of the bishopric. The text links the family of Aaron with the bishop, who fills the role of the Mosaic-Aaronic high priest, an office requiring lineal descent from Aaron. The rules here are reminiscent of the Levitical rules for the tabernacle priest. Observe also the substitution of the word "council" for "court." That same substitution eventually took place in Church instructions on Church courts in the 1990s.[83]

Next, consider the remainder of the revelation and the corresponding changes in the 1835 text. The second part of the November 11, 1831, revelation/D&C 107 was altered in interesting ways when published in 1835 and like the first part, these changes also reflect otherwise unknown revelation(s).

Proto-Text of November 11, 1831	**D&C 107:85–100**
A few more words in addition to the Laws of the church.[84] And again, verily I say unto you, the duty of the president over the office of a Deacon, is to preside over twelve Deacons, to set in council with them, & to teach them their duty, edifying one another as it is given according to the covenants.	85 And again, verily I say unto you, the duty of a president over the office of a deacon is to preside over twelve deacons, to sit in council with them, and to teach them their duty, edifying one another, as it is given according to the covenants.
And also the duty of the president over the office of the Teachers, is to preside over twenty four of the Teachers, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office as given in the covenants. Also the duty of the president over the priesthood is to preside over forty eight priests, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office, as given in the covenants.	86 And also the duty of the president over the office of the teachers is to preside over twenty-four of the teachers, and to sit in council with them, teaching them the duties of their office, as given in the covenants. 87 Also the duty of the president over the Priesthood **of Aaron**[85] is to preside over forty-eight priests, and sit in council with them, to teach them the duties of their office, as is given in the covenants—

88 This president is to be a bishop; for this is one of the duties of this priesthood.[86]

And again the duty of the president over the office of the Elders, is to preside over ninety six Elders, & to set in council with them, & to teach them according to the covenants.

89 Again, the duty of the president over the office of elders is to preside over ninety-six elders, and to sit in council with them, and to teach them according to the covenants.

90 This presidency is a distinct one from that of the seventy, and is designed for those who do not travel into all the world.[87]

And again the duty of the president of the office of the High Priesthood, is to preside over the whole church, & to be like unto Moses.

91 And again, the duty of the President of the office of the High Priesthood is to preside over the whole church, and to be like unto Moses—[88]

behold here is wisdom: yea, to be a Seer, a revelator, a translator, & prophet, having all the gifts of God, which he bestoweth upon the head of the chuch:

92 Behold, here is wisdom; yea, to be a seer, a revelator, a translator, and a prophet, having all the gifts of God which he bestows upon the head of the church.

93 And it is according to the vision showing the order of the Seventy, that they should have seven presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the seventy;

94 And the seventh president of these presidents is to preside over the six;

95 And these seven presidents are to choose other seventy besides the first seventy to whom they belong, and are to preside over them;

96 And also other seventy, until seven times seventy, if the labor in the vineyard of necessity requires it.

	97 And these seventy are to be traveling ministers, unto the Gentiles first and also unto the Jews.
	98 Whereas other officers of the church, who belong not unto the Twelve, neither to the Seventy, are not under the responsibility to travel among all nations, but are to travel as their circumstances shall allow, notwithstanding they may hold as high and responsible offices in the church.[89]
Wherefore now let every man learn his ~~duly~~ duty, & to act in the office in which he is appointed., in all diligence.	99 Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.
he that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand. & he that learneth not his duty & sheweth himself not approved, shall not be counted worth to stand; even so: Amen.	100 He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy to stand. Even so. Amen.

The compiled versions of the November 1831 and April 1835 revelations served as a foundation for much of LDS organization and became a litmus test for change and expansion.

11. Kirtland and Missouri Dissent and Canonical Modifications

D&C 107 was a long time in the making and contains many separate revelations woven together into a whole. Witness: The November 11 revelation, itself perhaps two separate revelations, the vision of the Seventy, the vision of Adam, the esoterica of bishops, the "Enoch" text and others (see Appendix 1 for a stemmatic treatment). The story is one worth telling, not only to understand the process of revelation, but also to understand the way Lat-

ter-day Saints speak and how that speech and its understanding were effected by the processes of textual influence.

In spite of the publication of the November 11, 1831, revelation as a "part 2" of D&C 107 in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants, that was not the end of it. The trial procedures for the president of the high priesthood that appear in the November 1831 revelation (or as it was altered in D&C 107, "a" president of the high priesthood) were given in terms of the common council: a bishop plus twelve high priests selected for the purpose.

Two kinds of issues drove the evolution of this concept:

1. The deterioration of the Kirtland economy and the increasing criticism of Joseph Smith for the failure of the Mormon "bank," led to charges of financial duplicity from apostles Lyman Johnson and Orson Pratt.[90]

2. In Far West, Missouri, the excommunication of Oliver Cowdery (a member of the Presidency of the High Priesthood) took place. Cowdery claimed the court was illegal, but it appears that the bishop at Far West (Edward Partridge) did take part.

With a first brush with Church discipline and the possibility of others looming, Joseph Smith sought clarification. The result was three revelations, given January 12, 1838. These revelations may have been relevant to the Cowdery case, but they were not reported to the Church at large until July 6, 1838. Since they are relevant to D&C 107, I give two of them here:

> Revelation Given at the French Farm in Kirtland Geauga Co. Ohio. In the presence of J. Smith Jr., S Rigdon V Knight & Geo. W. Robinson January 12th 1838.——–?When inquiry was made of the Lord relative to the trial of the first Presidency of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, For transgressions according to the item of law, found in the Book of Covenants 3rd Section 37 Verse? Whether the descision of such an Council in one Stake, shall be conclusive for Zion and all her stakes
>
> Thus saith the Lord, Let the first Presidency of my Church, be held in full fellowship in Zion and all her stakes, untill they shall be found transgressors, by such an high Council as is named in the above alluded section, in Zion, by three witnesses standing against each member of said Presidency, and these witnesses shall be of long and fathfull standing, and such also as cannot be impeached by other witnesses before such Council, and when a decision is had by such and Council in Zion, it shall only be for Zion, it shall not answer for her stakes, but if such descision be acknowledged by the Council

> of her stakes, then it shall answer for her stakes, But if it is not acknowledged by the stakes, then such stake may have the privilege of hearing for themselves or if such descision shall be acknowledged by a majority of the stakes, then it shall answer for all her stakes And again, The Presidency of my Church, may be tried by the voice of the whole body of the Church in Zion, and the voice of a majority of all her stakes And again Except a majority is had by the voice of the Church of Zion and a majority of all her stakes, the Charges will be considered not sustained and in order to sustain such Charge or Charges, before such Church of Zion or her stakes, such witnesses must be had as in named above, that is the witnesses to each President, who are of long faithfull standing, that cannot be immpeached by other witnesses before the Church of Zion, or her stakes, And all this saith the Lord because of wicked and asspiring Men, Let all your doings be in meekness and in humility before me even so Amen—

The next revelation addressed the possibility of "piling on" in an effort to get a majority against the presidency.

> Revelation Given the same day January 12th 1838, upon an inquiry being made of the Lord, whether any branch of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints can be considered a stake of Zion, untill they have acknowledged the authority of the first Presidency by a vote of such Church
>
> Thus saith the Lord, Verily I say unto ~~nay~~ you Nay No stake shall be appointed, except by the first Presidency, and this Presidency be acknowledged, by the voice of the same, otherwise it shall not be counted as a stake of Zion and again except it be dedicated by this presidency it cannot be acknowledged as a stake of Zion, For unto this end have I appointed them in Laying the foundation of and establishing my Kingdom Even so Amen.

These revelations amplify the text of D&C 107 (from the November 11, 1831, revelation) to the effect that "impeachment and conviction" of a president of the high priesthood requires a "zion" unit to begin the process. Far West evidently fit the bill at the time. The council of stakes then had to approve a conviction. And there could be no stacking the deck. The "council of stakes" perhaps suggests the quorum of high councils mentioned in D&C 107 from the April 1835 revelation but it could mean a popular vote. In any case, if Kirtland held a common council trial and convicted Joseph and/or Sidney, it would not be the final voice.[91]

Cowdery's case may have been different. He was removed in a more mundane way in November 1837 when Smith simply didn't

present him as a member of the presidency at the same time that Frederick G. Williams was dropped. Cowdery's subsequent excommunication might be interpreted as legal then. The nature of perseverance of priesthood after excommunication was not carefully settled, as evidenced by Cowdery's reaction when he heard of D&C 124. The policy of dissolving the presidency upon the death of the president, in force from Brigham Young's time on, obviated a repetition of the Rigdon situation.[92] One thing is clear: firing Joseph was not the same as firing his counselors![93]

Rigdon felt he deserved a full-blown procedure in Nauvoo, but perhaps since the revelation recognized a popular vote, his case was never heard in an extended way. Nauvoo may have been the "zion" unit at the time.[94] The three revelations were read in Church conference in Missouri, and sustained there. But they were lost from view and not published until the 1980s.[95]

12. The Deprecation of the High Priesthood and Its Legacy—A Case Study

To examine the influence of 1831 and 1835 revelations, it is helpful to consider some of the conceptual real estate for Church policy and procedure in the latter portion of the nineteenth century. The term "high priesthood" as a reference to the office of high priest in Mormon discourse gradually died out in the twentieth century, and its use in Mormon scripture became confused with "Melchizedek Priesthood." Reading Joseph Smith's revelations this way creates interesting potential paradoxes.[96] Joseph F. Smith's position on the high priesthood, specifically his interpretations of D&C 107 and 84, illustrates those tensions. Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) was the son of Hyrum Smith, brother to Joseph Smith the prophet. Joseph F. was an independent thinker. Growing up in Utah, he became somewhat of a street urchin following his mother's death in 1852. At age 15 (1853) Church leaders called him on a mission to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) to redirect his life. The contacts and experiences he had there would color his future writings and speeches. He would even draw later experience back into his narratives of that mission. He led an interesting and provocative life, divorcing his first wife but becoming a relatively successful and prolific polygamist. Smith presided over the European mission during 1860–63 and was ordained an apostle three

years later. Brigham Young made him a counselor in the First Presidency at the same time, placing him in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles that fall (usual practice today might suggest that membership in the quorum and ordination to apostle are simultaneous events— not so historically, mostly in cases of Brigham Young's children). Joseph F. Smith found his own administrative theory and praxis, which was based on Joseph Smith's revelations. He had no experience with Joseph Smith as an administrator and was outside any kind of formal instruction in his religion for much of his youth. His leadership style was independent and rather literal in the sense that the "Book of Covenants" formed a guide for him. It served him well as transitional leader of Mormonism from insular and exceptional nineteenth-century Utah to a progressive and expansive twentieth-century organization.[97]

After the death of Brigham Young, the apostles formed the leading body of the Utah church until October 1880 when John Taylor became Church president. During this apostolic leadership period, the apostles encountered several interesting cases of leadership change. One of these changes was in the Eighth Quorum of the Seventy. Seventies quorums were Church quorums, not local quorums, but their members were not in any sense general authorities, the exception being the First Council.[98] Each quorum of seventy had its own presidency of seven men. Each was a president, and the longest serving president presided over the other six. The apostles presided over the seventy and generally took interest in the issues in these quorums.[99]

The Eighth Quorum of Seventy had such an issue in 1879–80. John Pack, long time Latter-day Saint and member of the presidency of the eighth quorum, came under fire from his quorum—they petitioned the apostles to have him reassigned. The apostles considered the matter and invited Pack to join with the high priests. Pack felt badly about the decision and saw this move as a demotion. On the 8th of June, 1880, Pack wrote to his acquaintance Joseph F. Smith, who passed the letter to John Taylor, president of the apostles. In return, Taylor asked Smith to pass along the minutes of a meeting between Pack and Taylor on May 24, 1880, to Pack. Smith did so on June 18th. Pack's letter of the 8th represented a reneging on his promise to go along with the

ruling by the apostles. The reasons behind Pack's reluctance reflect the repositioning of the high priesthood after Joseph Smith's death. Joseph F. Smith's complete response reflects an administrative view that relied on both 1831 and 1835 meanings:

> June 18th 1880.
> Elder John Pack
> Salt Lake City?
>
> Dear Brother:—
>
> Your letter of the 8th inst. came duly to hand. I caused it to be read to President John Taylor and shall now answer you as directed by him and I trust it will be satisfactory.? I was directed by Pres. Taylor to send you the following minutes taken at the time of our interview with him at his office?May 24th 1880. "Elders John and Ward E. Pack called and read, also obtained a copy of the petition of Elder ——— and members of the 8th Quorum of Seventies in regard to Elder John Pack. Also the action of the Apostles in regard thereto. After which Pres. Taylor and Elder Jos. F. Smith talked with bro. John Pack on this matter upon which he said he did not wish to have any thing more to do with that Quorum and <u>would fully carry out the desires</u> of the Apostles so far as the (8th) Quorum (of 70) was concerned but did not wish to join himself with the High Priests Quorum. Elder Smith explained to bro. Pack why he should join the High Priests. Also Pres. Taylor in speaking his mind suggested that bro. Pack carry out fully the mind of the council and that he associate himself with the High Priests Quorum, and thus put himself beyond all contention in the matter. Bro. Pack <u>said he was willing to do so and would let the matter drop.</u>" With the foregoing fresh on my mind you may imagine my surprise at the contents of your letter of the 8th inst. to which this is a reply. My own judgement is that you are very impudent in attempting to agitate this matter again and I advise you, as a friend and a brother it cannot possibly result in any good to you, but may result in much injury. I advise you therefore, most seriously, to stop this matter short where it is, and carry out your promise as made before Pres. Taylor—myself—your son Ward and bro Nuttall—on May 24th. This will be for your best good. You lose nothing by joining the High Priest Quo. now, but actually gain the right and Keys of Presidency—(by appointment) (or if appointed) and that is more than you hold as a Seventy, except to presided over a quorum when appointed. For you to persist any further in your course in opposition to the decision of the Council of Apostles, could be considered no less than obstinate rebellion against [this?] will in the matter, which would be foolish in the extreme. Therefore I exhort you to be advised and begin to act with more moderation and greater wisdom or you will precipitate yourself into a vortex of trou-

ble and dishonor far greater than now and from which you and your friends will be powerless to relieve you.

I have no doubt you have labored long and honorably in the Kingdom for the good of yourself, your family and others, and therefore what strikes me as most strange is, why, at your time of life, and with the vast experience you claim to have had, you are not more confiding in the providences of God, why you are not more humble, why you are so persistant against the will of your brethren and the decisions of their councils. Experience has taught me, to use the means God has provided me with for the redress of my real or supposed injuries or wrongs. And where, as it may seem those means fail, then to leave my cause in the hands of God, and await calmly His final decision. I am not afraid to risk the consequences when my case is appealed and submitted to the Great and righteous Judge. If you still feel as you expressed yourself in your letter you had better appeal, silently and peacibly, to God and with him leave the whole matter, for there is no higher tribunal on earth, on spiritual matters- or in your case than the Council of Apostles and they have rendered their decision and are not likely to reconsider it at the present.

Your own conduct is against you. Your own course more than anything else, had injured your cause, and the longer and stronger your persistancy, you must see, the more disasterous the results will be for you.

Now. As you have said, "my mission is to save" and the object of this writing is to assist and save you from greater troubles. Nowithstanding I have spoken plainly, my rebukes, to you, should be better than the kisses of an enemy.

I tell you candidly—were I of your age, and a Seventy, if the offer of the office of High Priest were made me I would joyfully accept it, as a greater gift than that I possessed, and yet I would not be considered as seeking office, but in the language of Joseph Smith the Prophet "The melchisedec High Priesthood," (i.e. the office of High Priest in the Melchisedec Priesthood) "is no other than the Priesthood of the Son of God." This office hold the Keys of Presidency over the Melchisedec Priesthood, and also over the Lesser Priesthood" and over the whole church. However the power and right of Presidency depend upon appointment by the proper authority.

With kind regards I am your bro in the gospel. Jos. F. Smith[100]

Joseph F. Smith tried to persuade Pack that making a move to the office of high priest was a promotion, contrary to Pack's feeling that it amounted to the opposite, while moving him away from what he felt to be his duty to preach. Pack was elderly and it's not clear he would have been able to fulfill that promise in any case. In fact, Pack died five years later.

But the more interesting part of Smith's letter for the purposes of this essay involves his own view of the office of high priest. Joseph F. Smith assigns his beliefs to quotations from Joseph Smith's revelations and statements made nearly five decades previously. Observe his use of the term "high priesthood" as a synonym for high priest. This reflects the early Mormon (1831) usage, which in turn appears in several revelations cited by Joseph F. Smith in his letter to Pack. Smith clearly places (based on the November 11, 1831, revelation and the September 1832 revelations) the office of high priest at the top of the list in terms of presiding authority in the Church. This has interesting implications for succession and Smith himself entertained various ideas about the successional impact of the revelations during his own term as Church president. A number of these are in tension.

When ordaining George Albert Smith an apostle (who became Church president himself in 1945) and placing him in the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, Joseph F. Smith also ordained George Albert a high priest, explaining that George could not preside in the Church without the high priesthood.[101] Joseph F. Smith's view contrasted sharply with Brigham Young's, for example. Young stated the office of apostle was superior to the high priesthood and it was an insult to suggest that apostles needed to be ordained high priests.[102]

13. Ordination Practice and the Revelations

In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, how is a man ordained to the priesthood? This question has some interesting historical complexity both in the meaning of the terms deployed in that question and in the ways in which acceptable practice has evolved over the years.

Over the first ninety years of LDS Church organization, priesthood ordination ceremony gradually developed into more or less the following pattern:

> By authority of the Holy Priesthood and by the laying on of hands, I ordain you an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and confer upon you all the rights, powers keys and authority pertaining to this office and calling in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.[103]

Historically this probably unrolled from Book of Mormon text:

> In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a priest, (or, if he be a teacher) I ordain you to be a teacher, to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on his name to the end. Amen.[104]

The nearer to 1830, the simpler the form becomes. Ordinations in Ohio were quite simple: "Brother —— we lay our hands upon thee and ordain thee an elder . . .," for example. There were some variations on this. Some words of blessing were often included.[105]

In 1919, in a collection of Joseph F. Smith's sermons and writings titled *Gospel Doctrine*, a new liturgy for ordination was proposed:

> The revelation in section 107, Doctrine and Covenants, verses 1, 5, 6, 7, 21, clearly points out that the Priesthood is a general authority or qualification, with certain offices or authorities appended thereto. Consequently the conferring of the Priesthood should precede and accompany ordination to office, unless it be possessed by previous bestowal and ordination. Surely a man cannot possess an appendage to the Priesthood without possessing the Priesthood itself, which he cannot obtain unless it be authoritatively conferred upon him.
>
> Take, for instance, the office of a deacon: the person ordained should have the Aaronic Priesthood conferred upon him in connection with his ordination. He cannot receive a portion or fragment of the Aaronic Priesthood, because that would be acting on the idea that either or both of the (Melchizedek and Aaronic) Priesthoods were subject to subdivision, which is contrary to the revelation.
>
> In ordaining those who have not yet received the Aaronic Priesthood, to any office therein, the words of John the Baptist to Joseph Smith, Jr., and Oliver Cowdery, would be appropriate to immediately precede the act of ordination. They are: "Upon you my fellow servants [servant], in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron." Of course, it would not necessarily follow that these exact words should be used, but the language should be consistent with the act of conferring the Aaronic Priesthood.[106]

The procedure advocated by Smith of "conferring" the "priesthood" prior to ordination seemed odd or unnecessary to many; and after his death in 1918, the new First Presidency

(Heber J. Grant era) issued a statement to the effect that the "old" way was quite as effective and acceptable as Joseph F. Smith's process. Of course, Smith's argument is partly without basis regarding the ordination by John the Baptist. Whether the rest of his argument was forceful was a relative matter.[107]

Joseph F. Smith's view of the priesthood was colored by the natural misunderstanding derived from the joining of the April 1835 revelation with the November 1831 revelation. Consider this remark:

> Further in the same revelation [D&C 107] verses 65 and 66, we are told: "Wherefore it must needs be that one be appointed of the High Priesthood to preside over the Priesthood, and he shall be called President of the High Priesthood of the Church:
>
> "Or in other words, the presiding High Priest over the High Priesthood of the Church."
>
> It is well to remember that the term "High Priesthood," as frequently used, has reference to the Melchizedek Priesthood, in contradistinction to the "lesser," or Aaronic Priesthood.[108]

The meaning of "lesser priesthood" had textually shifted by the April 1835 portion of D&C 107. But "high priesthood" was never shifted in meaning by Joseph Smith; in fact, he and most everyone else was using the term to refer to high priests up until he died.[109] His successors in Utah used it the same way. Joseph F. Smith used it the same way, at least until he became Church president.

In spite of the Heber J. Grant First Presidency letter regarding ordinations, with the genetics of D&C 107 submerged in historical amnesia, a later generation of leaders saw President Smith's position as compelling, and it eventually became policy (officially in 1968). In this case it may be true that the Joseph F. Smith method was popularized by Bruce R. McConkie's 1958 book *Mormon Doctrine.*[110] From a recent edition of the LDS Church handbook[111] of instruction:

> To perform a priesthood ordination, one or more authorized priesthood holders place their hands lightly on the person's head. Then the priesthood holder who performs the ordination:
>
> 1. Calls the person by his full name.
>
> 2. States the authority by which the ordination is performed (Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood).
>
> 3. Confers the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood unless it has already been conferred.

4. Ordains the person to an office in the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood and bestows the rights, powers and authority of that office. (Priesthood keys are not bestowed in conferring the priesthood or ordaining to one of these offices.)

5. Gives a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs.

6. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.[112]

Hence, the joining of the two revelations and the eventual fading of meanings influenced liturgical practice in the twentieth century.

Joseph F. Smith saw his 1899–1902 interpretations of the revelations as incorporating a broad view of succession. If all Church authority was wiped out by some unimaginable cataclysm, with the exception of a single elder, that elder held full authority (the "Melchizedek Priesthood") to reconstruct every aspect of the institutional Church. There was no reason for angels to revisit earth in that case.

Meanwhile, Joseph F. Smith's procedure was not just mechanical, it provided for a kind of "super-office" or a sort of "possessing the order" as well as some office or another in that "order." This is a curiosity that was built into Mormon understanding by the adoption of this liturgy.

14. The Genesis of Mormon Clerical Structure

The November 11 revelation circulated in manuscript copies and was tagged to be a part of the proposed 1833 *Book of Commandments* (BC), the first attempted publication of Smith's revelations. The destruction of the Mormon press in Missouri in 1833 prevented the completion of the printing.[113]

The November revelation revamped Church leadership in the wake of the introduction of the high priesthood and in hindsight cleared the way for a decentralized expansion and eventual *local* Church organizations. Regulation was still not complete however. For example, would every deacon belong to a quorum? The practical answer to this was no. Far-flung churches (branches) had a presiding elder (or in some cases a high priest or perhaps a priest or teacher) but no "quorums" within the branch.[114] Indeed, quorums, when they became more ubiquitous, were not regarded as restricted to a given branch of the Church. Eventually, when Church ecclesiastical base units (branches, wards, or stakes connected to a presiding elder or a bishop or other officer) became more com-

mon, even requiring separating geographic boundaries (Nauvoo), an elders quorum, for example, might include members from more than one such unit. Indeed, up until recent times, elders quorums in the LDS Church often crossed ecclesiastical unit lines. The quorums of elders and high priests in Utah up to 1870 remained largely non-functional as instructional institutions.[115]

With the priesthood reorganization movement of 1877, high priests quorums, seventies quorums, and elders quorums began to be more subordinate to ecclesiastical units and more regulated in their practices of recruiting new members and disciplining them. High priest quorums were confined to stakes. Elders quorums were stake level institutions and, via the November 1831 revelation, limited to ninety-six members. Hence many quorums might exist within a stake. Seventies were not connected to ecclesiastical boundaries, and once a member became part of a seventies quorum, he remained in that quorum no matter his geographical movements. More practical rules for seventies membership followed the 1877 changes in 1883, when each quorum became identified with a geographic region and change of residence resulted in change of quorum. Of the three groups, the seventies underwent the most change in succeeding decades.[116]

The correlation movement of the 1960s in effect made Melchizedek Priesthood quorums into ecclesiastical unit auxiliaries. Before the 1960s, high priest quorum presidents were stake level officers different from the stake president, requiring a general authority to call and set them apart.[117] They were in some ways on a level with the stake president and, in a quirky way, presided over him. Correlation in essence erased the high priest quorum and substituted basic unit level "groups" (in stakes) somewhat puzzling entities, simultaneously making the notion of authoritative "keys" a more problematic concept in the process.[118] The high priests groups functioned authoritatively in precisely the same way as the elders quorums, whose presidents were designated as holding keys, making the notion of keys effectively an empty concept.[119] On the other hand, while Melchizedek Priesthood leaders were placed under the authority of the bishop, their activities were more systematic and statistically measured. But they were clearly, and deliberately, placed under the direction of the bishop,

removing their decision powers of membership, and restricting the ability of quorum members to carry out quorum discipline. This elevated the bishop and the textual support was evident: the bishop holds two primary positions in twentieth-century Mormonism. He was designated as "presiding high priest" and the "president of the Aaronic Priesthood," an office that combines the early pecking order of section 20, the instruction of 1831, and the forms of 1835 and 1841 into a single office.[120] These changes began gradually and long before the 1960s. This shows an interesting flow in design as "stakes" were modeled on the Kirtland organization rather than the "Zion" of the era and wards in Utah gradually became much of what stakes were in Joseph Smith's later career.

15. Discipline and a President of the Church

One of the interesting issues raised by the history of section 107 is the question of a transgressing President of the Church. The November 11 revelation introduced a Church court system. The two leading offices in the 1831–1832 Church were the bishop and the president of the high priesthood. The revelation defined a way for each officer to be disciplined, should the need arise. This was to work by using each of the court systems attached to these officers, to judge the other.

As the Church matured, there continued to be only one president of the high priesthood over the entire Church, but the number of bishoprics gradually increased. Since the original revelation left open what should happen in that event, some clarification was needed. The January 8, 1838, revelations offered some regulations to substitute for the earlier instruction. But those revelations, while subjected to congregational vote, did not provide a lasting answer to the question of how to deal with a transgressing Church president. Moreover, it was clear that people in the know saw the November 11 revelation applying to each member of the Church presidency even though it could not have done so when delivered (D&C 90 probably mediated this change).[121]

The Twelve Apostles had no defined role in the problem, partly because they didn't exist in November 1831. The first portion of D&C 107, the April 1835 revelation, defines the role of the apostles, but does not give them overt disciplinary responsibilities

with regard to the Church presidency, and in the question of Joseph Smith's trial in Kirtland, they played no role beyond the two plaintiffs. The April 1835 revelation set up a kind of general court consisting of all the Church authorities (107:32). A somewhat unwieldy group, and not clearly applicable to this case, it does expand the judicial horizon of the November revelation by implying an appeals process beyond the court of the president of the high priesthood.

The 1838 revelations made it clear that the November 11 revelation was deprecated and was to be discarded with reference to this disciplinary issue. But another office was in store in Nauvoo: a presiding bishop. This bishop presided over other bishops. While revealed in Nauvoo, it was never occupied during Joseph Smith's lifetime.[122] A naive reading of D&C 107 led some to suppose that the presiding bishop would be the judge of a Church president, reinvigorating the November 11 revelation.

In a sense, the problem disappeared with the death of Joseph Smith. Of course it was Sidney Rigdon's position that he was a president of the high priesthood and that (in essence) based on policies like those found in D&C 102, he should lead the Church.[123] A segment of the Church believed him. When the apostles assumed leadership, they weren't, and did not become, presidents of the high priesthood. Indeed, Brigham Young came to describe his office as superior to the high priesthood.[124] When the First Presidency was re-formed in 1847, there was no mention of the high priesthood either in the stormy private discussions preceding that, or the public announcements that followed.[125] Historically, the identification of the First Presidency and the Presidency of the High Priesthood was merely a convenient renaming process. With the desire to elevate the office of apostle, the old title was left behind. It's worth noting that Brigham's point of view would not stick. As already observed, Joseph F. Smith read D&C 107 in a different way than Young. Recall that apostles such as George Albert Smith, who was not a high priest before induction into the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, were ordained as high priests too, since Joseph F. Smith believed the high priesthood was necessary to preside (a similar practice was adopted with the First Council of the Seventy decades later).[126]

Still, an analogous problem existed with Brigham Young's new First Presidency in 1848. How would a member of the First Presidency be dealt with? In Young's later years, the presidency had become involved in various clandestine political activities, and by the 1880s, during Taylor's presidency, not even the three of them were cognizant of what perhaps two had agreed to (it is a fact that the "raid" dampened all sorts of communication among Church leaders).[127] By the 1890s, a number of the apostles were uncomfortable with some of presidency member George Q. Cannon's activities, and only learning of some of them by rumor made it worse. Some apostles felt Cannon should be dropped. The idea angered Woodruff, but the apostles asserted themselves, partly based on D&C 107 and perhaps also because of Young's occasional expression that he was merely an apostle with a different assignment. The resolution of the tiff put the two bodies on a more even footing.[128]

The idea that a member of the presidency may be dropped was not without precedent. It had happened twice in 1832 and twice again in 1837. Joseph Smith attempted to drop Rigdon in 1843, but failed. Rigdon was dropped in 1832 for a few months and of course there was Rigdon's counterpart, Jesse Gause, and then John Cook Bennett. Bennett was probably not considered a president of the high priesthood, while Gause's status is not precisely clear, but Rigdon and Gause gave some precedence to Cowdery and Williams. Cannon was certainly not dropped, but the presidency's autonomy was reined in somewhat. This was important for various reasons, one of which was the presidential disability that became a significant issue in the twentieth century.

However, it is difficult to believe that a Church president could be dropped. Instead, President Wilford Woodruff offered another resolution: if a Church president went haywire, God would take him out of the mortal shell (see the ancillary text for D&C Official Declaration 1). The discipline would come from above, not below, and it would be permanent. Hence, fears of ecclesial despotism or enforced error and the ability to deal with that were confronted by Woodruff with a rather different approach than by Joseph Smith or Brigham Young.[129]

By the 1940s, some reference to the president of the high

priesthood (as Church president) began to reappear in general conference addresses. However, "high priesthood" by this time had morphed into a synonym for "Melchizedek Priesthood." Hence the question of applying a deprecated D&C 107 becomes considerably muddled. With no formal method for recalling a Church president, the Woodruff solution remains to this day.

The recalling of a president has low probability though, for other reasons. The system of leadership presently in place in the Church makes it unlikely that a young, vigorous man will rise to the senior tranche.[130] But even in the case of a vigorous leader gone "astray" (whatever that might mean) the present system is capable of dealing with any extreme moves. Given the embedded bureaucracy in the Church, and the consensus-driven approval process for big moves, something suggested in the April 1835 revelation itself and illustrated by the 1978 revelation, and surfacing in the apostles' criticism of the presidency in the 1890s, it would be nearly impossible for the untoward formal announcement to arrive at a news desk. What about speech? Could an off-the-reservation Church president be muzzled? It is clear that presidents who have been less functional can be isolated. This happened with Ezra Taft Benson and Spencer W. Kimball.[131]

This suggests that a presidential recall would be unnecessary except for a vigorous president who began to *speak* what was judged as heterodox. The ugly head of schism rises in this case, but it seems clear that since the apostles have been king-makers since Brigham Young (even if in a perfunctory way), they would have to act as a quorum to depose the president. The common council is really a dead issue unless the presiding bishop was officially inserted into the November 11 reading (the January 1838 revelations would only come into play in some worst case scenario, perhaps). There are all kinds of nightmare scenarios here, each as unlikely as the next.

Sidney Rigdon argued for succession based in part on the ideas of the November 1831 portion of D&C 107. Brigham Young argued for succession in part based on the April 1835 portion of D&C 107. Could Rigdon have made a stronger case? Perhaps, but the insiders in Nauvoo knew Rigdon had problems with Joseph Smith's innovations like polygamy, and unlike Young he never had

any cachet in the "sealing" or "fullness of the priesthood" enterprise. Rigdon might have cited the July 1837 revelation (now D&C 112) as clearly marking out the territory of the First Presidency as superior to the Twelve. On the other hand, the same revelation suggests that Joseph would hand the "keys" to Thomas B. Marsh and the apostles (and hence Brigham Young and other apostles). The apostles did try to reinforce their position later, perhaps vis-a-vis this revelation, by publishing a modified version of a statement assigned to Joseph Smith to the effect that when he was not present, there was no First Presidency over the Twelve.[132] (And while that statement was a fabrication, it still plays into the recall question.)

Finally, the recall provisions of the November 11 revelation seem not only temporary in fact, but temporary in need. They responded to the old Protestant fear of ecclesial tyranny. Nevertheless, the narrative of tried-and-true leadership over decades of steady service is a convincing one, and combined with the Woodruff doctrine and isolation in the case of mental aberration or disability, it is relatively complete in theory. But whatever the case, the second half of D&C 107 is unlikely to ever play a role in deposing a Church president.

16. Epilogue: Elijah, Sealing, and a Summation of Successional Realities

The early 1830s revelations were important texts that helped define how the Church hierarchy eventually saw itself and to some degree the associated terminology and theology of succession of a Church president. However, they were overtaken by events like the failure of Kirtland, the end of the Zion experiment, and the coming of the Nauvoo temple liturgy. That liturgy defined a new kind of priesthood, one that only intersected ecclesial power at its apex. The early revelations were known to the Church at large, but it would be these later events and the largely unknown revelations that came with them, that determined who would sit in the seat vacated by Joseph Smith's death.

An 1837 revelation, now found as D&C 112, placed the Twelve Apostles of the Church as second in command to the presidency in a fairly natural reading and had the effect of diminishing the powers of local presidents of the high priesthood.[133] However, D&C 112 was not published until 1844 and did not appear in

print during Joseph Smith's lifetime.[134] Indeed, its release was too late to be seen by most Church members as an authoritative reference during the succession meetings of August 1844 though it did circulate in manuscript copies from 1837.

The April 3, 1836, vision (D&C 110) experienced in the Kirtland temple[135] was not organizational per se, but in the narrative of Mormon priesthood it finds a place of prominence. Indeed, Brigham Young saw it as a defining element for the top leaders of the Church. It, like section 112, was not published prior to Joseph Smith's death. More remarkably, it was not circulated prior to his death. Key revelations were nearly always hand copied in early days and shared by missionaries and others (the earliest extant version of D&C 112 appears in a letter).

D&C 110 was not, at the time of its reception or ever, openly referenced in Smith's lifetime. Some were evidently told of some of its contents, but it was treated either as a kind of private blessing or simply mysterious in terms of meaning (and some of it, at least, remains that way). It is ironic, given the emphasis the event has received in the modern Church, that neither Smith nor Cowdery ever spoke of it, at least publicly. W. W. Phelps appears to have known of the vision, but perhaps not in detail. Warren Cowdery recorded the two men's account of the vision in the third person. Oliver Cowdery did not mention the revelation in his report of foundational events during his testimony upon returning to Mormonism after Smith's death. Smith does not report the experience in his letter on baptism for the dead (excerpts of which appear in D&C 128), which details his visions through the years, including obscure events like hearing the voices of Michael and Raphael. Willard Richards copied the Cowdery entry expressing D&C 110 into the manuscript history of the Church while changing the viewpoint to first person. Except for this silence, the experience has parallels, at least in reporting, to the John the Baptist visitation. However, while the Baptist was reported as making physical contact, the 1836 vision offered only verbal announcements.[136]

The April 3 vision and the Nauvoo revelation on plural marriage and sealing written on July 12, 1843 (D&C 132), did not appear in print until September 14, 1852, in a *Deseret News Extra* following Orson Pratt's famous speech on the subject of polygamy.

Pratt referenced the revelation in his speech, and the newspaper produced a follow-up that included the text as edited by Richards. There seems to be no public acknowledgement of the 1836 vision prior to that.[137]

Elijah, the final person to appear in the 1836 vision, is a person of some moment in Mormonism, and he became the masthead of Mormon family theology. Given that Smith may have been initially ignorant of the future position of Elijah theologically, it is clear that he was on board by 1844.[138] Why not mention the fact that the ancient one from Tishbi had made an appearance, since he seems to be one of the foci of discursion by the time of Nauvoo? A number of reasons may be presented, but none seems very forceful.[139]

Aside from this mystery, there are a few things about the vision that beg explanation. Of the four angelic persons who make an appearance, all but one seem to offer a fairly obvious reason (from the present vantage point) for their visits. The one that is strange is the next to last, Elias. Joseph Smith had a record of identifying biblical figures (like Noah or Adam) with angelic figures (Gabriel and Michael in these cases). The game here is to guess the alternate moniker for Elias. It's an awkward name because most everyone, including Joseph Smith, knew that Elias was the New Testament name for Elijah. On the other hand, Joseph had revelations on the books (e.g., D&C 27, 84) suggesting a biblical identity for various people called Elias. The situation increases in complexity when we see that it's an official name in Mormonism as well, that is, a name that identifies both a class of biblical persons and an office having to do with restoring lost information or authority, being a forerunner, or in other words, the dispensational paradigm of Mormonism. Elias restores the keys of the "gospel" of Abraham. Since Abraham formed the intersecting link between the protologies of the high priesthood and the patriarchal priesthood, he is a figure representing renewal of the Adamic era and the distribution of this duality to all who come after, both in bodily and "adoptive" descendants.[140]

The Elijah vision is the (often implicit) centerpiece of much of modern Mormon preaching and practice. Elijah is seen as the foundation of temple sacraments, and those sacraments are in turn seen

as the ultimate liturgical goal of Latter-day Saints. (Interestingly, Elijah makes no appearance in temple ritual or in revelations such as D&C 132, which announces exaltation and sealings for eternity.)

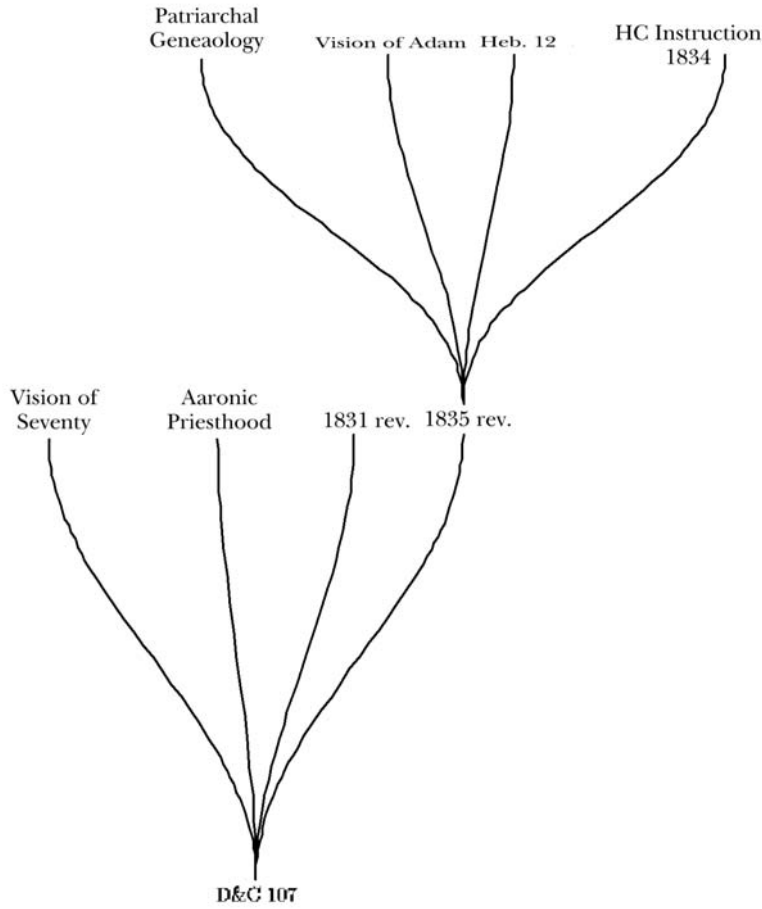
The revelation of July 12, 1843, did not provide direct successional regulation, but it did announce a theology and bureaucracy that placed those who practiced plural marriage in Nauvoo deep in Joseph Smith's inner circle. Its influence on, and elevation of, temple Mormonism made it one of the most important of succession documents. The April 3, 1836, vision and July 12, 1843, revelation define those who lead the present-day Church more clearly than the priesthood revelations.[141] The sealing and plural marriage doctrines of D&C 132, while founded on Elijah in Smith's sermons, were centered in one man, Joseph Smith. It was Smith's deepest inner circle that understood the connection of these dual doctrines to Church leadership as the insurance for their continuance, and from Smith on, sealing praxis, aside from the John Taylor years, and the associated post-Manifesto die-down of polygamy, was tightly controlled by the First Presidency. Among all other issues of authority and procedure, Elijah sat at the center of succession from the death of Joseph Smith onward.[142]

Appendix 1: A Genetic Stemma for D&C 107

D&C 107 has an interesting tributary system and a stemmatic representation is helpful in grasping its genetics. The representation is incomplete in a number of ways. It must fail to graph the gradual rereading of the September 1832 terminology, for example. See the following page for illustration.

Appendix 2: Genetic Texts for the November 11 Revelation and What They Reveal

The November 11 revelation was copied and edited a number of times. Considered below is the "first" revelation in the November 11 text from the previously exhibited proto-text with a comparison to the manuscript edition of the revelation found in Revelation Book 2 (RB2).[143] Revelation Book 2 is commonly known as the Kirtland Revelation Book (KRB). The November 11 revelation in RB2 is in the handwriting of



A Genetic Stemma for D&C 107

Frederick G. Williams, a clerk and counselor to Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio. Williams failed to note the complete date of the revelation in his RB2 manuscript, leaving out the day. A bit of textual detective work narrows down the date, even without the benefit of Revelation Book 1 (RB1). It is important to note that the revelation was edited before it was copied into RB2—likely in 1834—and therefore the differences in the following texts may approximate changes to the archetype in RB1 and RB2. The textual changes between 1831 and 1834 reflect some of the terminological evolution in the first few years of Mormonism.

Proto-Text of the Nov. 11 Revelation

To the Church of Christ in the Land of Zion in addition to the Church Laws respecting Church business verily I say unto you, saith the Lord of hosts there must needs be presiding Elders to preside over them who are of the office of an Elder: & also Priests over them who are of the office of a Priest;

& also Teachers over them who are of the office of a Teacher, & from Teacher to Priest, And also the deacons; wherefore from Deacon to Teacher, & from Teacher to Priest, & from Priest to Elder; severally as they are appointed, according to the Church Articles & Covenants: then cometh the high Priest hood, which is the greatest of all: wherefore it must needs be that one be appointed of the high Priest hood
to preside over the Priest hood: & and he shall be called President of the ~~hood~~ high Priest hood of the Church; or in other ~~high~~ words the Presiding high Priest ~~hood~~ over the high Priesthood of the Church; from the same cometh the administering of ordinances & blessings upon the Church, by the Laying on of the hands:
wherefore the office of a Bishop is not equal unto it; for the office of a Bishop is in administering all ~~things~~ temporal things: nevertheless a Bishop must be chosen from the high Priesthood, that he may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things, having a knowledge of them by the Spirit of truth; & also to be a Judge in Israel to do the business of the Church, to sit ~~down~~ in Judgement upon transgressors

Revelation Book 2 Text

regulating the Presidency of the Church.[144]

To the Church of Christ in the Land of Zion in addition to the Church Laws respecting church business verily I say unto you saith the Lord of hosts there must needs be presiding Elders to preside over the those who are of the office of a priest[145]
and also teachers over those who are of the office of a teacher in like manner and also the Deacons wherefore from Deacon to Teacher and from Teacher to Priest and from Priest to Elder & severally as they are appointed according to the Church Articles and Covenants then cometh the High Priesthood which is the greatest of all wherefore it must needs be that one be appointed of the high Priesthood
to preside over the Priesthoood and he shall be called President of the high priesthood of the Church or in other words the presiding high Priest over the high priesthood of the Church from the same cometh the administering of ordinances and blessings upon the church by the laying on of the hands
wherefore the office of a Bishop is not equal unto it for the office of a Bishop is in administering all temporal things nevertheless a Bishop must be chosen from the high priesthood that he may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things having a Knowledge of God, that all things may be done in or Elders of the church then shall he be a Judge even a common Judge among the inhabitants of

upon testimony it shall be laid before them according to the Laws, by the assistance of his councillors whom he hath chosen or will choose among the Elders of the church.
thus shall he be a judge even a common judge among the inhabitants of Zion until the borders are enlarged, & it becomes necessary to have other Bishops or judges. & inasmuch as there are other Bishops appointed, they shall act in the same office. & again, verily I say unto you, the most important business of the church, & the most difficult cases of the church, inasmuch as there is not ~~sufficient~~ satisfaction upon the decsision of the judge, it shall be shall be handed over, & carried up unto the court of the church before the president of the high Priesthood
& the president of the Court of the high priesthood shall have power to call other high priests, even twelve to assist as counsellors, & thus the president of the high priesthood, & his councellors, shall have power to decide upon testimony, according to the laws of the church; & after this desision it shall be had in remembrance no more before the Lord; for this is the highest court of the church of God & a final desision upon controverses, all persons belonging to the church are not exempt from this court of the church
& inasmuch as the president of the high priesthood shall transgress, he shall be had in remembrance before the common court of the church, who shall be assisted by twelve councellors of the high Priesthood, & their desicision upon his head shall be an end of controversy concerning him. thus none of Zion until the borders are enlarged and it becomes necessary to have other Bishops or Judges and inasmuch as there are Bishops appointed they shall act in the same office. And again verily I say unto you the most important buiness of the church and the most difficult cases of the church inasmuch as there is not satisfaction decission of the Judges it shall be handed over and carried up unto the court of the church before the President of the high Priesthood
And the President of the court of the high priesthood shall have power to call other high priests even twelve to assist as councellors and thus the president of the high priesthood and his councellors shall have power to decide upon testamony according to the laws of the church and after the decision it shall be had in remembrance no more before the Lord for this is the highest court of the church of God and a final decission upon controverses there is not any person belonging to the church who is exempt from this court of the church[146]
and inasmuch as the President of the high priesthood shall transgress he shall be had in remembrance before the common court of the church who shall be assisted by twelve councellors of the high priesthood and their decission upon his head shall be an end of controversy concerning him thus none shall be exempt from the justice and the Laws of God that all things may be done in order and in solemnity before me according to truth and righteousness Amen.—

them shall be exempt from the justice of the Laws of God, that all things may be done in order, & in solemnity before me, to truth & righteousness. Amen.

The RB2 text is in the hand of Frederick G. Williams and suggests perhaps more strongly that the November 11 revelation represents two revelations.[147] Observe again that the text never uses the word "quorum." My use of the word in reference to these texts is only to provide context. The word appears in revelation texts for the first time in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants.[148] Meanwhile, like the word "priesthood," during Joseph Smith's lifetime, was used in a much looser way than Latter-day Saints use it now.

Note the comparison of the president of the high priesthood to Moses. While there was no such president at the time this revelation was given, Joseph Smith eventually filled the office. This marked one of several times a revelation drew parallels between Moses and Joseph Smith (D&C 28, 103).[149] The parallel with the Old Testament prophet is apt for several reasons. Smith was an Old Testament prophet in a number of ways, with many of his sermons, visions, and revelations appealing to Old Testament prophets. This was clear from the beginning with the Moroni visits and their extensive Old Testament references. In contrast to the other restorationists like Stone, Campbell et al., Joseph Smith restores both the patriarchal Old Testament and the Christian New.[150] The present revelation itself is a puissant example.

The Proto-Text for the "Second" Revelation of November 11, 1831	**Revelation Book 2 Text**
And also the duty of the president over the office of the Teachers, is to preside over twenty four of the Teachers, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office as given in the covenants. Also the duty of the president over the priesthood is to preside over forty eight priests, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office, as given in the covenants.	and also the duty of the president over the office of the Teachers is to preside over twenty four of the Teachers and to sit in council with them teaching them the duties of their office as given in the covenants also the duty of the president over the priesthood[151] is to preside over forty eight Priests and to sit in council with them and to teach them the duties of their office as given in the covenants.

And also the duty of the president over the office of the Teachers, is to preside over twenty four of the Teachers, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office as given in the covenants. Also the duty of the president over the priesthood is to preside over forty eight priests, & to set in council with them, & to teach them the duties of their office, as given in the covenants. and again the duty of the President over the office of the Elders is to preside over Ninety six Elders and to set in council with them and to teach them according to the covenants and again the duty of the President of the office of the high Priesthood is to preside over the whole church and to be like unto Moses.[152]

Notes

1. Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1997), 117, 124, 202. Smith leavened Mormonism late in his career with a Female Relief Society that was charged with charitable works and spiritual improvement. Additionally, he introduced temple sacraments that called for female administrators. Finally, early Mormonism was filled with female enthusiasm, healing, and blessing, making it generally more participatory for women than nineteenth-century American Protestantism in general. See Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine Wright, "Female Ritual Healing in Mormonism," *Journal of Mormon History* 37 (Winter 2011): 1–85; Jonathan A. Stapley, "Last Rites and the Dynamics of Mormon Liturgy," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 50.2 (2011): 96–128.

2. The literature on Mormon priesthood is huge, both in devotional and academic terms. I make no attempt to provide sources for every instance of referenced ideas in this essay, and manuscript sources are usually privileged over others. One important exception is the Joseph Smith Papers (JSP) Project and its volumes in print. My abbreviation for published volumes in the JSP imprint series is guided by internal practices in the JSP volumes. The volumes in the various series referenced here are Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Manuscript Revelation Books* (hereafter *MRB*), facsimile edition, first volume of the Revelations and Translations series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church Historians Press, 2009) (*JSP*, *MRB*); Robin Scott Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Riley Lorimar, eds., *Published Revelations,* second volume of the Revelations and Translations series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church

Historians Press, 2011) (*JSP*, RT2); Karen Lynn Davidson, Richard L. Jensen, and David J. Whittaker, eds., *Assigned Histories, 1831–1847* second volume in the Histories series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church Historians Press, 2012) (*JSP*, H2); Karen Lynn Davidson, David J. Whittaker, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds., *Joseph Smith Histories, 1832–1844,* first volume of the Histories series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church Historians Press, 2012) (*JSP*, H1); Dean C. Jessee, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds., *Journals Volume 1: 1832–1839,* first volume of the Journals series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church Historians Press, 2008) (*JSP*, J1); Andrew H. Hedges, Alex D. Smith, and Richard Lloyd Anderson, eds., *Journals Volume 2: December 1841–April 1843,* second volume of the Journals series of THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church Historians Press, 2011) (*JSP*, J2). This work was completed prior to the release of the first two volumes of the Documents Series of The Joseph Smith Papers. There is some overlap in concepts and conclusions with those volumes.

3. For illustrations of the Nauvoo schismata see, John C. Hamer, "Mapping Mormonism and the Latter Day Saint Movement," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 32.2 (Fall/Winter 2012): 1–35.

4. Revelation Book 1 is found in *JSP*, *MRB.* It is self-titled as Book of Commandments and Revelations. In addition to "covenants," early Mormon speech used "commandment" for Smith's divine communications that conveyed moral rules or perhaps specific requirements of the target audience. "Revelation" referred to such communications that were cosmological or informational in nature. Terminology moved away from this early usage fairly rapidly, but left terminological detritus through early Mormonism. See *JSP*, *MRB,* xxv.

5. The "Law," Doctrine and Covenants section 42, outlined much of this behavioral expectation, but left open disciplinary details and methods.

6. Revelation Book 2, often referred to as the Kirtland Revelation Book, was a later compilation of Smith's revelations. See *JSP*, *MRB.*

7. Doctrine and Covenants was the name attached to an early (1835) compilation of Smith's revelations (called covenants in early Mormon parlance) bound with a collection of lectures formulated ca. 1835, probably by Smith's assistant, clerk, and co-leader, Sidney Rigdon. Doctrine and

Covenants is often abbreviated as D&C. On early Mormon revelation texts, see Robin Scott Jensen, "'Rely Upon the Things Which Are Written': Text, Context, and the Creation of Mormon Revelatory Records," M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, December 2009.

8. The "Articles and Covenants" was the founding document of the Church. Drafts were composed at an early date (ca. 1829) by Oliver Cowdery. One early copy suggests that the date of the writing of a more or less complete document is April 10, 1830, four days following the formal Church founding on April 6, 1830. See *JSP,* MRB, 21–2; also Oliver Cowdery, Revelation, ca. June 1829, CHL; Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University), 1974, vol. 1: 287–90; also, D&C 18:1–5. Also, Scott H. Faulring, "An Examination of the 1929 'Articles of the Church of Christ' in Relation to Section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants," *BYU Studies* 43, no. 4 (Summer 2004): 57–91.

9. Searching the published revelations for mentions of priesthood offices can be chronologically misleading. When revelations were printed, a number was modified to make reference to offices not known when those revelations were originally delivered. Doctrine and Covenants section 20 (D&C 20) is perhaps the leading example. Consider, for example, verses 65–67 in the current (1981) edition, which mention bishops, high councilors, common consent, presidents of the high priesthood, high priests, etc. Manuscripts were also updated with sequential changes. Again D&C 20 is a good example. In fact, it has more variants in both imprints and manuscripts than any other revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants. Minute Book 2 reports the first Church conference, June 9, 1830. The reading there suggests that the office of deacon was not present in the text. The first recorded deacon ordination waited until 1831 (see Minute Book 2, October 25, 1831, CHL). A most interesting change in the text(s) of D&C 20 was the baptismal prayer from the Book of Mormon form to the present wording in 1835. On election of meeting chairs, irrespective of Church office, see, for example, Minute Book 2, p. 84 (November 7, 1837). Minute Book 2 is commonly known as the *Far West Record*. It is available online at http://josephsmithpapers.org.

10. An unusual difference during the period was the duty of elders in the laying on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. Textually, this may be seen as a Book of Mormon/New Testament derived practice. Protestant-like confirmation ceremony was incorporated into Mormonism nearly from its beginning and typically consisted of the Lord's Supper and the laying on of hands. Richard Robert Osmer, *Confirmation: Presbyterian Practices in Ecumenical Perspective* (Louisville, Kentucky: Geneva Press, 1996); *JSP*, H1:366, 429.

11. Mark L. Staker, *Hearken, O Ye People: The Historical Setting of Joseph Smith's Ohio Revelations* (Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books, 2010), chapter 12. This innovation/restoration is rarely mentioned in the modern Church, but it was a major development. Part of the reason for this lack of attention was the careful emphasis on the apostolic office by the Mormon apostles, post-martyrdom. The demotion of "the high priesthood" among other measures seems meant to help ensure no official competition for Church leadership. It was a strategy in the long run that obscured the nature of Church government over Joseph Smith's lifetime. See below.

12. The procedures for installing local Church officers were frequently quite egalitarian throughout the nineteenth century. For example, during the 1877 systematization and reform of leadership practice, the apostles often polled congregations.

13. *JSP*, *MRB:* 217–18.

14. Another revelation was delivered on the 11th. It would become the basis of D&C 69. The revelation under discussion here was perhaps, itself, two revelations. This division is discussed below.

15. The word "priesthood" in the early revelations was not the designator of a class of individuals or offices. It named an office. This is partly telegraphed to modern readers in the spelling above (priest hood). It gradually evolved in usage so that priesthood meant a multitude of things. A good example of this generality occurs in D&C 124, an 1841 revelation that illustrates this in verses 91, 95, 121, 132, etc. A beginning to this broadening is seen in what became D&C 84 as discussed below.

16. President was a relatively common term in religious contexts deployed both formally and informally in literature and practice. Tertullian used it (third century) to refer to the head of a Christian community. Proximate to Joseph Smith, Methodism used the term for those elected to govern a "conference" or collection of regional congregations. See the "Wesleyan Methodist Church Presidents Scrapbook" (Drew University Methodist Library) for vignettes of presidents in the British Conference beginning with John Wesley himself. After Wesley died, fears of ecclesial abuse led to yearly elections of new presidents from the ranks of ordained presbyters, a tradition that found place in Mormon praxis for a time. On organizational structure and methods, see Christopher Jones, "We Latter-Day Saints Are Methodists': The Influence of Methodism on Early Mormon Religiosity" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 2009), 77–93; also Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith, Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Knopf, 2005): 69–70, 153, 251, 254; Kathleen Flake, "From Conferences to Councils: The Development of LDS Church Organization, 1830–1835," in *Archive of Restoration Culture Summer Fellows'*

Papers, 1997–1999 (Provo, Utah: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for LDS History, 2000): 1–8.

17. The term "high priesthood" was well understood to refer to the office of high priest. Similar terminology dated from the Book of Mormon translation and was found in Masonic movements of the time. "Melchizedek" became attached to the high priesthood in early discourse and, by 1835, was firmly embedded in priesthood taxonomy.

18. On the 1877 changes see William G. Hartley, "The Priesthood Reorganization of 1877: Brigham Young's Last Achievement," *BYU Studies* 20.1 (Fall 1979): 3–36.

19. This was more or less what is now D&C 42—see *JSP, MRB:* 61. For the textual development of D&C 42, see Grant Underwood, "'The Laws of the Church of Christ' (D&C 42): A Textual and Historical Analysis," in *The Doctrine and Covenants: Revelations in Context*, edited by Andrew H. Hedges, J. Spencer Fluhman, and Alonzo L. Gaskill (Provo and Salt Lake City, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University and Deseret Book, 2008), 108–41; Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730–1840* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 299.

20. Another bishop was ordained a month later–Newel K. Whitney, in Kirtland, Ohio.

21. Text in brackets is explanatory, not original.

22. The presence of the deacon office suggests its complete integration into the official structure.

23. Kirtland and Nauvoo set a partial precedent for the Utah LDS practice that confined the deacons, teachers, priests, and elders as "stake" quorums in Utah. Bishops in the stake would select men (and, gradually, boys) to fill the ranks of deacons with perhaps a number of quorums of each rank, but the quorums would not be affected by ward boundaries. Boys finally filled the teachers and priests quorums as well but as teachers were deployed in Church discipline in nineteenth-century Utah Mormonism, boys generally did not invade their ranks at first. On bishops and early Utah organization see D. Gene Pace, "Community Leadership on the Mormon Frontier: Mormon Bishops and the Political, Economic, and Social Development of Utah before Statehood" (PhD diss., Ohio State University), 1983. Also see William G. Hartley, *My Fellow Servants: Essays on the History of the Priesthood* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 2010); Dale Beecher, "The Office of Bishop," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15.4 (Winter 1982): 103–15.

24. Naturally one sees the beginnings of the "high council" system here, which was formalized in February 1834. High council may be seen

as a title originating both in civil government just as "common council" (common pleas court, superior court) and also Smith's visions of the Old Testament patriarchs sampled in D&C 107. Church government issues prior to formal high councils were handled by the *ad hoc* high priesthood councils. For example, see Minute Book 1 (summer 1833), MS 3432, CHL, also available online at http://josephsmithpapers.org. Minute Book 1 is also known by the title Kirtland Council Minute Book.

25. The role of the bishop's counselors is not completely clear from the text. In ordinary cases they seem to act as attorney/jurors, presenting aspects of the case, much like the high priesthood councils and the eventual high council. Their role evolved with further regulation.

26. Church judicial formalities regarding a president of the high priesthood were modified in August 1835 and again in January 1838. See below.

27. The Saints gradually withdrew from the judicial institutions of civil government in favor of the Church court system for resolution of disputes and other issues. Mark Ashurst-McGee, "Zion Rising: Joseph Smith's Early Social and Political Thought" (PhD diss., University of Arizona, 2008), 293–94.

28. For most of the nineteenth century, quorum and other leaders were elected by their constituents. At least visiting leaders polled the feelings of those affected by the establishment of new officers. Exceptions were general officers, where practice varied from announcement by the Church president to discussion of names by affected groups (like the apostles for instance) and offering those names to the president for approval of one. Styles of leadership dictated procedure. See, for example, Joseph F. Smith, *Special Conference Report*, October 1901, 82; *Gospel Doctrine*, 220–21; Minute Book 2, 81–2; Hartley, "Priesthood Reorganization," 16, 19.

29. The idea that the bishop was the president of the priests came later. A priest was to be assigned as president of the priests group and the bishop was not a priest at this point. Quorum organization records are sparse until after 1835. When the present information was incorporated in D&C 107 in 1835, a discontinuity remained. The Aaronic bishop mythos introduced later impressed more consistency on the organization, moving the bishop into the ranks of the Aaronic order and effectively identifying him as the directing priest—the Mosaic high priest. In fact, the "High Priesthood after the order of Aaron" was deployed for a time in 1833. See the discussion of the April 1835 revelation below. On quorums, see Lyndon W. Cook and Milton V. Backman Jr., eds., *The Kirtland Elders Quorum Record, 1836–1841* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book Co., 1985) (original in Community of Christ historical archives) or

Teachers Quorum Minutes, December 1834–December 1845, MS 3428, CHL.

30. Smith's report of the angel's words was given in 1838. However, Cowdery's 1834 report uses essentially the same language. *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (October 1834):14–16; *JSP*;, H1:43.

31. Suggested by Cowdery in his 1834 explanation of his delayed membership in the First Presidency. *JSP;*, H1:43. On Cowdery's account, see *JSP*; H1:24–28.

32. Some of the section headings of pre-2013 editions of the LDS Doctrine and Covenants perpetuated (historical) misunderstanding here. See for example the 1981 edition heading for D&C 84. It has been suggested that "high priesthood" was something separate from office, or an office that disappeared from Mormon liturgy and hierarchy. Textually the picture is somewhat clearer. Appeals to reports of lived Mormonism show that referential structures were more complicated "on the ground" and equally evolutionary. See Matthew C. Godfrey, "A Culmination of Learning: D&C 84 and the Doctrine of the Priesthood," *You Shall Have My Word: Exploring the Text of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2012), 167–81; Gregory R. Prince, *Power from on High: The Development of Mormon Priesthood* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 27–28. Early Mormons saw the Book of Mormon version of high priesthood as the June 1831 "Joseph Smith" high priesthood. Cp. Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 45. Also, Minute Book 2 (October 25, 1831); see also, David Grua, "On Higher, and Lesser, Priesthoods," *The Juvenile Instructor*, November 24, 2010, http://www.juvenileinstructor.org/on-higher-and-lesser-priesthoods.

33. *JSP*, *MRB:* 275–90.

34. Shipps and Welch, *Journals*, 45. The usage coincides with commonly understood meanings, i.e., the office of a priest. For example, see Webster's 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*, or *Oxford English Dictionary* period entries.

35. Outside the texts represented here, it is seldom useful to try to understand then contemporaneously lived Mormonism in terms of rigid definitions. Terminology was in flux and discursive edges were often fuzzy. A good example is a sermon written, and perhaps delivered, by Algernon Sidney Gilbert, ca. 1832. Gilbert wrote: "Now I ask, what order of Priesthood do your priests belong to? do they belong to the order of Aaron, I think you will answer no. I ask again do they belong to the order of Melchizedeck, I think you cannot say they do—" (MS 4583, book B, 118–24, CHL). Already the notion of "orders" had surfaced and Joseph

Smith's affinity for the book of Hebrews may have been important here. The terminological drift ("Melchisedec order") was an early one as illustrated by Mormon dissident Ezra Booth's critiques in the *Ohio Star*. Booth wrote nine letters for the *Star* that appeared between the October 13 and December 8, 1831, issues. The letters also appeared in other newspapers. Afterward, they were reprinted in Eber D. Howe's *Mormonism Unvailed*, (Painesville, Ohio, 1834): 175–221. It should be noted however that Booth equates the high priesthood and the "Melchisedec" order, probably a Hebrews allusion. A vision received on February 16, 1832 (*JSP*, *MRB:* 249; D&C 76:57), speaks of the "order of Melchisidec which is after the order of Enoch which is after the order of the Son of God." The notion of orders and high priesthood found its way briefly into discourse on the lesser priesthood. The 1833 Zion temple plans referenced "the high priesthood after the order of Aaron." In 1835, this referential swirl settled in to match the new priesthood architecture of the April revelation. Compare, Godfrey, "A Culmination."

36. That is, Aaronic Priesthood and Melchizedek Priesthood as presently defined in Mormonism. A fascinating example of the confusion created by the adjustment of terminology appears in the arc of Joseph F. Smith's instructions on priesthood. Joseph F. Smith played a key role in the modern understanding of these revelation texts and his own transition in understanding is important here. This is explored briefly below.

37. Smith expanded and reformulated priesthood orders through his life. Much of this was connected to temple theology and liturgy. For example, see his sermons of August 27, 1843, and March 10, 1844, in Lyndon W. Cook and Andrew F. Ehat, *Words of Joseph Smith* (Orem, Utah: Grandin, 1990), 243–47, 327–36 (hereafter cited as *WJS*).

38. This trope is connected to the expanding adoption theology of Mormonism. Cf. Samuel M. Brown, "Early Mormon Adoption Theology and the Mechanics of Salvation," *Journal of Mormon History* 37, vol. 3 (Summer 2011): 3–52. Also, Jonathan A. Stapley, "Adoptive Sealing Ritual in Mormonism," *Journal of Mormon History* (Summer 2011): 53–118.

39. The reader will see that in this meta-discussion of Mormon priesthood I often employ the current (essentially post-1900) terminology in referring to LDS priesthood. Complete precision is difficult here without introducing a companion meta-language.

40. Just as the November 11 revelation exists in the Newel K. Whitney collection at the L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, BYU (hereafter LTPSC), so D&C 84 appears there, as well as in the KRB. There is only one intriguing alternate reading in those texts and it does not apply to the passages above. Two other manuscript versions of the

revelation exist but, like the Whitney version, do not bear on the discussion here.

41. Minute Book 2, p. 28.

42. Newel K. Whitney Collection, LTPSC. Compare D&C 81:1–2 given a few days later. The word "presidency" in the revelation didn't necessarily refer to a plurality of persons. The interesting use of "priesthood" here means that early usage of the term was fluid and time-sensitive. Latter-day Saint establishment of priesthood (in the 1835 sense) was very unusual among contemporary Protestants in whom the fear of ecclesial tyranny ruled. Mormon nomenclature expanded, contracted, and otherwise altered in several ways as things progressed. As an aside, the use of "ordained" had a somewhat fluid meaning as well. This fluidity is still echoed in the twentieth century with Church presidents often being "ordained and set apart." Probably because the event occurs so rarely, and is invested with profound reverence, there has been no opportunity to formalize the language.

43. On Gause, see Erin B. Jennings, "The Consequential Counselor: Restoring the Root(s) of Jesse Gause," *Journal of Mormon History* 34, vol. 2 (2008): 182–227.

44. Rigdon's outlandish behavior was possibly due in part to the lingering effects of the beating he received by a Hiram, Ohio, mob that attacked him and Smith in March. Rigdon was delirious for days following the event. Outwardly he may have been frustrated with his Hiram (a small log cabin near the John Johnson home) and Kirtland living accommodations together with ongoing threats of violence. Rigdon felt a continuing dissatisfaction regarding Partridge's treatment of Kirtland leaders during their visit to Missouri in April 1832. He apparently blamed Partridge for the miserable return journey brought on by Partridge's purchase of canoes for a river trip, as well as Partridge's skepticism of the location of Zion in 1831. On the mob, see Staker, *Hearken,* chap. 27.

45. Frederick G. Williams papers, CHL (dated incorrectly there as 1834).

46. Minute Book 1, 16.

47. See *JSP, MRB:* 313–18.

48. Samuel Brown, *In Heaven as It Is on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Early Mormon Conquest of Death* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011): 179–202; *WJS*, 3–12, 119–20, 243–47.

49. Minute Book 1, 27–41; D&C 102. With the establishment of the high council, its members were often referred to as "counselors." To avoid confusion apparently, the presidency counselors became known as "assistant presidents" for a time. See below.

50. Brigham Young did not use the title, no doubt because he saw

the title as distracting from the narrative he constructed around "apostleship." However, his successor John Taylor resuscitated it. It seems to disappear again until the mid-twentieth century. Used sparingly, Gordon B. Hinckley claimed it most recently. It's not clear, of course, how "high priesthood" was interpreted, but with John Taylor, at least, the early meaning is quite likely. Young found various occasions to teach the high priests their place in the scheme of things. By November 1847 the apostles were acting as presiding authorities in high priest gatherings. See Robert L. Campbell journal, November 17, 1847, filed as volume 9, Church Historian's office journal, CHL.

51. Minute Book 1, 198. The revelation is dated March 28, 1835, in Minute Book 1 and the Heber C. Kimball journal, but based on the movements of the participants in the experience, it was probably given near the end of April. See Steven C. Harper, *Making Sense of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2008), 395n2. As mentioned previously, its character is different than the November 11, 1831, revelation, consisting of a fusion of different developments and revelations, roughly in lecture form, in a sense comparable to Rigdon's "Lectures on Faith"; see Noel B. Reynolds, "The Case for Sidney Rigdon as Author of the Lectures on Faith," *Journal of Mormon History* 31, vol. 2 (2005): 1–41.

52. Now known as D&C 107, Kimball's reference is to what are now verses 1–57 of D&C 107. Since the original dictated text of the April revelation is not extant, it is difficult to determine how much of the text of the current edition's first fifty-seven verses were given at that time. The patriarchal Enochian genealogy forms the mythical background to the office "patriarch" and forms a companion mythos to that of the bishop. Note its similarity in purpose to the 1832 priesthood genealogy of D&C 84. See below for more discussion. D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 46–47.

53. Heber C. Kimball journal, 94B, 23, CHL (as quoted in Woodford, "Historical Development," 3: 1399).

54. Perhaps the earliest manuscript copy is found in the Heber C. Kimball journal, Book 94C, 28–33, CHL. Variants found in the Kimball journal are essentially accidentals. Information suggests the Kimball version represents an edited version of the original.

55. As already noted, Book of Mormon language deploys a "high priesthood" (e.g., Alma 13), sometimes as part of an "order" but other times, not. Hence both the term and the identification of "high priesthood" and "high priest" have very early support in Mormon semantics and biblical usage reflects this as well. Early Latter-day Saints saw this in their Protestant traditions in both high and low church sources. Non-

Mormon religious discursion still understands the term "priesthood" in this way, and occasionally Mormons also use it this way. For example, in speeches to LDS Young Women organizations there were sometimes references to acknowledging or submitting to the "priesthood" but this didn't refer to the Mormon category as much as it did fellow workers in either the Young Men organization or local or general Church leaders like bishoprics, etc.

56. The November 1, 1831, revelation (*JSP, MRB:* 200) makes it clear that bishops must be ordained from among the high priests. The September 1832 revelations (D&C 84) saw the bishop, like the elder, as subordinate offices to the high priesthood and this was still true in June 1833 as shown by the seating plan for the Kirtland temple MS 2568 1, CHL; the August 1833 plan confirmed this in more detail. Seating was altered by the dedication in 1836. While Partridge and Whitney were high priests in 1831, no textual imperative existed for this until the November 1 revelation. Prior to 1835, the high priesthood was seen as the eventual desired place where every male ended his believer's journey in earthly office. See Minute Book 2, 11 (October 25, 1831).

57. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 1:134–36.

58. For example, see Orson Pratt's address to the London Conference on March 9, 1879 (*Journal of Discourses* 22:194). In this sermon, Pratt reads the presiding bishopric into the bishop mythos of priestly descent and common council trials of a president of the high priesthood.

59. For much of the twentieth century, this was official. See Widtsoe, *Priesthood and Church Government,* 169. In Utah, Brigham Young attempted to separate the roles of presiding priest (ward bishop) and presiding high priest (ward president). While beautifully symmetric in the Mormon sense of either the 1832 or 1835 priesthood architectures, it was unsuccessful in practice. Dale Beecher, "The Office of Bishop: Its Development through History," Task Paper, Historical Department of the Church, CHL, 32–34; D. Gene Pace, "Changing Patterns of Mormon Financial Administration: Traveling Bishops, Regional Bishops, and Bishop's Agents, 1851–88," *BYU Studies* 23, vol.2 (1983): 6–7.

60. For example, there is no provision in the revelations for honorable termination of a bishop's service. For most early officers, their ordination/setting apart and its implied service was theoretically permanent. Releasing a bishop from service seems to violate the definition of the office in the early revelations. Pulpit releases from Church assignments were not done and changes were simply announced with some explanation attached. For example, when Joseph Smith went to Far West in November 1837, "Bishop Partridge was then nominated to still act as Bishop, and was unanimously chosen. Who then nominated Isaac Mor-

ley and Titus Billings for his counsellors who were unanimously chosen." Former counselor John Corrill was then simply assigned another duty. Emeriti Mormon bishops are currently seen as holding office but essentially with congregations of zero size. Prior to 1835, a retired bishop might have been seen as merely a member of the high priesthood, but it is difficult to rationalize such counterfactuals. See Minute Book 2, November 7, 1837, 87.

61. Note the presence of the Revelation Book 2 preamble here. The Revelation Book 2 text is from the 1834 time period. (See http://josephsmithpapers.org/papersummary/revelation-book-2.)

62. Joseph F. Smith saw this verse as an imperative for ordaining presidency members high priests (whether or not they were previously apostles—apostles who had not been ordained high priests should have this done as a matter of course). The presidency is identified as a separate quorum. Some distance is placed between the Presidency of the Church and other high priests by this passage perhaps, but recall that "quorum" had a less formal import at this period. Joseph F. Smith was committed to the received text more than the received tradition and part of his liking for James Talmage's religious work was Talmage's evident sympathy with that. See below for more on Joseph F. Smith's thought.

63. For example, see Jean Bickmore White, ed., *Church, State, and Politics: The Diaries of John Henry Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 387–88.

64. The ancient reference echoes Minute Book 2, 7 (October 11, 1831).

65. D&C 128:18; *WJS,* 38–44; Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 137.

66. "Solemn Assemblies" were associated with Mormonism from the revelatory commands for a school of the prophets and later a temple. See D&C 88:68–70, 117; Minute Book 1, 6; *JSP,* J1:241–48.

67. The Nauvoo and then the Salt Lake stakes (prior to 1877) might be seen as having Zion high councils.

68. The designation of the apostles as forming a traveling presiding high council suggested a role that only slowly came to fruition. Barred at first from official operations in the stakes, they nevertheless individually came to prominence there. (For example, following the fall of the New York contingent—Cowdery and the Whitmers—in 1838, apostles shored up leadership in the Far West Stake.) In Utah, apostles commonly supervised stakes and operated as local ecclesiastical leaders until 1877. The high council motif reached its zenith in the April revelation. Like seasonal change, Church polity followed suit in delayed fashion. By 1841, the traveling high council moved to the top of the pecking order, not without resistance based on tradition, but Smith's trust had been earn-

ed. Turner, *Brigham Young,* 75–79, chap. 4. Also, Quinn, *Origins of Power,* 57–69.

69. "Evangelical ministers" was a later alteration of "patriarchs" according to Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses* 19:114. Quinn, *Origins of Power*, 49.

70. On "evangelist" as "patriarch," see *WJS,* 6. Samuel Brown reads this linkage in terms of adoption language. Brown, *In Heaven*, 213.

71. Adam-ondi-Ahman was later linked to a physical location in the Missouri Zion, further building the meaning of the area as central to the movement. The Church purchased the region in the twentieth century. The name appears in an 1832 revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants (section 78 in the 1981, 2013 editions).

72. Smith's summary instruction to the apostles in July 1839 valorized Adam and the ancient patriarchs in the salvific scheme. Adam was seen as not just the original ancestor but "presiding over the spirits of all men" in an angelology whose breadth and uniqueness stand out in antebellum Christianity. The Mormon patriarchs took their cues of office from the "presiding" patriarch confirmed by a January 1841 revelation. Joseph Smith's father was apparently "ordained" as a patriarch when he joined the Presidency of the High Priesthood on December 6, 1834. Quinn, *Origins of Power,* 46–57. The extant minutes of December 6 do not report the Patriarch ordination. *JSP*, J1: 47–48; *JSP,* H1:37–38.

73. Smith's sermon of January 21, 1844, suggests a well-earned caution in delivering innovation. See *WJS,* 317–19. For examples of charges that Smith produced revelations for convenience, see the series of letters written by dissident Ezra Booth published in the *Ohio Star*.

74. On Smith's Elias doctrine, see his sermons of March 10, 1844, and May 12, 1844. *WJS,* 327–36, 365–72. On Mormonism's angelology, see Benjamin E. Park, "'A Uniformity So Complete': Early Mormon Angelology," *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 2, vol. 1 (2010). Also, Brown, *In Heaven*. The Elias order finds its biblical support in the Mount of Transfiguration narrative and Joseph Smith's expansion of that passage. (D&C 63:21; Joseph Smith's sermon to the apostles near August 1839; *WJS*, 9; Scott H. Faulring, et al., *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2004), 201, 276.

75. One difference between the 1832 and 1835 priesthood narratives was the presence of Abel in the 1832 high priesthood genealogy and Seth in the 1835 patriarchal genealogy. This mapped the President of the High Priesthood through Abel, the Patriarch through Seth, and perhaps plays into the announcements of D&C 124.

76. Each of Smith's scriptural additions entails some aspect of this

exercise in legitimacy. Smith's (1835) Book of Abraham texts open with the ancient patriarch hoping to join the authoritative line of high priests that Smith details in the April 1835 revelation. The 1832 genealogy already maps Abraham into the high priesthood line. The ancient father of Isaac is at the intersection of both the high priesthood and the sacerdotal chain of patriarchs, making him a central figure in temple theology, adoptive practices, patriarchal blessing "lineage," and Joseph Smith's own developing vision of the importance of his family in not only the patriarchal office but the Church presidency as well.

77. On printing the 1835 edition, see *JSP,* RT2:301–10. The 1835 edition cited Oliver Cowdery's copy of the Book of Commandments, as well as RB1 and RB2.

78. This interesting statement was certainly interpreted in light of the noninterference directive: the apostles were to stay out of stakes. By 1841 it was beginning to be taken at face value. The statement itself is a very broad one and open to a very strong construction, one not overlooked after the death of Joseph Smith.

79. Oddly, this artifact from 1831 was not edited to reflect the change in presidency of the priests.

80. The Articles and Covenants, while fundamentally important in the first few years after 1830, were superseded in many respects by later revelations and decisions. The delay in publishing the November 11, 1831, revelation led to different categories of editorial change—hence the more general "covenants and commandments," both words that historically referred to revelations, or types of revelations rather than the specific Articles.

81. The inserted text refers back to the same 1831 revelation, though the editors left this ambiguous.

82. This is simply grammatical permutation. The RB1 text has the same importance here.

83. It is duly noted that the revelation of November 1, 1831 (LDS D&C 68), was also updated with various portions from the April 1835 revelation as well as the updated text of the November 11 revelation. For what was probably very near the original text of the November 1 revelation, see *JSP, MRB:*199–201.

84. A reference to D&C 42 and its various addenda among the revelations.

85. This change is interesting because of the potential for historical misunderstanding. The verse, in its historical meaning, has nothing to do with the "President of the Aaronic Priesthood," an office and concept that didn't exist in 1831.

86. Verse 61 was not modified to reflect the change in status for

bishops in this new regulation. The subtle addition in verse 87 "of Aaron" is consistent with the 1831 priesthood architecture by itself, but verse 88 identifies the change as part of the new (April 1835) classification of bishops: they are now part of the Aaronic order. In effect, "bishop" merely means "presiding priest."

87. The added verse here may seem redundant but possibly has reference to the Mosaic appointment of "Seventy Elders," Num. 11:16; Church publications and private records also report an association of "elder" with "seventy." Again, this played into the future difficulty of privileging the First Council of Seventy in local Church administration. It was not a bothersome issue in the Joseph Smith era when the seventy, despite technical standing in the revelations, had little authority in core districts of the Church where high priests typically operated administratively (an exception to this rule occurred in 1835–36). As an example of the conflict over the nature of the office, in 1840 the Nauvoo high council, expanding its purview, directed that one of the seventy become part of the high priests quorum. The seventies were put out, and the April conference of the Church took up the matter to settle it: "A letter was read from the Presidents of the Seventies, wishing for an explanation of the steps which the High Council had taken, in removing Elder Francis Gladden Bishop, from the Quorum of the seventies to that of the High Priest's without any other ordination, than he had when in the Quorum of the Seventies, and wished to know whether, those ordained into the seventies at the time Elder Bishop was, had a right to the High Priesthood or not. Several persons spoke on the subject, after which the President gave a statement of the authority of the seventies, and said they were Elders, and not High Priests, and consequently Elder Bishop had no claim to the High Priesthood—On motion—resolved that Elder Francis Gladden Bishop be placed back into the Quorum of the Seventies." The ruling confirmed Smith's position of 1837.

88. At this point the revelation suggests that the high priests served at the pleasure of the president of the high priesthood. This neglected dynamic points to the evolution from 1832, but it is interesting that the revelation was not updated with information regarding the high council(s). Later practice in Kirtland (and then revelation) provided for a possible localized internal structure for the high priests, allowing for a distancing from the president of the Church.

89. The inclusion of the details of organization of the seventy (from an otherwise unknown vision) at this point fits with the treatment of the other quorums. Observe that the apostles get no such treatment. Their internal structure was defined in a separate revelation (D&C 112). In the

meantime, the apostles had a system of rotating leadership as per Joseph Smith's instruction. They were to be equal in everything.

90. Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 338. On the Kirtland economy and banking problems, see Staker, *Hearken*, chaps. 30–34.

91. However, the presidency had a push on to create new stakes. See Mary Fielding to her sister Mercy Fielding, October 7, 1837, CHL. At the same time, the word "stake" held a broader meaning than the Church gives it today. Taken together, it is probable that the quorum of high councils are to play a role. Hence a fully organized "stake," like the Kirtland and Far West organizations, is the likely meaning here.

92. Although, it was the case that "faithful" surviving counselors were still a loose end, perhaps because their position was in fact clouded by a lack of canonical category. At Brigham's death, the surviving counselors, if not taken in by the new presidency, and not part of the quorum of apostles previously, became "counselors to the Twelve." For Mormons schooled in the current priesthood policies, it is an odd situation given the practice elucidated by Joseph F. Smith that the status of counselors at the death of the church president was void. Before this, these counselors continued in office until death or dishonor. The last such conundrums were Alvin R. Dyer and Thorpe B. Isaacson at the death of David O. McKay. The situation was resolved by dropping them into the "assistants to the Twelve"—not precisely parity perhaps, but a near equivalent to the nineteenth-century practice. On Cowdery, his situation could be construed as different from nearly everyone else's. Ordained by angels in the (by then) mostly well-understood incidents of ca. 1829, removing Cowdery's authority may have seemed problematic, at least to him. There is another facet to Cowdery discussed later. Like so many other latent tripwires of administration, Joseph F. Smith resolved the issue of priesthood persistence by reducing it to excommunication. Prior to this, early judicial bodies had prescribed varying sorts of penalties regarding retention of priesthood office for misbehavior.

93. Perhaps the puzzling interaction of excommunication and church office was partly settled by the January 1841 revelation (D&C 124), but it lingered on in terms of temple priesthood theology. For example, the effect of excommunication on temple sealings and anointings has always been murky, though practical policy invaded the issue.

94. This seems to have been Brigham Young's view. See Smith's sermon of April 8, 1844 (*WJS*, 362–65). The question of whether Rigdon was still a president of the high priesthood was tied to a March 1833 revelation (D&C 90). His tenure by that measurement may have been over. Rigdon was removed from the presidency in 1832 for making wild claims—how that played into 1844 thinking was important to some at

least and was mentioned at the August 1844 meetings in Nauvoo. Brigham Young expressed the idea (no doubt tongue-in-cheek) that if Rigdon wanted to be spokesman for Joseph, he would have to go where Joseph was. See *Times and Seasons* 5, vol. 16 (September 2, 1844): 638. *Times and Seasons* 5, vol. 17 (September 15, 1844): 648–49, 651, 653, 666; *Times and Seasons* 5, vol. 19 (October 15, 1844): 684, 686.

95. While technically the three revelations are canon (or were) their relevance seems dated. Utah historians of the 1850s mentioned the sustaining of the revelations in the manuscript history of the Church, but by then either no one knew the whereabouts of the texts of the revelations or no one saw them as helpful. Finally in B. H. Roberts's edited *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Roberts believed they had been lost in the travails of the Church. See *History of the Church* 3:44fn (Manuscript History of the Church, volume 2 (book B–1), 799, CHL). The revelations were rediscovered in Joseph Smith's "Scriptory Book." For the text of all the January 1838 revelations, see *JSP*, J2: 281–84.

96. When the revelations were published in 1835, texts from different definitional eras were combined while some early revelations were edited using later terminology (again, D&C 20 for example), making it appear that later terms were actually used much earlier. A naive reading leads down paths of frustrating inconsistency.

97. Joseph F. Smith was seen as an important link to the Smith family. The Utah Church never bought into quasi-primogeniture like the "Reorganization" did, but there was a significant undercurrent of thought regarding Joseph's descendants and Church leadership, partly because Joseph Smith himself came to see succession in terms of his own brothers. Smith's ranking of the revelations above the early Utah praxis and theological speculation marked a tendency in his own thought about the place of revelation in Mormonism and how liturgy and belief were founded. Smith was familiar with at least some of Joseph Smith's Nauvoo corpus of discourse, but he gradually moved toward a settled position defined in part by James E. Talmage's transitional work.

98. The First Council of Seventy consisted of the seven presidents of the "first" quorum of seventy. That quorum was dispersed by the apostles after Joseph Smith's death, possibly to help ensure against the specter of further leadership confusion and dissent like that which surfaced at Smith's death. The text of the April 1835 revelation was somewhat troubling on that score. "First" distinguished the First Council from the leaders of the multiplying seventies quorums who had their own presidencies. The First Council remained however, and at least on paper had something like General Authority status, though as a group they had little ecclesiastical influence during Brigham Young's tenure. Additionally,

the expansion of seventies quorums depleted the elders in Nauvoo who owed some ecclesiastical fealty to the high council, another possible competitor for leadership. Individually, seventies sometimes held local ecclesiastical positions unrelated to their titles. The position of the First Council was unclear in terms of what they could do or not do as well as what the other authorities would allow them to do. The high priesthood was an important issue and the April 1835 revelation provided little support for seventies as ecclesiastical authorities as it did for the apostles. Finally, in the 1800s, there was simply no pressure to expand their roles. After Brigham Young's death and the beginning of the "raid" and then its resolution and statehood (and the resumption of significant missionary efforts), the First Council rose in prominence, speaking in general conferences and lobbying for increased responsibilities. These puzzles would not be resolved until the 1970s. On lobbying over insertion of material in *History of the Church* regarding the seventies (the presidency rejected Roberts's proposals as creating possible confusion), see B. H. Roberts correspondence with the First Presidency in B. H. Roberts Collection, MS 1278, CHL.

99. D&C 107 dictates that the apostles supervise the seventy. The relatively large number of seventies in Utah reflected Brigham's continuing Nauvoo policy of ordaining elders before they were sent out preaching. These men often remained in the office their whole lives, restricting their utility beyond their own quorum instruction and business.

100. Joseph F. Smith letterpress copybook, MS 1325, box 30, fd. 4, pp. 86–89, CHL.

101. George Albert Smith journal, October 8, 1903, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah. Joseph F. Smith's idea made for discussion during his presidency when a number of the First Council of Seventy suggested that they should be able to reorganize stakes. While submerged in later language, the principle stuck around: Was it legitimate for a seventy, who, under 1837 dictum, had never been ordained a high priest, to ordain a high priest? (On Smith's 1837 explanation, see *Messenger and Advocate* 3 [April 1837]: 486–87, note 96.) It was a troublesome question for many. When the rule was relaxed in the 1960s, the problem went away because the now natural vetting process of Church leadership took away the option of making charismatic elders into members of the First Council and filled the ranks with already-ordained high priests.

102. Loren Woolley, a supplier of authoritative tradition to twentieth-century polygamy groups, particularly the Musser-Allred and Johnson branches, combined the two names as "high priest apostles," truly the best of both worlds. On Brigham and the high priesthood, a repre-

sentative sampling is *Journal of Discourses* 1:131. On Woolley, see Daymon Mickle Smith, "The Last Shall be First and The First Shall be Last: Discourse and Mormon History" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2007), 376–415.

103. First Presidency letter, April 1919. See Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency* 5:120–21.

104. The Book of Mormon pattern was seen as appropriate at least until 1900. For example, George Q. Cannon in *The Juvenile Instructor* 31, vol. 5 (March 1, 1896): 139.

105. For example, "Joseph Kingsbury, We ordain thee to be an high priest and pray that thy crown be made to shine as the stars that thou mayest always bear off the gospel triumphly in the face of all opposition, We also ordain thee to be a high counsellor at that stake at Kirtland, praying that you may have the spirit of these offices to which you are now ordained, and this shall be the case through your faithfulness." Minute Book 1, 202. For his part, Joseph Smith apparently did not see the 1835 priesthood architecture as requiring new liturgy. In Smith's March 10, 1844, sermon, Wilford Woodruff reports Smith as saying, "I saw an angel, and he laid his hands upon my head, and ordained me to be a priest after the order of Aaron," *WJS*, 327.

106. John A. Widtsoe, comp., *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith, Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1919), 169. Widtsoe's compilation brought Smith's ideas to a larger audience than they enjoyed when first delivered. See, for example, *Improvement Era* 4 (March 1901): 4.

107. Probably one of the most influential Church-produced books of the twentieth century was John A. Widtsoe's *Priesthood and Church Government*. Widtsoe quoted the Grant presidency in his 1939 book: "By authority (or in the authority) of the Holy Priesthood and by the laying on of hands, I (or we) ordain you an Elder (or Seventy, or High Priest, or Patriarch, or Apostle, as the case may be) in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and confer upon you all the rights, powers, keys and authority pertaining to this office and calling in the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen" (243–44). The Grant letter was printed in full in Widtsoe, *Gospel Doctrine*, 2nd ed., Addenda, 541. The second edition was issued the same year as the first edition, 1919.

108. Widtsoe, *Gospel Doctrine*, 219; Joseph F. Smith, *Conference Report of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, October 1915, 7.

109. For example, *Times and Seasons* 2 (15 April 1841): 387–88.

110. By 1958, Bruce R. McConkie's *Mormon Doctrine* (170) suggested

the Joseph F. Smith method as canonical. This private work gained cachet among Church members and leaders, despite the wish of the church presidency to suppress it.

111. The modern LDS Church handbooks had their immediate genesis in late nineteenth and early twentieth century regulation of local Church financial affairs. Gradually, these early (yearly) numbered publications gave way to more permanent and substantial rulebooks that were distributed at less frequent intervals. Up until the twenty-first century, handbooks reached twenty-five in number. When referencing these handbooks, I simply use titles of the form *Handbook, No. 19* together with the year of publication. Twenty-first-century Church handbooks are referenced in more common fashion. A survey of Church handbooks for the twentieth century shows that the Joseph F. Smith method appears for the first time in a Church handbook in 1968 (*Handbook, No. 20*, 88). Prior to that time, the official form, when one appeared in handbooks, read "By (or in) the authority of the Holy Priesthood, I (or we) lay my (or our) hands upon you head and ordain you a deacon in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and confer upon you all the rights, powers and authority pertaining to this office and calling in the Aaronic Priesthood, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."

112. *General Handbook of Instructions, Book 2* (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2010): 20.7.1. Available online at http://lds.org.

113. See *JSP*, RT2:174–93, for what was likely the planned completed form of the Book of Commandments.

114. Inherited from Protestant speech, the term "branches" replaced "churches," but not before "churches" became encoded in the printed revelations (found, for example, in D&C 20:81; 51:11). Used in this sense, it is found in the Book of Mormon (Mosiah 25:22) as well as, of course, the New Testament. The revelations that invited missionaries of the 1830s to visit the "churches" on the way to their destinations were meant to take advantage of visiting with, and strengthening established congregations (much like Methodist itinerants), not the local Presbyterians. D&C 20 met Protestant theology on a number of levels. It is easy to consider D&C 20:71 as an allusion to the Westminster Catechism, for example.

115. For example, Elias Smith became president of the high priests quorum in Salt Lake City in 1870. Up until 1877, the Salt Lake Stake was seen as the "center stake of Zion." Hence, in some respects, Smith supervised high priests everywhere. When quorums of high priests were regularized in each stake and the Salt Lake Stake was reduced to ordinary stature in 1877, Smith became president of the high priests quorum of

the Salt Lake Stake and served until his death in 1888. Andrew Jensen, *Latter-day Saints' Biographical Encyclopedia, Volume 1* (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Co., 1901), 720. "History of Brigham Young," 40:820; 58:1326, CHL.

116. William G. Hartley, "Priesthood Reorganization"; James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 2:283–95.

117. See the 1963 *Handbook, No. 19*: 8. In handbooks prior to 1963, only members of the presidency, the apostles and, after 1940, Assistants to the Twelve, could install the quorum presidency.

118. Long before the correlation movement of the 1960s, Church leaders struggled with the interaction between ecclesiastical units and priesthood quorums. Quorums had authority to drop or exclude members and even provide discipline relative to priesthood use. Quorums that crossed ecclesiastical unit boundaries were often split into groups that met weekly with the ward priesthood meeting. But that group had no real standing beyond group study functions and records, perhaps. See the 1944 *Handbook, No., 17*: 9, 15, 18–22.

119. For a period during the twentieth century, priesthood cosmology was written in terms of quorums. Only quorum presidents could hold "keys." This became more awkward as, from the 1940s onward, there were Church officers who held no keys, but who could confer them on others. Part of the difficulty in the terminology stems from the desire to isolate the power to direct temple activity within the highest Church leadership. The idea that keys are associated with quorum leadership fails to work in the modern apostleship narrative, where each apostle has all keys.

120. Governance literature or handbooks for Mormon leadership developed out of Church leader instruction via circular letters, financial regulation handbooks, and published sermons of general conferences, and was motivated by the desire for unified practice. John A. Widtsoe's priesthood study manual, *Priesthood and Church Government* and its precursors like Joseph B. Keeler's *The Lesser Priesthood and Notes on Church Government* helped pave the way for more robust Church handbooks of the twentieth century.

121. See the notes above for Sidney Rigdon's August 1844 trial.

122. D&C 124:74–76. Vinson Knight, the designated bishop, died before the revelation was acted on. The first official presiding bishop was Newel K. Whitney, who served without counselors between 1847 and his death in 1850. Andrew Jenson, *Church Chronology: A Record of Important Events Pertaining to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1899), xvii.

123. Nauvoo stake president William Marks's testimony at Rigdon's Nauvoo trial suggests this.

124. For example see his sermon of April 6, 1853, and his testimony at Rigdon's trial in rebuttal to Marks.

125. Turner, *Brigham Young*, 171–74.

126. George Albert was ordained a high priest and an apostle on October 8, 1903. On Joseph F. Smith's point, see George Albert Smith Journal October 8, 1903, and Joseph F. Smith Special Conference Report, October 1901, 82.

127. For example, see Smith, "The Last Shall be First," chap. 3.

128. White, op. cit. See also typed excerpt of George Q. Cannon's journal in the B. H. Roberts collection, MS 1278, CHL.

129. As observed above, President John Taylor seems to have identified the First Presidency with the Presidency of the High Priesthood. For example, see *Journal of Discourses* 21:364 and Orson Pratt in *Journal of Discourses* 22:35. Another meme became associated with the Woodruff solution and it surfaces on occasion in attempts to encourage unquestioned obedience in various Church settings. This is the idea that even if a leader is wrong in his dictates, the subject is blessed for obedience to that erring instruction. This idea is supported by occasional stories and rumors of blessed resolutions in such circumstances. A commonly cited example is the late departure and subsequent tragedy of the Martin and Willie handcart companies of 1856.

130. Age is not the complete issue. President Gordon B. Hinckley, while elderly, had great vigor. Much of the well-known headline changes and announcements over the last fifteen years have been attributed in part to that vigor. Spencer W. Kimball was a vigorous leader in his first decade (1973–81).

131. On Kimball's decline, see Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball,* Working Draft (Salt Lake City: Benchmark, 2009).

132. Manuscript history 2:691; *Deseret News* 2 (August 21, 1852), 1.

133. The use of Marsh's name may have been distracting in a succession argument. Also the "in all the world" language continued to play havoc with jurisdiction, ironically. After Joseph Smith's death, however, the apostles, particularly Brigham Young, repurposed the phrase to suggest universal authority over everything, not just Church function, away from central units (stakes). The D&C 107 text never announced that Ohio juridical restriction in any case.

134. A summary of printing history appears at the Joseph Smith Papers website: http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/doctrine-and-covenants-1844#5.

135. *JSP*, J1:219–23.

136. *JSP*, J1:222.

137. Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 319–21.

138. Consider his sermons and instructions of August 1839, October 1840, August 1843, January 1844, and March 1844. See *WJS*, 8–12, 38–44, 242–43, 317–19, 327–36.

139. Important in this matter: polygamy. But its relationship to D&C 110 is obscure. I've left D&C 124 and 132 out of this discussion, though they clearly form part of the Elijah mystique in Mormonism and their role in succession was and is fundamental. D&C 124's lionization of the Church patriarch fashioned a problematic text for succession pathways. Seth vs. Abel? Consider Joseph F. Smith's request that the Church Patriarch ordain him Church president or his exploration of the possibility that the Patriarch succeed him, all apparently in reference to the text of D&C 124. This illustrates a point previously made about Smith's praxis and theology: the scripture texts founded those things rather than the words or policies of previous Church leaders, Joseph Smith not excepted. Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch* (Urbana.: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 123–73.

140. On Elias, see Samuel Brown, "The Prophet Elias Puzzle," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought,* 39, vol. 3 (Fall 2006): 15–31.

141. Orson Pratt in "History of Brigham Young," 40:805, CHL. Andrew F. Ehat's master's thesis, "Joseph Smith's Introduction of Temple Ordinances and the 1844 Mormon Succession Question," Brigham Young University, 1982, points to this idea. Dated and perhaps too narrow (and tainted a bit by the forgeries of Mark Hofmann), it still forms an important part of the succession narrative. William Marks, a blip on the succession radar for an 1844 moment, never had a chance. Like Rigdon, he was a part of the "anointed quorum" and the Council of Fifty, but he missed the other leg of the stool: polygamy. After D&C 124, stake presidents seem weakened as possible succession candidates in any case. Elijah came to be the foundation of all LDS priesthood sacraments in the view of Joseph Fielding Smith: Elijah transferred the factor that made the salvific acts of priesthood permanent. This vision of the breadth of Elijah's power pressed him into service as a designated delegate of Christ, founding all LDS ordinances, not just the rites of Nauvoo. In this reading, without Elijah, the effects of baptism and other sacraments, trembled on an existential abyss. See, for example, Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955): 2:117, 3:129–30. Compare one of Joseph Smith's few written sermons, October 5, 1840. Some of Joseph Smith's later preaching suggests a more narrow view.

142. Brown, *In Heaven*, 164–69. It is somewhat remarkable that Elijah makes no textual appearance in the July 12, 1843 revelation on sealing.

143. As found in *JSP*, MRB:585–90.

144. Observe the reference to *presidency of the church.* This represents a reading back into the manuscript a development several years in the future. The date of RB2 (1834) allows this, and it was not an unusual practice for early editions of the revelations. I will consider this in more detail below.

145. A homeoteleuton by Williams accounts for the seemingly strange regulation of elders presiding over priests. One sees the same sort of errors represented in the Revelation Book 1 text in deleted (stricken) text not evident in the proto-text given here.

146. The variation between the two texts here represents an editorial change evident in the RB1 text, which is not visible in the proto-text reconstruction here.

147. In editing Joseph Smith's revelations for publication, it was not terribly uncommon to see revelations combined into a single text or divided into multiple texts. The current LDS D&C contains a number of important examples of this, D&C 107 being the most interesting perhaps.

148. Smith deployed the term very broadly. As usage became more fixed after his death, the early editions of the revelations came to be seen as the only acceptable use of the term.

149. Compare *JSP,* MRB, 51, 355 (D&C 28, 103).

150. On the Disciples, see Richard T. Hughes and Leonard Allen, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630–1875* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 170–87; Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 242–44.

151. Recall that the meaning here of "president over the priesthood" is *president of the priests.* The language does not require the existence of the later policy of a bishop functioning as president of the priests. The nature of "presidencies" in this revelation (a term not actually used there) is a solitary president. Somewhat ironically perhaps, this situation would change for everyone but the priests. Mormon usage gradually translated this in a rather curious way to the idea of a President of the Aaronic Priesthood, a concept and office whose seed sprouted in Nauvoo.

152. As mentioned previously, these were not "local" quorums in the sense of modern practice, but they were "located." Kirtland and Nauvoo set a partial precedence so that LDS practice confined the deacons,

teachers, priests, and elders as "stake" quorums in Utah. Bishops in the stake would select men but gradually, boys, to fill the ranks of deacons with perhaps a number of quorums of each rank, but the quorums would not be affected by "ward" boundaries. Boys finally filled the teachers and priests quorums as well; but as teachers were deployed in Church discipline in nineteenth-century Utah Mormonism, boys generally did not invade their ranks at first. On bishops and early Utah organization see, D. Gene Pace, "Community Leadership on the Mormon Frontier: Mormon Bishops and the Political, Economic and Social Development of Utah before Statehood" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1983). Also see, William G. Hartley, *My Fellow Servants: Essays on the History of the Priesthood* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 2010); Dale Beecher, "The Office of Bishop," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15, vol. 4 (Winter 1982): 103–15.

Ex-Mormon Narratives and Pastoral Apologetics

Seth Payne

Introduction

The personal exit from any organization, especially those which are socially controversial, tends to produce a very specific type of narrative or story which gives an account of the individual's experience within, and eventual withdrawal from, the organization. This is especially true in the case of modern Mormonism. Vocal ex-Mormons are often motivated to produce and disseminate exit narratives, often written in the context of pop-psychological terminology such as *recovery* (e.g. "Recovery from Mormonism"), which describe in various ways their victimization at the hands of Mormonism generally and their subsequent movement from being victims to victors.[1]

Indeed, an entire ex-Mormon movement has emerged in the past eighteen years,[2] developing its own unique social structure, language, and culture in the process. Ex-Mormonism, as a sub-culture, has long existed as a subset of a larger, and largely Evangelical counter-cult movement. This latest ex-Mormon movement or culture, however, is characterized by its mostly secular focus and distrust, if not outright rejection, of not only LDS doctrinal literalism but most forms of religious theological conservatism as well.[3] Recent ex-Mormon narratives do not generally describe a process of what sociological literature would describe as "leave-taking" or "switching," but rather focus on the description of a fundamental shift away from what is perceived as rigid literalism to an unbounded scientific rationality. In this sense, members of the ex-Mormon movement should be sociologically considered *apostates,* although I hesitate to employ this label due to the extremely negative connotations this word has within the LDS community.

The use of a word such a word as *apostate* in light of its significance and meaning in LDS culture may oversimplify what appear to be complex notions and descriptions of social and cultural estrangement found within the narratives of ex-Mormons. The significance of the apostate label, as opposed to other forms of religious separation will be discussed below.

This article will examine the ex-Mormon narrative *as narrative* and will attempt to glean insights into the culture of ex-Mormonism and its relationship to the modern LDS Church from this very specific literary form. This essay is not an attempt to explain the specific reasons why individuals leave (or have left) the LDS Church. As will be discussed below, after-the-fact narratives are inherently unreliable in establishing the authenticity of actual occurrence. Rather, this paper seeks to explore the cultural impact and mood of said narratives in an effort to identify areas and issues in need of further research and study.

This article will rely heavily on sociological literature dealing with the nature of religious apostasy. Accordingly, I will begin by presenting relevant sociological theory and will attempt to place Mormonism, and particularly the modern LDS Church, within this larger conceptual framework. In a sense, this paper has three purposes: (1) to properly identify modern Mormonism's societal positioning, (2) to explore how this unique positioning leads to the creation of ex-Mormon exit narratives; and (3) to propose an approach to modern apologetics which is both informed by the culture of ex-Mormonism and meets the unique social and spiritual needs of the modern LDS doubter.

Perhaps what is more important than understanding the sociological context and the unique structure of contemporary ex-Mormon narratives is to appreciate that these narratives are the words of real Latter-day Saints expressing genuine feelings of anger, frustration, and hurt caused by their encounter with troubling aspects of LDS culture, doctrine, and history. As such, I conclude this paper with some personal reflections and specific recommendations on how members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can be better equipped to (1) understand the nature of doubt, thus developing empathy for those members who leave or consider leaving the Church, and (2) respond appropriately to those who struggle.

Organization Type and Exit

David Bromley identifies three types of organizations and classifies them according to "the degree to which their interests coincide with other organization units in their respective environmental fields."[4] These include Allegiant, Contestant, and Subversive organizations.[5] Allegiant organization are "positioned either as neutrals or coalitional allies" within the host society and "include "therapeutic/medical organizations, mainline churches, colleges, professional organizations, and various voluntary associations." Due to their trusted positioning in society, "allegiant organizations are able to exercise considerable autonomy in conducting their organizational missions" and both "external groups and internal members will find little need or basis for serious or frequent claimsmaking against the organization."

Contestant organizations have "a moderate level of tension with other organizations in their environments" and mostly include "profit-making economic organizations."[6] Because "contestant organizations are dedicated to the pursuit of organizational self-interest" their "environment [is] populated with both allies and opponents." Consequently, "they are able to exercise limited autonomy in conducting their organizational missions as the legitimacy of pursing private interests is deeply embedded in property rights and in cultural themes." Bromley explains:

> Contestant organizations are therefore involved rather routinely in disputes with other organizations and the social expectation is that normal competition and conflict will involve these organizations in an ongoing pattern of claimsmaking. The normative boundaries that constrain unfettered pursuit of organizational interests are those such as "good citizenship" and commitment to "public interest."

Bromley limits the classification of Contestant organizations to those that are subject to formal regulation and oversight. However, some exception is made with respect to "independent groups approximating regulatory agencies" when "restrictions on external political regulation" exist. Such groups may include conservative Christian counter-cult movements who seek to "expose" the doctrinal errors of those groups whom they label as "pseudo-Christian."[7]

Subversive organizations "have extremely low coincidence of interests with other organizations in their environment" and in fact the term "'subversive' is a label employed by opponents specifically to discredit these organizations."[8] There exists a continual and "concerted effort by opponents [of Subversive organizations] to label the organization as dangerous and pathological." Consequently, "organizations regarded as Subversive are accorded virtually no organization legitimacy and therefore face continuous opposition and constraint in pursuing organizational goals." Bromley contends that Subversive organizations include "controversial alternative religious movements, radical rightist and leftist political movements, and various forms of underground economies."

Bromley observes that "all types of organizations experience some rate of participant exodus, and exiting participants are a potentially important source of information that could be used to discredit the organization."[9] Therefore, organizations have incentives to control or manage the exit process of members as much as possible. Bromley argues that "whatever the nature of individual or situational motivations . . . organizations in the low-tension positions are most likely to be able to control the exit process as to prevent public dispute, while organizations in a high-tension position are much less likely to be able to do so." Thus, Bromley "[identifies] three distinctive contested exit roles—Defector, Whistleblower, and Apostate—that are characteristic of Allegiant, Contestant, and Subversive organizations, respectively."

Defector

The term defector "traditionally has been applied to leavetaking in a variety of institutional contexts—familial, military, [and] religious—in which role occupants are defined as having a strong commitment and responsibility to the organization and their status within it."[10] Defection, in this sense, is less about an individual making a dramatic or distinct break with an organization, and more about taking quiet leave due to some internal conflict, dispute, or disagreement. As Bromley explains "members [of Allegiant organizations] have considerable reason for reluctance to sever relationship for which they often have made considerable personal sacrifice and to which they have serious com-

mitment." Consequently, member "response to initial problems is likely to be renewed commitment and effort." If however, "remedial efforts are unsuccessful, the process of exiting involves negotiations between the member and organizational leadership [or I contend—other organization members] rather than with external parties." Exits from Allegiant organizations tend to be quiet affairs garnering little notice from external interests. It is no surprise then, that "once outside the organization, defectors are most likely to seek a transition into a new social network" and exit narratives from Allegiant organizations are rarely produced.[11]

Whistleblower

Bromley narrowly defines "the whistleblower role . . . as one in which an organization member forms an alliance with an external regulatory unit through offering personal testimony concerning specific, contested organization practices that is then used to sanction the organization." Bromley's definition and discussion of the whistleblower is largely limited to how the role affects the relationship between an organization and some sort of external and formal overseer. I would argue, however, that a whistleblower alliance with a formal external group may not be required as often the force of "public opinion" may be functionally equivalent to that of any regulatory group, and in many cases may even exceed it. In such cases, whistleblowers may make direct appeals to the public in order to apply pressure to the Contestant organization with which they have a dispute. Also, as will be discussed below, some whistleblowers may make direct appeals to members still within the Contestant organization in an effort to effect change from within.

Most relevant to our discussion here is the whistleblower narrative and its role as the means of communicating to the external world the "deviant practices" of the Contestant organization. Typically, the whistleblower will explain that he/she became involved in or aware of said practices "as a result of ignorance, deception, or pressure; has pursued all internal means of recourse before going public; was not recruited; is acting out of personal conscience; has no personal interest in pending adjudication; and has assumed considerable personal risk in whistleblowing."[12] The "heart of the narrative is evidentiary material documenting a spe-

cific pattern of rule violation." The purpose of "the account [is to] simultaneously [elevate] the moral standing of both the whistleblower, as an exemplar of public virtue, and the agency, as a defender of public interest, while camouflaging any political motivations and struggle within the organization."

Significantly the "whistleblower often seeks to maintain organizational membership and is involved in a limited dispute between two legitimate organizational entities [the contestant organization and the regulatory or quasi-regulator agency]." Not surprisingly "whistleblowers find that their disloyalty has the consequence of sealing off alternative opportunities" even if there is some "protection from overt retaliation."

Apostate

Unlike defectors and whistleblowers, apostates "[undertake] a total change of loyalties by allying with one or more elements of an oppositional coalition without the consent or control of the organization." Thus "the [apostate] narrative is one which documents the quintessentially evil essence of the apostate's former organization chronicled through the apostate's personal experience of capture and ultimate escape/rescue."[13] Subversive organization apostates generally have "a plethora of allies to whom [they] can turn [to] for support" and "because the [subversive] organization possesses little legitimacy, [they] may be able to control the integral dispute resolution process as long as individuals remain members, but [have] a very limited capacity to control external intervention in exit and post-exit processes."

Due to a "polarized situation and power imbalance, there is considerable pressure on individuals exiting Subversive organizations to negotiate a narrative with the oppositional coalition that offers an acceptable explanation for participation in the organization and for now once again reversing loyalties."[14] The most common apostate narrative can be classified as a:

> "Captivity narrative" in which apostates assert that they were innocently or naively operating in what they had every reason to believe was a normal, secure social site; were subjected to overpowering subversive techniques; endured a period of subjugation during which they experienced tribulation and humiliation; ultimately effected escape or rescue from the organization; and subsequently renounced

> their former loyalties and issues a public warning of the dangers of the former organization as a matter of civic responsibility.

Upon exiting a subversive organization, apostates assume a "newly constructed role [which places them] in a position that is diametrically opposed to [their] former beliefs and commitment."[15] Consequently "the apostate seeks to polarize the former and present identities, accentuating a personal transformation akin to conversion" and "the intensity and zeal in which the apostate embraces the new moral vision, seeks atonement through public confession and testimony, and makes salvific claims of redemption, at least suggest that the ex-member's new affiliation may be analyzed as a type of quasi-religious conversion in its own right." Indeed "it is typically characterized as a darkness-to-light personal transformation."

Bromley's Typology and the LDS Church

We can utilize Bromley's typology in two distinct ways when considering the LDS Church: first, in what I term a historical progression model and second by employing what I have labeled societal segment analysis. Armand Mauss, in *The Angel and the Beehive*, gives a thorough account of the LDS Church's social positioning through time, society's reaction to this positioning, and the various levels of tension which have existed at various stages of LDS Church development.[16] In general, the LDS Church has gone from being considered a highly subversive organization (due mostly to plural marriage and fears of theocratic leadership dynamics) from 1830 to the early 1900s, to experiencing high levels of assimilation through the 1950s and has more recently, through what Mauss calls "retrenchment," assumed what Mauss describes as a position "somewhere between Allegiant and Contestant, perhaps closer to the latter."[17]

The use of a historical progression model is extremely useful if we are attempting to identify modern Mormonism within a static position along Bromley's organizational typology. Clearly, the LDS Church would fit, as Mauss has indicated, between the Contestant and Allegiant organizational types due to the moderate-to-low tension experienced *in general* with society at large. Such a positioning, however, does not consider (due to its high-level abstraction) those societal segments with which the LDS

Church experiences extremely high levels of tension and therefore does not adequately describe the LDS Church's unique social positioning at any given point in time—hence, the importance of the societal segment analysis. Using this analysis, we can evaluate the varying levels of tension that exist between the LDS Church and divergent societal segments to gain a more nuanced understanding of both the modern LDS Church, its apostates and whistleblowers.[18]

LDS Church as Allegiant

In most respects, the LDS Church would like to be perceived as an Allegiant organization and experience low levels of tension with society as a whole. The Allegiant role should be considered the Church's desired societal positioning and the Church invests significant resources, in the form of ad campaigns via disparate outlets, search engine optimization, keyword advertising,, etc., into presenting itself as "mainstream" and "Christian." Additionally, the Church's media arm, Bonneville Communications, owns many radio and television stations that broadcast the Church's semi-annual general conference and weekly Mormon Tabernacle Choir performances. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir was termed "America's Choir" by Ronald Reagan and has performed at several presidential inaugurations. Modern Church leaders have been presented with prestigious civic awards and are often given audience with both prominent American politicians and world leaders.

Many Latter-day Saints drop out or disaffiliate during some point in their lives. One study led by Stan Albrecht concluded that "eight out of ten current members of the Mormon Church will become disengaged at some time in their life" meaning that "operationally . . . they [will experience] a period of at least 12 months when they [do not] attend religious services on a regular basis or the LDS Church [will be] unimportant to them."[19] However, this same study determined that there are high-levels of reengagement among Mormons which "clearly [indicates] the extent of movement into and out of religious involvement."[20] Albrecht concludes that, even during these periods of disengagement, "most . . . [will maintain] some identification with the Church [and therefore] do not qualify as apostates." It should be noted that the Albrecht

study was conducted well before widespread availability of the Internet and the wealth of information on Mormon history and doctrine that the Internet makes possible. Thus, I suspect that, were this same study to be conducted today (2013), the number of respondents who self-identify as apostates or cite historical and doctrinal issues as instrumental in their disaffiliation may increase.[21]

LDS Church as Contestant

Unlike many denominations, the LDS Church actively attempts to "sell" its message through a very large and sophisticated proselytizing effort. Currently, this missionary effort includes over 80,000 young men and women, as well as retired couples (as of December 2013).[22] While some of this missionary work is charitable in nature, the vast majority is designed to bring converts into the LDS Church. Consequently, some may view the LDS Church as pursuing its own self-interest by expanding its membership rolls much like a business enterprise attempts to increase market share and promote its own image. The Church's proselytizing effort and the omnipresent missionary focus within LDS culture creates tension with society at large and may raise skepticism among some societal segments about the Church's intentions and motives. The Church's "I'm a Mormon" advertising campaign, while potentially effective in improving general perception of LDS Church members, seems very much like commercial advertisements meant to promote the Mormon "brand."

Additionally, the Church controls a very large and sophisticated business arm.[23] The Church maintains that profits from business operations are used to support ecclesiastical efforts but this claim is unverifiable due to the private nature of Church finances. This policy of financial non-disclosure in and of itself raises tension with some societal segments.[24] Add to this that the Church is apparently very successful in its business ventures and investments and you end up with a Church which is, in many respects, perceived as a business.[25] This perception places the Church squarely within the Contestant role.

Other conflicts and controversies serve to reinforce the LDS Church's Contestant role, and it is from these conflicts that the Church's whistleblowers emerge. Modern Mormonism tends to

be politically conservative and has exercised its considerable organizational power to support controversial conservative causes.[26] This clear conservatism puts the LDS Church at odds with liberal activist groups as well as with those societal segments that are affected by conservative policies. At the same time, however, these conservative positions lower tension and improve relations (at least on a functional level) with conservative activists and Evangelical Christians who share the Church's political aims.

Due to its prophetic tradition, the doctrines and policies of the modern LDS Church have occasionally been at odds with an emerging social orthodoxy. A poignant example of this would be the Church's policy of denying priesthood ordination and temple admittance to black men from 1852 to 1978. The emergence of the civil rights movement in the 1950s quickly created significant tension with societal segments that were adopting more tolerant, liberal, and open positions towards African-Americans.[27] Remnants of this tension still exist today as the Church struggles to shake off perceptions of racism and bigotry.

A key tenet (both institutionally explicit and cultural) of modern Mormonism is obedience and loyalty to the Church hierarchy. Richard Bushman argues that this component of Mormonism can be traced back to Joseph Smith during the time when he was developing and making known, to a few key individuals, doctrines and practices that were a significant departure from the relatively democratic Protestantism of that time.[28] Modern Church administration has explicitly been referred to as a "theocracy, where God directs his Church through representatives chosen by him."[29] In the early days of the Church, Joseph Smith established a system wherein Church leaders were to be called and then "sustained" by a vote of the membership. On several occasions, congregations rejected leaders who were chosen by the hierarchy, and leaders were forced to call alternate individuals. Today, such sustaining still takes place but is done more as a formality and rarely has any bearing on the ordination or placement of Church leaders.[30]

Not surprisingly, this theocratic and authoritarian organizational structure creates tension between the Church and Western culture at large that embraces democracy, is anti-authoritarian, and generally holds in contempt any effort to curtail speech and thought. It is this cultural tension that produces whistleblowers in

the modern LDS Church who seek to "expose" Mormonism's authoritarian structure in an effort to reform the Church.[31] An excellent example of this type of whistleblower is the organization called the Mormon Alliance. The Mormon Alliance is operated by Lavina Fielding Anderson and Janice Merrill Allred—Mormon intellectuals and feminists who were excommunicated in the early 1990s. Three volumes of case reports have been published by the Mormon Alliance and outline claims of both sexual abuse and what Anderson and Allred have termed "ecclesiastical abuse"[32] by leaders in the LDS Church. It is essential to note that both Anderson and Allred have not rejected the fundamental claims of Mormonism and, according to their narratives, would very much like to be full participants in the modern Church. However, their whistleblowing efforts (just as Bromley describes) led to estrangement from more conservative Church members and eventually to official separation in the form of excommunication. Other individuals who been outspoken on these issues of authority include Michael Quinn, Paul and Margaret Toscano, and Maxine Hanks.[33] (As of 2012 Maxine Hanks has reconciled with the LDS Church and has returned to Church activity.) Each sought, through various means, reform within the Church and attempted to apply external pressure by appealing to the democratic sentiment and anti-authoritarianism of outsiders. Their efforts seem to have had the exact opposite effect, however, as the Church hierarchy has exerted even more authority to reinforce official positions on doctrine both during and after these attempted reforms.[34]

More recently Denver Snuffer, a conservative LDS author who claims to have had personal interaction with Jesus Christ and in his book, *Passing the Heavenly Gift,* claims that the LDS Church has strayed from Joseph Smith's original vision and mission, was excommunicated for apostasy. Specifically, Church leaders took issue with his implied criticism of Church presidents from Brigham Young onward and demanded that the book be pulled from publication.[35] Snuffer, just like members of the Mormon Alliance, is an excellent example of a whistleblower at work.

LDS Church as Subversive

The efforts of the LDS Church to establish itself as a mainline

religion have been largely successful. Clearly, however, there is some level of suspicion of Mormonism in the U.S. cultural ethos. Whether this suspicion is a reflection of the LDS Church's placement as a Contestant or Subversive organization is very much an open question.

There are some societal segments or groups, however, which view the LDS Church as subversive and attempt to ascribe to it hidden motives, oppressive methods of control, and other nefarious agendas. These groups are diverse with conservative Evangelical anti-Mormons at one end of the spectrum and radical "New Atheist" secular critics at the other.[36] Even amongst these various anti-Mormon groups it is important to make a distinction between theologically conservative anti-Mormons, radical theological conservatives, and secular anti-Mormons (who may take an antagonistic stand against the LDS Church similar to the antagonism seen in certain "New Atheist" circles).

Conservative anti-Mormons find the modern LDS Church subversive on mostly theological grounds. They reason that, because the beliefs and practices of the Church are so far beyond what could be considered traditional Christianity, individual Mormons are in spiritual danger and that their eternal souls are in jeopardy. Consequently, these groups are generally formed as ministries to help "witness to Mormons" about the "real Jesus" in an effort to bring them out of Mormonism.[37] Groups such as the Utah Lighthouse Ministry, Concerned Christians, and Ex-Mormons for Jesus may be classified as contemporary conservative anti-Mormons.

Radical theological conservative anti-Mormonism is generally organized around ministries that aim to aid individuals out of Mormonism, but their institutional rhetoric extends far beyond issues of individual salvation. Most speak of Mormonism in terms of a vast conspiracy. Even their theological rhetoric is violent and extreme as they claim that Mormons (at the highest ecclesiastical levels) knowingly worship Satan. Contemporary examples of these groups include With One Accord, the Prophecy Club, and most infamously, Ed Decker's Saints Alive.[38]

Secular anti-Mormons may be conservative, moderate, or radical, but this differentiation is generally found in the actions and writings of individual members of loose affiliates of the

Exmormon Foundation—founded by Richard Packham in 2001—and not at an institutional level. The Exmormon foundation aligns loosely with the websites "Recovery from Mormonism" (www.exmormon.org), and Post-Mormon (www.postmormon.org).[39] Packham is an avowed atheist (and thus has no theological motive) and has stated that he believes Mormonism (not individual Mormons) to be "evil."[40] Therefore, at its inception, the partial aim of the foundation was to act as "a counter-force to the massive Mormon missionary and advertising effort" as well as "review and critique the Church's propaganda." These aspects of the foundation's mission statement had been dropped, under new foundation leadership, by September 2007.[41] From its beginning, the foundation has been focused on forming helpful ex-Mormon communities and sponsoring conferences to raise awareness of Mormon-related issues.

Jeff Ricks, founder of the Post Mormon foundation—while certainly no fan nor proponent of the LDS Church—has focused his efforts from the beginning (2002) on forming a meaningful and supportive community for those who leave Mormonism and has never established foundation goals specifically meant to "counter" the LDS Church.

It is from these groups who, broadly speaking and to varying degrees, view the modern LDS Church as subversive that LDS sociological apostates emerge. Rather than simply transitioning out of Mormonism or becoming "inactive" or "less-active"—to use Mormon vernacular—which would make these individuals religious leave-takers in the sociological sense, these sociological apostates make a conscious and clear break with the LDS Church as an institution. Most often, this is done through a "resignation letter" wherein individuals request that their names be removed from Church records although some apostates do not feel it necessary to take this administrative step.

The Ex-Mormon Narrative

Narratives regarding the entry and exit from modern Mormonism are often mirror images of one another.[42] Both describe the circumstances and context that brought about an eventual epiphany that led the individual either into or out of Mormonism.

When analyzing ex-Mormon narrative, it is essential to place

the narrative in the proper sociological context. Several researchers have pointed out the inherent unreliability of apostate narratives in establishing fact.[43] Daniel Johnson goes so far as to say, "Substantial portions of apostate accounts—indeed, perhaps even entire accounts—have nothing to do with 'real-world happenings or experiences.'"[44] Johnson's conclusions are derived from his analysis of anti-Catholic narratives from the nineteenth century that were produced at a time when the Catholic Church was considered highly subversive by American society at large. In such an extreme anti-Catholic atmosphere it is not surprising that Catholic apostates were able to construct narratives containing blatant fabrications because in such an environment there were essentially no defenders of the Catholic Church to question these narratives or act as a check of their reliability. Such was the case with late nineteenth-century Mormonism as well when wild apostate narratives were produced and widely accepted because Mormonism had no societal credibility and the public was eager to believe anything negative or salacious about the Church.

Such is not the case with modern Mormonism. First, an entire industry of Mormon apologetics, including the now defunct *FARMS Review of Books,* FAIRMormon (formerly FAIR LDS), the Interpreter Foundation, and SHIELDS, have sprung up to counter both anti-Mormon claims and narratives. Additionally, as discussed above, individual Mormons have become successful and admired members of society. Therefore, the public is likely to be more skeptical of wild or extreme claims made against the Church in apostate narratives.

We must maintain a healthy level of skepticism as we read these narratives and not look to them as a source of actual fact. Lewis Carter points out that "believers [are] much more likely to minimize or ignore negative traits in a community" while "apostates [are] more likely to identify negative traits which the group [does] not in fact exhibit."[46] It is for this reason that I am not attempting to establish fact or reach conclusions on "real-world happenings" from this study. Rather, I am looking to these ex-Mormon narratives as cultural signposts that provide insight into aspects of ex-Mormonism itself, rather than as definitive indicators of specific "problems" that lead people out Mormonism. These narratives are not sufficiently explanatory in and of them-

selves of the reasons why individuals exit Mormonism; and therefore, any attempt to construe the data below to reach this type of conclusion would be extremely misguided.[47] Nonetheless, there is no reason to dismiss these narratives as either wholly or partially untrue. While these narratives may be unreliable in establishing "facts" of personal history, they accurately convey the feelings, attitudes, mindset, and worldview of the author. While reading these narratives, and in speaking with former Mormons about the narratives they have written, it is my view that authors made a concerted and sincere effort to produce a story that was as truthful and accurate as possible.

Methodology and Sources

This study should be considered a preliminary or pilot study. The data presented here represent only the narratives directly considered by the study. Therefore, the data is not meant to apply to *all* ex-Mormon narratives. The sources used in this study were neither selected randomly nor screened for bias.

A total of 137 narratives were collected and analyzed for this study. A corresponding list of narrative elements was created simultaneously to represent the content or themes of each narrative. Ultimately, 145 unique narrative elements were identified. As each narrative was read and analyzed, it was associated with corresponding elements. Thus, there is a one-to-many relationship between narratives and elements.

All narratives were selected from online collections including:

- Recovery from Mormonism (http://www.exmormon.org)
- Concerned Christians (http://www.concernedchristians.com)
- Life After (http://www.lifeafter.org)

Post-Mormon (http://www.postmormon.org) Recovery from Mormonism (hereafter RFM) had the largest collection of narratives or "stories." I was able to identify and extract 111 unique narratives from the main sections of the RFM site. The stories posted on the main site are well constructed and representative of traditional "apostate narratives." Each has a consistent flow and struc-

ture. Thus, I limited my study to these high-quality (and incredibly lengthy!) narratives rather than indexing and analyzing the less-organized stories that may be found in bulletin board postings.[48]

Stories collected from Concerned Christians and Life After Ministries were much shorter and more focused than those narratives found at RFM. Not surprisingly, these narratives are more formulaic than those at RFM and clearly written with the mission of the host organization in mind. Concerned Christians and Life After ministries both state explicitly that their goal is convert Mormons to the "real Jesus" whereas RFM's stated goals are support-oriented rather than evangelical.

Ex-Mormon Narrative Structure

The narratives examined in this study each exhibit a similar structure and format and contain several common elements regardless of their source. There are several possible reasons for this common structure. In the case of RFM, reading other narratives likely influenced narrative authors, and thus the stories posted early (~1995–96), established a pattern for later narratives. As mentioned above, the evangelical narratives were written with a very specific purpose in mind and consequently are structured as testimonials that serve the overall purpose of the hosting ministry. In both cases, the writing of the narrative serves as a kind of "rite of passage" wherein authors become members of a newfound community. The construction of a narrative for "admittance" into a new community is to be expected. In Bromley's conceptual framework, RFM, Concerned Christians, and Life After Ministries act in some ways as "oppositional coalitions" and thus, "upon the rendering of an acceptable narrative, the oppositional coalition accepts pledges and tests of loyalty and professions of regret as the basis for reintegration into social networks to which it controls access."[49]

A second possibility is that ex-Mormons do in fact share a common experience in exiting the LDS Church. I suspect that both factors come into play in the construction of ex-Mormon narratives. To me, most of the narratives reviewed in this study possess an "air of authenticity" which I judge by my years of involvement with the LDS Church and those marginal to it. Thus, while the format and structure of these narratives may be some-

Table 1
Introduction Elements

	RFM		*Evangelical*	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Introduction Elements				
Born/Raised LDS	52%	58	48%	12
LDS Convert	20%	22	16%	6
Pioneer Ancestry	11%	12	18%	2
Attended BYU	17%	19	4%	1
Served Full Time Mission	24%	27	0%	0
Seminary/Institute Attendance	10%	11	12%	3
Bishop	2%	2	0%	0
Relief Society President	2%	2	4%	1
Temple Worker	2%	2	0%	0
Total Narratives		**122**		**25**

what artificial, I believe that the general feeling behind the accounts and the described process of apostasy are likely authentic.

Introduction–Establishing Credibility

These narratives generally begin with some sort of introduction that states the general purpose for writing and serves to legitimize the story to follow. The author often states how long he/she was a member of the LDS Church, if he/she was a convert or born into the Church and, if born into the Church, will often cite LDS pioneer ancestry. Additionally, the authors may make mention of callings or positions they held or provide other indications of their "activity" level while a Latter-day Saint. In addition to specific Church callings, this may include mention of seminary or institute attendance, full-time missionary service, or matriculation at Brigham Young University. The narrative introduction often sits in sharp contrast to what comes later. The authors generally want to make it clear that at one point they were fully in Mormonism and now they are completely out.

Statement of Disenfranchisement or Detachment–"The Apology"

Authors want to illustrate how they were once fully Mormon, yet they also want to provide an explanation for why they once accepted beliefs they now deem utterly ridiculous. In a sense, authors offer an "apology" or explanation for why they were once part of the LDS belief system. Also, authors often point out feelings of long-term discontent within Mormonism. For those authors who were born or raised LDS, this often includes statements that a "testimony" of Mormon beliefs was never received or that the credibility of a "spiritual witness," the key component of any Mormon testimony, should be seriously doubted. Nearly 50 percent of the narratives reviewed included some sort of indication that while authors may have been fully active within Mormonism, they never fully accepted LDS beliefs. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that these authors experienced some sort of nagging discomfort while Mormon. Similarly, those authors who were converts to the LDS Church often explain that at the time they joined Mormonism they were emotionally vulnerable (from divorce, abuse, etc.) and were taken in by the kindness of Mormon missionaries or LDS Church members. In fact, nearly 44 percent of those authors who identified themselves as converts made a point of emphasizing the fact that they were vulnerable at the time of conversion. Overall, these statements of long-term discontent and vulnerability function as a genesis for the author's account of the exit process and provide context for explaining how/why the exit process began.

When I began this study, I expected that doctrinal issues or problems would be the driving force behind these exit narratives, that somehow specific issues of LDS Church history or claims of scriptural literalism would force people to reconsider their faith in the face of difficult and daunting questions. What I found, however, is that most of these narratives deal directly with issues of cultural pressure and disengagement and that the narrative authors generally address specific doctrinal concerns only in an after-the-fact manner. Additionally, the narratives focus on the result of discovering doctrinal difficulties—generally feelings of hurt, confusion, and anger—rather than on the doctrinal issues themselves. The evangelical narratives were much more likely to

focus on specific doctrinal claims or disagreements—mostly citing how LDS Church doctrine is unbiblical—but even these narratives expressed that a sense of spiritual emptiness or cultural disenfranchisement was the beginning of their exit out of Mormonism.[50]

That these narratives express such descriptions of cultural disenfranchisement is not surprising. LDS culture is very specific in its requirements and there are clear, if not explicit, expectations of what a Mormon "should" be. It is a common assumption within the LDS Church that Mormons become apostates because of their desire to violate certain "commandments," or standards of behavior that are part of the LDS cultural norm including abstinence from premarital sex and the avoidance of alcohol, coffee, tea, and tobacco. Naturally, members who violate these cultural norms will find themselves somewhat separate from Mormon culture and left with a feeling of estrangement. Some of this type of estrangement is described in these narratives. However, most descriptions of cultural estrangement are linked with issues of thought or belief, rather than specific violations of behavioral norms. Additionally, modern Mormon culture is theologically centered on the concepts of marriage and the nuclear family. Therefore, those within Mormonism who do not easily fit into these norms and expectations may find also themselves culturally estranged. Mormon culture also places much emphasis on acquiescence to authority and respect for a rigid hierarchical structure. Therefore, some narratives express frustration at what is perceived to be the suppression and discouragement of free thought in individual members by the Church hierarchy. One author recounts how he was disciplined by a local stake president for writing to Church headquarters expressing disagreement with the Church's political involvement in China. The author reports that he was repeatedly told by his Stake President that the "Brethren (Church hierarchy) hold the keys"; therefore, their decisions—even political decisions—are sanctioned by the Lord and that he, as a member of the Church subject to their authority, had no right to express disagreement.

Each narrative, in one way or another, expresses some sort of cultural estrangement between the individual and Mormon cul-

ture at large.[51] Another widely held belief among some active Latter-day Saints is that apostates leave the Church because leaders or other members offend them. The narratives examined here lend support, at least in part, to that perception. Nearly 34 percent of narrative authors report having had a negative experience with other Church members who, for one reason or another, made them feel unwelcome, unworthy, or otherwise excluded from the Church community. Additionally, this includes accounts of authors observing or becoming aware of what they judge to be hypocritical behavior on the part of members of the LDS Church.

Other narratives report feelings of guilt or confusion over central LDS worship, mostly in regard to LDS temple practices. From a young age, Mormons are encouraged to look forward to the day when they can worship and eventually marry in the temple. 32 percent of the narratives reported discomfort with either their first temple experience or temple participation in general. Of these, most described the temple experience as being odd, unspiritual, and even upsetting. In 1990, significant changes were made to the LDS temple endowment which brought the ceremony, originally introduced in 1842 by Joseph Smith and later expanded and edited by Brigham Young,[52] more into line with outside societal norms. It is unclear how many authors experienced the pre-1990 temple endowment versus the more modern version.

Discomfort with other key tenets of Mormon doctrine—including the position that the LDS Church is God's "one true Church" and that a testimony of the truth of this claim can be obtained through a spiritual experience—is also a common theme in these narratives. For example, one author reports that, while serving a full-time mission in a Central American country he was confused by the seemingly authentic spiritual experience of a man who felt that he should *not* accept Mormon claims and join the LDS Church. This author's missionary companion explained that Satan had deceived this man, but the author felt that the man had experienced a genuine revelation from God. Thus, the question: "How can Mormonism be the 'one true Church' if non-Mormons experience authentic spiritual experiences confirming the truth of their faiths?" For those authors to whom faith is still important, they interpret these spiritual experiences as general expressions of God's love and not as confirmation of specific truth

claims. However, most evangelical as well as RFM authors express significant doubt as to the validity of such spiritual confirmations of truth and explain them as merely emotional responses. Evangelicals maintain that truth is to be found in the Bible while secular authors express confidence in reason and science.

Other authors felt culturally estranged because they were homosexual or self-identified feminists—these identities were difficult to reconcile with the conservative doctrinal and social positions which the modern LDS Church has adopted. A few female authors express that they felt unimportant because they were unmarried and had no children. In general, it seems as though the authors of these narratives were in some way marginal to Mormon culture. No author reports being completely comfortable with Mormonism and subsequently deciding to cut ties for purely doctrinal reasons. Of course, whether this represents genuine experience or is the product of the narrative creation process is a question worthy of further study.

Doctrinal and Historical Concerns

The discussion of doctrinal issues and specific LDS truth claims is present in nearly all of the narratives but is generally proffered as an after-thought recitation without evidence of a deep grasp of the historical or theological questions at hand. This recitation generally follows the discussion of cultural estrangement and in many cases functions in the narrative to justify or validate the estrangement described previously. In only rare cases are doctrinal concerns and problems described as the genesis of the exit process. Rather, doctrinal and historical issues function to solidify or widen the gap between the author and Mormonism. However, doctrinal and historical concerns do seem to produce the most anger and frustration in the narratives because they evoke a sense of betrayal in the author. Such angst can be described thus: an author has been taught a particular version of Church history or has built a conceptual world-view based on LDS truth claims only to discover that (at least in the author's mind) he/she has been "lied to" regarding key elements of Mormon history and doctrine. The author generally blames Church leadership for the supposed cover-up and is apt to describe the whole affair in conspiratorial terms. It is this perceived cover-up

Table 2
Doctrinal and Historical Issues

	RFM		*Evangelical*	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Doctrinal and Historical Issues				
Unbiblical	3%	3	48%	12
Polygamy	25%	24	20%	5
Joseph Smith	15%	17	8%	2
Book of Mormon	38%	34	16%	4
Blacks and the Priesthood	22%	24	16%	4
Altered Church History	27%	30	0%	0
Adam-God Doctrine	14%	16	0%	0
Blood Atonement	7%	8	4%	1
Book of Abraham	15%	17	12%	3
Total Narratives		**111**		**25**

that creates the vitriolic and often irrational criticism that is present, not only in these narratives, but also in the RFM community in general. By decrying a supposed LDS Church conspiracy and cover-up, some of these narrative authors actually create or invent secret Church motives and begin to interpret every Church action, both past and present, in terms of this conspiratorial framework. The adoption of this conspiratorial framework impedes or prevents a complete understanding of some of the issues at hand. For example, many authors express abhorrence for the practice of polygamy and explain its emergence as a product of Joseph Smith's overactive ego and libido. Often, they claim that Joseph Smith "seduced and had sex with a 14 year old girl" and make comparisons to the modern FLDS prophet Warren Jeffs. In reality, it is unknown and perhaps unlikely that Joseph Smith consummated his relationship with Helen Mar Kimball—his youngest wife.[53] Smith likely married Helen Mar Kimball to form some sort of dynastic relationship with her father, Heber C. Kimball. Now, it is true that Joseph Smith did consummate his relationships with many, if not most, of his plural wives. However, to claim that

Table 3
Cultural Estrangement Elements

	RFM		*Evangelical*	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Cultural Estrangement Elements				
Never Received Testimony	27%	30	20%	5
Vulnerable at Time of Conversion	7%	8	12%	3
Long-term Discontent	7%	8	12%	3
Doubt Validity of Spiritual Witness	16%	18	8%	2
Difficulty with Church Members	34%	38	24%	6
Free Thought Discouraged	15%	17	0%	0
Temple Experience Unsettling	35%	39	20%	5
"One True Church" Attitude	14%	15	8%	2
Homosexual	6%	7	0%	0
Feminist	10%	18	0%	0
Total Narratives		**111**		**25**

Smith was purely driven by a sexual attraction to underage girls is to illustrate an incomplete understanding of both the practice of polygamy and Joseph Smith. This is not to suggest that one must necessarily approve of Smith's polygamous activities or that discomfort with this once-Mormon doctrine is unjustified; it is simply discussed here to illustrate that, once a conspiratorial view is adopted by these narrative authors; that view seems to be seen as the only reasonable or viable interpretation of the historical record. In other words, once the author adopts an idea that the LDS Church is actively fraudulent, they are less likely to accept more sympathetic views such as those offered by Mauss.[54]

Other examples could be given but the purpose here is not to explore Mormon doctrine or apologetics. Rather, what is of interest is the violent emotional reaction that these narrative authors seem to have once they learn of doctrinal and historical problems in the LDS Church. This type of reaction is consistent with existing research. As Rosemary Avance has noted, some who leave Mormonism are what she terms "Escapists" and harbor significant anger throughout the exit process.[55] As these narrative au-

Table 4
Testimony Elements

	RFM		*Evangelical*	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Testimony Elements				
Evangelical	10%	11	76%	19
Agnostic	7%	8	0%	0
Belief in God–Not Christian	9%	10	0%	0
Liberal Christian	5%	5	0%	0
Pagan	2%	2	0%	0
Atheist	4%	4	0%	0
Total Narratives		**111**		**25**

thors have some of the very basic assumptions that inform their worldview challenged and undermined it is clear why they experience a violent emotional backlash.

The Testimony–"Out of Captivity"

The final component of each of these narratives is an expression of gratitude for newfound freedoms or beliefs. Often, authors will report that their time in Mormonism was a time of being "trapped" or "controlled" and that, now that they have rejected Mormon claims and embraced a new worldview, they experience freedom and pleasures previously unknown. In this way, 40 percent of all narratives examined can be classified as apostate "captivity narratives." Certainly, these captivity narratives are not as extreme as those written when Mormonism was universally considered Subversive during the early Utah years. However, these modern narratives have adopted the language of Western liberal orthodoxy, espousing the merits of individuality, freedom, and reason—contrasting these values with the stifling, overbearing modern LDS Church. As these authors were once trapped, now they are free.

Narrative Implications and Additional Questions

It is clear that these exit narratives describe a process driven by

cultural estrangement supported and perpetuated by LDS doctrinal and historical problems. The ex-Mormon narrative in many respects is very much what we would expect from apostate narratives. They express feelings of captivity and eventual freedom and almost universally act as a "warning" against the dangers and ills of Mormonism. Their structure is artificial but the feelings they convey and the process of disaffiliation they describe seem genuine. Thus, this initial study may act as a springboard for further research on the specific causes and consequences of Mormon apostasy.

This study should focus our attention on the social and cultural estrangement aspects of Mormon apostasy first and foremost. As I have illustrated above, the narratives themselves seem to be driven by this estrangement process. Yet, there are other reasons to consider the estrangement process vital to an understanding of Mormon apostates. First, there are many Mormons who participate actively in the LDS Church even with a full understanding of the historical and doctrinal problems facing the modern Church. Such voices are heard in popular publications such as *Sunstone* and Mormon-themed blogs as well as established academic publications such as *Dialogue*, *Exponent II*, and the *Journal of Mormon History*. At first glance Mormonism may give the appearance of a homogeny of culture and belief. Yet there is a strong undercurrent of lively discussion, debate, and conversation involving a wide range of Latter-day Saints who may or may not accept all of modern Mormonism's truth claims.

Additionally, the past decade has seen the emergence of the Bloggernacle, a collection of blogs dedicated to the intellectual discussion of all things Mormon. Contributors to these blogs are well educated and very aware of the Church's doctrinal and historical problems, yet they choose to be Latter-day Saints. Within the narratives reviewed for this study, it seems that the authors believed they were given an either/or choice: accept Mormonism or completely reject it. Yet, there are many examples of those Latter-day Saints who do not reject Mormonism altogether but revel in its paradoxes, contradictions, and challenges. Why is this so? Why do some who encounter the challenges of Mormonism reject it completely and actively work against the Church while others embrace a more liberal view? These narratives would seem to in-

dicate that a key difference is that these individuals perceive and contextualize their experiences within Mormon culture. A possible difference between the ex- and liberal Mormon may be the degree to which each perceives his or her individual latitude of belief within Mormonism at large as well as the ability to perceive Mormonism as what Mauss has called a "human institution" with its inherent strengths, weaknesses, and struggles.[56]

Of course, to imply that Mormon culture at-large or even the Church institution is openly accepting of alternative views or liberal positions would be misleading, and so the choice to abandon a relationship with the institutional Church or Mormonism generally is not only understandable, but also compelling. There is tremendous pressure to conform in both belief and behavior in modern LDS culture; and unfortunately, modern LDS leaders often present Church participation as an either/or proposition based on how an individual views specific Mormon truth claims. This cultural pressure reinforces the false choice to either fully accept, or fully reject, Mormon-specific truth claims, thus creating an unnecessary dilemma for those with legitimate questions concerns over doctrinal, historical, and social issues.

Personal Reflections on Pastoral Apologetics and the LDS Doubter

I must preface what follows with a clear and unequivocal statement that the abandonment of Mormonism may be the most appropriate and rational choice for many individuals depending on their own unique circumstances, beliefs, and preferences. No individual who has invested significant amounts of time and effort in the LDS Church takes the choice to leave or stay lightly. Likewise, the choice to stay connected to the Church even in light of difficult questions and doubts is not one made hastily without considerable reflection. Both those who leave and those who stay would do well to develop empathy for others who have made a different choice. Incessant finger wagging on both sides of this question is as useless as it is obnoxious.[57]

As I have spoken and written about subjects related to Mormon doubt and belief over the past several years, I have been contacted, on occasion, by both long-time Mormon friends and complete strangers who express a desire to stay involved with Mor-

monism—to one degree or another—but are unsure of how to navigate their Mormon identity in light of new and perhaps troubling information. I certainly won't pretend to have any answers but I have formulated some ideas based on what I have seen work for others. First, allow me to share with you some thoughts and reflections sent to me by a long-time friend whom I have always known to be a strong, committed, and believing Latter-day Saint but who has struggled, along with his spouse, to find their place in the Church. In trying to make a "decision" to either stay with or leave the Church, this friend and his spouse considered two main questions. Note that specific doctrinal or historical issues do not underpin these fundamental questions. Rather, they represent meta-questions; that is to say, these questions sit above any specific concern or doubt and are centered on ethics and broad, fundamental issues of metaphysics. From our correspondence:

> 1. Raising our kids: The Church did a great job helping [my wife] and me to grow up as smart/good people. Do we go to church even if we don't have testimonies, to support our children's development?
>
> 2. Hope: If we ever do make a finite decision that we don't believe in God, then our "hope" for what happens after this life comes crashing down . . . and that's pretty heavy. May I share with you one of my thoughts that I'm very curious if others have considered? One of the fundamental ideas used to promote the existence [of] a supreme being is the fruit of the Spirit. It's what we use on missions to convert people to believe in God and to join the Church. Here's my theory (I'm not saying I believe this, but it is a possibility in my mind): Over millions of years of evolution, groups of people evolved into societies. Societies where people worked together helped one another, cared for each other, etc., would probably have a higher propensity to grow, flourish, and perpetuate their culture. If our bodies could evolve over millions of years to more effectively survive, then why not our "feelings". Would it be a stretch to imagine that over time people evolved to have warm-fuzzy feelings when they experience "good things"? So, the promptings of the Spirit could simply be our evolved sense of doing what is "right" which perpetuates our species to survive.[58]

Another friend, also a long-time believing and committed Latter-day Saint shared the following about some specific concerns that were impacting her relationship with the Church:

> A few [other concerns]—polygamy is a big one that is hard for me to understand and reconcile with even though it's obviously not practiced. Another is feminism and the role women play in the church—that's a big one for me, as well as the whole gay topic. Personally I have no issues with gay couples & know many great people who I know didn't "choose" that but rather were born that way. I did recently read the church came out with a statement saying they didn't think it was a chosen thing. I guess I'm just curious & want to know more about what the general authorities think. . . . I guess you could say [Elder] Packers talk a few conferences ago [October 2010] & then the fact that it was edited later for the Ensign, well that bothers me.[59]

Additionally:

> I do have questions though and unlike many members I know, in my opinion it is OK to have questions. Why is it do you think? That some members (my parents included) seem to fear asking the tough questions? I think doing so is an essential part of developing a relationship with God and what we believe on a personal level. Just because I have questions doesn't make me apostate . . . so why is it perceived that way? (that is a generalization but to a large degree I have found it to be true).[60]

The sentiments expressed by these friends are, at least according to my own experience, not uncommon. As discussed above, some of these same sentiments are expressed in the ex-Mormon narratives considered for this paper. Given that such concerns exist and that many Latter-day Saints feel reluctant to share, and perhaps even explore these concerns openly, what is the pastoral responsibility of LDS members and leaders alike in helping members find some sort of resolution and with it, their individual place within the Church?

I strongly believe that those who consider themselves Mormon liberals or intellectuals must come "out of the shadows," as it were, and assume a pastoral role for those who may become ex-Mormon but may, in fact, be searching for reasons to stay. By existing and behaving as a sub-culture, rather than as an integral part of the larger Mormon tapestry of experience, liberals and intellectuals inadvertently contribute to the myth of Mormon orthodoxy. By this I mean that Latter-day Saints struggle with their faith, prefer some doctrines over others, and ultimately form a unique world-view informed but not strictly defined by LDS the-

ology. Several scholars have explored this issue in the past including Armand Mauss, Ethan Yorgason, and Matt Bowman. Each has made recommendations, throughout several articles/ books, on how liberal theological or social thought can, and should play an important role in contemporary Latter-day Saint communities.[61]

I must admit that I am not certain as to how this should be done. I suppose that each Latter-day Saint finds him/herself in unique circumstances with local priesthood leaders who demonstrate varying levels of tolerance for liberal expression in their wards and stakes. Regardless of circumstance, however, I believe it is possible for Latter-day Saints to reach out in appropriate and meaningful ways.

The "About" and the "Of"

The philosopher and mystic Alan Watts once wrote that Christianity had become a religion *about* Jesus rather than a religion *of* Jesus.[62] To Watts, the simple and straightforward message of Jesus was unnecessarily muddied by questions of the Logos, transubstantiation, and other dogmas which emerged in Christianity's first 1000 years. These emerging dogmas were *about* Jesus, and not *of* Jesus. They provided Christians with an academic understanding of metaphysics without emphasizing the "essence" of Christ's message. The Reformation went a long way toward addressing this issue, and Vatican II represents a monumental shift in how the Catholic Church approaches such questions in modern times. Yet this is still an issue with which all modern Christians struggle.

I fear that members of the LDS Church—especially members with a keen interest in apologetics and the academic study of religion—speak a lot about Mormonism but not much of Mormonism. If I were to ask a typical Church member why Mormonism is important and matters to them, I would expect to receive an answer expressing the importance of family and community and not an explanation of their preferred Book of Mormon geography model.

Members who find themselves in the midst of doubt are, at the core, struggling to discover why Mormonism matters to them, or if it matters at all. Such members may find comfort and fellowship within the context of what I term *pastoral apologetics.*

Pastoral Apologetics

Pastoral apologetics may be succinctly defined as a response to doubt that focuses primarily on the spiritual, social, and psychological desire for meaning, purpose, and mysticism. It is an awareness of, and effort to support individuals as they process new information and adjust existing pragmatic truth narratives.[63]

Truth narratives represent the synthesis of all life experience into a single cohesive whole. These life experiences lead the individual to form opinions, ideas, and conceptions about "how the world works." Thus, an individual has within him or herself a varied collection of ideas, which together form a comprehensive worldview. However, this collection of experiences and ideas is not static. It is constantly growing and changing based on new information.

The plan of salvation is a central component of a Latter-day Saint truth narrative. It allows an individual Mormon to understand past, present, and future but most importantly, recognize his/her individual role and place within God's plan. The plan of salvation, of course, is itself made up of many individual doctrines that are often presented as narratives themselves.

It is not difficult to understand, then, why a challenge to the core of one's truth narrative is so disruptive. The challenge throws our understanding of truth into complete disarray—eventually reaching some sort of tipping point.

In his essays on pragmatism, William James explained that "the individual has a stock of opinions already, but he meets a new experience that puts them to a strain . . . somebody contradicts them; or in a reflective moment he discovers that [existing ideas] contradict each other; or he hears of facts with which they are incompatible; or desires arise in him which they cease to satisfy." This new information "result[s] in an inward trouble to him which his mind until then had been a stranger, and from which he seeks to escape by modifying his previous mass of opinions." James contends that we are all "extreme conservatives" and seek to "save as much of [the original stock of opinions] as [we] can." Individuals struggle and negotiate between old and new information "until at last some new idea comes up which he can graft upon the ancient stock with a minimum of disturbance of the lat-

ter, some idea that mediates between the stock and the new experience and runs them into one another most felicitously and expediently." At the conclusion of this process, the "new idea is then adopted as the true one" as "it preserves the older stock of truths with a minimum of modification, stretching them just enough to make them admit the novelty, but conceiving that in ways as familiar as the case leaves possible."

Every member responds differently to new, and perhaps surprising, information but it is clear that by the time a person decides to divorce him/herself from the Church, either through official resignation or by simply dropping out of Church activity wholesale, he/she has gone through the narrative adjustment process over and over again. They have reached a point where the mind's "extreme conservatism" in wanting to hold together old beliefs has given way to something new.

In examining Peter's admonition to "always be ready to make a defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you" we see that Peter is advocating for Christians to share the reasons they embrace their faith and hope with "kindness and gentleness" as an outward sign of an inner hope, a manifestation of the love characteristic of Christian discipleship. Thus, in order to be a pastoral apologist, believers must first understand, and be able to articulate as best they can, why they have chosen to be, or remain, a Latter-day Saint. I am, of course, not speaking of academic answers but rather, answers that address issues of the heart and the desire to feel connected in a sense of expansive, or ultimate meaning. Latter-day Saints of all kinds choose Mormonism because it means something to them. It matters.

Most importantly, Mormonism may matter to Latter-day Saints even if they discount or question certain metaphysical or historical truth claims. Thus, when pastoral apologists interact with those who doubt they can, and in many cases should, speak of Mormonism in pragmatic terms, explaining why the Book of Mormon, the Church as community, or the story of the First Vision are personally inspiring, of comfort, or encouraging. I do not mean to suggest that studying and seeking answers to questions of history or metaphysics are unimportant. However, for those looking for reasons to stay as opposed to rock-solid solutions to very

difficult questions, specific answers may be less important than discovering cultural or spiritual reasons to maintain their relationship with Mormonism.

Latter-day Saints must never make a doubter feel stupid, unwelcome, unworthy, or unwanted because of their doubts or disbelief. Such behavior is anathema to Christian love and is an attempt at social shaming and coercion. The redemptive value of the gospel of Jesus Christ rests on the ability of an individual to choose for him/herself. Besides, even if these attempts at shaming and coercion were effective, they would create reluctant disciples following the rules with an unconverted and defiant heart. The act of choosing Christ is the very act of redemption itself.

It is my hope that Latter-day Saints, by understanding both the nature of dynamics of doubt and apostasy, may become more effective pastoral apologists focused on matters of the heart and spirit. Ex-Mormon narratives give us insight into the painful process of losing faith and may act as useful starting point to explore the complex relationship between faith, doubt, community, heritage, and intellect.

Notes

1. The use of the word "recovery" is indicative of how these ex-Mormons view their former faith. In common parlance, individuals *recover* from an illness, alcoholism, abuse, etc. That these former Mormons frame their previous Mormon belief and/or relationship with the institutional Church in these terms is indicative of the high level of animosity some former members have towards Mormonism and the LDS Church. This will be discussed in further detail below within the context of organizations that are views as socially "subversive."

2. The website "Recovery from Mormonism" (www.exmormon.org) was launched in 1995 by Eric Kettunen. The site continues to be active with both content critical of Mormonism and a lively discussion board where some well-known ex-Mormons such as Steve Benson still participate to this day.

3. It is important to note that there are conservative religious participants in the secular ex-Mormon movement; but by and large, counter-cult ex-Mormonism and secular ex-Mormonism operate in separate and distinct spheres.

4. David G. Bromley, "The Social Construction of Contested Exit Roles: Defectors, Whistleblowers and Apostates," in *The Politics of Reli-*

gious Apostasy: The Role of Apostates in the Transformation of Religious Movements, edited by David G. Bromley (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 21.

5. It is essential to note that these classifications constitute a continuum and therefore, a single organization may be classified as an Allegiant, Contestant, or Subversive organization simultaneously. Ibid.

6. Ibid., 22.

7. Ibid., 35.

8. Ibid., 23.

9. Ibid., 25.

10. Ibid., 27–28.

11. Ibid., 29.

12. Ibid., 32.

13. Ibid., 36.

14. Ibid., 37.

15. Stuart A. Wright, "Exploring Factors That Shape the Apostate Role," in *The Politics of Religious Apostasy*, edited by David G. Bromley (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 97.

16. Armand L. Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

17. Armand Mauss, "Apostasy and the Management of Spoiled Identity," in *The Politics of Religious Apostasy*, edited by David G. Bromley (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1998), 53.

18. Such an analysis could (and probably should) be an article in itself. The analysis here will be brief and somewhat superficial in an effort to illuminate an understanding of the ex-Mormon narrative.

19. Stan Albrecht, Marie Cornwall, and Perry H. Cunningham, "Religious Leave-Taking, Disengagement and Disaffiliation among Mormons," in *Falling from the Faith: Causes and Consequences of Religious Apostasy*, edited by David G. Bromley (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1988), 65.

20. Ibid., 66.

21. I base this assertion purely on anecdotal evidence and experience given that statistics or studies on regarding post-Internet disaffiliation are unavailable at the time of this writing.

22. http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/facts-and-stats (accessed December 1, 2013).

23. Richard N. Ostling and Joan K. Ostling, *Mormon America* (San Francisco: Harper, 1999), 113–29.

24. It is important to point out that there has never been a known financial scandal within the Church and no whistleblower has yet emerged to illustrate any misuse of Church funds.

25. D. Michael Quinn believes that the ecclesiastical Church itself is

operated like a business and describes his excommunication in terms of being "fired" rather than as a ministerial or ecclesiastical function. Personal interview, April 10, 2007.

26. Most notable would be the Church's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment and its support of Propositions 21 and 8 banning gay marriage in California. For details on the Church's involvement with the ERA, see D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books and Smith Research Associates, 1987), 384–401.

27. The most comprehensive studies on the topic are: Armand L. Mauss, "The Fading of the Pharaoh's Curse: The Decline and Fall of the Priesthood's Ban against Blacks," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14, no. 3 (1981): 10–45; Armand L. Mauss, *All Abraham's Children: Changing Mormon Conceptions of Race and Lineage* (Urbana: Ill.University of Illinois Press, 2003).

28. Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling, a Cultural Biography of Joseph Smith* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Press, 2005).

29. N. Eldon Tanner, "The Administration of the Church," *Ensign*, November 1979.

30. The exception to this would be when there are moral transgressions or other sins of which the hierarchy may not be aware and a member of the congregation objects and makes these issues known in private.

31. This of course includes a wide range of issues ranging from very conservative to extremely liberal social positions.

32. In general, Anderson and Allred use this term to refer to what they consider inappropriate use or exercise of ecclesiastical authority ranging from a local bishop giving bad financial advice to ward members to the widely publicized condemnation that George Pace's writings and ideas received from Apostle Bruce R. McConkie.

33. Peggy Fletcher Stack, "Exiles in Zion," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 16, 2003.

34. Most members of the Church would not describe the organization as authoritarian in a negative way but would simply acknowledge the prophetic calling of Church leadership. In my view, Anderson and Allred have approached these difficult issues in an ineffective way. The LDS Church, just like the Catholic or any church that makes strong claims of authority, is *by definition* not a democracy; and this fact is neither obscured nor hidden. Being a Latter-day Saint implicitly illustrates the acceptance of a social contract wherein the authority of Church leaders is recognized and accepted. This is not to suggest that there are no means to express concern about leadership decisions or dynamics. How-

ever, in an authoritative Church environment, such concerns should be expressed and addressed in accordance with the social contract at work. Armand Mauss has suggested that Latter-day Saints with concerns about Church leadership, doctrines, or policies, view the Church more as a "family" wherein disputes are discussed and settled quietly and outside the public eye. Armand L. Mauss, "Seeing the Church as a Human Institution," *Sunstone*, July 2002, 20–23.

35. See Denver Snuffer, "Don't Call Me. (That Means You Too!)," http://denversnuffer.blogspot.com/2013/08/dont-call-me–that-means-you-too_23.html; and "Denver Snuffer Excommunication Letter," http://denversnuffer.blogspot.com/2013/09/no-title.html.

36. Ed Decker's Saints Alive in Jesus Ministry is an example of conservative Evangelical anti-Mormonism. Secular critics of Mormons are less formally organized, but well-known atheist activists such as Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Bill Maher have all expressed disdain for Mormonism.

37. http://www.concernedchristians.com, http://www.utlm.org, http://www.lifeafter.org.

38. Jerald and Sandra Tanner engaged in a lengthy and well-documented dispute with Ed Decker and Bill Schnoebelen of Saints Alive after the release of *The Godmakers II*—the title of both a book and video which claimed that Mormonism was both Satanic, and part of a larger conspiracy. The Tanners illustrated that the claims of Decker and Schnoebelen were inflammatory, poorly researched, and based on either poor research or pure speculation. Jerald Tanner and Sandra Tanner, *Problems in the Godmakers II* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1993).

39. There is also a separate Post-Mormon foundation, which, historically, has been less hostile toward the institutional LDS Church than the Ex-Mormon Foundation.

40. Richard Packham, "Reflections of an Old Apostate in a Brave New World," paper presented at the Ex-Mormon Foundation Annual Conference: A Brave New World, Salt Lake City, 2005.

41. Compare "2006 Exmormon Foundation Mission Statement," http://web.archive.org/web/20060615100426/exmormonfoundation.org/node/6 to "2007 Exmormon Foundation Mission Statement," http://web.archive.org/web/20070810201655/http://exmormonfoundation.org/node/6.

42. Rosemary Avance, "Seeing the Light: Mormon Conversion and Deconversion Narratives in Off- and Online Worlds," *Journal of Media and Religion* 12, vol. 1 (2013): 16–24.

43. See Daniel Carson Johnson, "Apostates Who Never Were: The

Social Construction of *Absque Facto* Apostate Narratives," in *The Politics of Religious Apostasy: The Role of Apostates in the Transformation of Religious Movements*, edited by David G. Bromley (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 115–38; and Lewis F. Carter, "Carriers of Tales: On Assessing Credibility of Apostate and Other Outside Accounts of Religious Practices," in *The Politics of Religious Apostasy: The Role of Apostates in the Transformation of Religious Movements*, edited by David G. Bromley (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998), 221–38.

44. Johnson, "Apostates Who Never Were," 135–36.

45. Carter, "Carriers of Tales," 222.

46. In 2012 John Dehlin, a well-known podcaster and liberal Mormon, conducted a survey conducted a survey {http://www.whymormonsquestion.org.} to assess the reasons Mormons choose to leave the fold. While Dehlin's study is incredibly valuable in many ways, it has methodological constraints that prevent me from drawing sweeping conclusions about ex-Mormons generally. The biggest methodological problem of the study is that survey participants were self-selected via the Internet. Without question, such self-selection reinforces the most commonly discussed reasons Mormons begin to doubt their faith. In order to formulate conclusions beyond the limited population of those who participated in Dehlin's survey, it would be necessary to conduct a decades-long study that tracks the beliefs, activities, and attitudes of randomly selected individual Mormons over time.

47. Since performing my initial analysis, I have discovered several other sources of ex-Mormon narratives. And while I have not analyzed these narratives systematically as I did the narratives under direct consideration here, they do seem to conform to the structure I outline in this paper.

48. "Recovery from Mormonism Biography Board," http://exmormon.org/phorum/list.php?3.

49. Bromley, "The Social Construction," 37.

50. It is important to keep in mind, however, that while the majority of these narratives describe a period of disenfranchisement, there were those who described exiting Mormonism for purely doctrinal reasons. I would contend however, that since strict orthodoxy, or at least the appearance thereof, is such a large part of LDS culture that, when individuals adopt heterodox views, they feel tremendous cultural pressure to either re-conform their beliefs or hide their views. In this way, it can be said that even purely doctrinal or historical concerns are likely to lead to some feelings of cultural pressure.

51. This estrangement occurs either before or after the author "discovers the truth" about Mormon doctrinal and historical problems.

52. David John Buerger, *The Mysteries of Godliness: A History of Mormon Temple Worship* (San Francisco, Calif.: Smith Research Associates, 1994), 170.

53. Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1997), 14; and Brian C. Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy Volume 1: History*, 3 vols. (Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books, 2013), Appendix E.

54. Mauss, "Seeing the Church."

55. Avance, "Seeing the Light," 16–24.

56. Mauss, "Seeing the Church."

57. As a side note, I was once compared to a Nazi by a well-known prominent individual in the ex-Mormon community because of my choice to remain a Latter-day Saint. Some ex-Mormons have faced similarly ludicrous accusations of leaving Mormonism due to a desire to sin, etc.

58. Personal correspondence, February 14, 2013.

59. Personal correspondence, February 20, 2013.

60. Personal correspondence, February 22, 2013.

61. See, for example, Matthew Bowman,*The Mormon People: The Making of an American Faith* (New York: Random House, 2012); Ethan R. Yorgason, *Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive.*

62. Alan Watts, *Behold the Spirit: A Study in the Necessity of Mystical Religion* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972).

63. William James discusses the concept of truth narratives in depth in *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1907).

What Kind of Truth Is Beauty?: A Meditation on Keats, Job, and Scriptural Poetry

Michael Austin

When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,–that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."
–John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1820)

I.

Two poems that I read during my sophomore year of college ended up changing my life. The first of these, John Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," changed it quickly by helping me decide to change my major from accounting to English. It wasn't so much that I was impressed with Keats for being such a good writer as much as I was impressed with myself for being such a good reader and for sort of understanding "Ode on a Grecian Urn." It made me feel smart, perhaps for the first time in my life, and I decided that I liked feeling smart and wanted to spend the rest of my time in college understanding poems and feeling like a genius. So I majored in English. In fact, I majored in English three times. As a graduate student, a teaching assistant, and, eventually, as a professor of English literature I continued to teach "Ode on a Grecian Urn" in a variety of courses more or less the same way that I originally understood it the first time I read it.

The second life-altering poem that I read that year, the Book of Job, changed my life gradually. I read Job in a BYU religion

class that assigned only the first two chapters, the second half of the last chapter, and a few reputedly Christological verses in between. But (being a new English major and all) I read the entire book—or, at least, my eyes passed faithfully over every one of its words. I understood almost none of it, but I accepted, on the authority of the instructor and the Institute manual, (1) that Job was a historical narrative about a man who suffered greatly and never complained or cursed God; (2) that in the middle of his suffering and for no particular reason he prophesied of the coming of Christ by saying, "I know that my Redeemer lives"; and (3) that, as a reward for Job's being such a good sport, God rewarded Job at the end of the book with twice as much stuff as he lost at the beginning. I learned, in other words, the small portion of the Book of Job that one can derive by reading only the first two chapters, as well as the second half of the last chapter, and a few reputedly Christological verses in between.[1] I am deeply ashamed to admit that I went on to get a PhD in English, write a dissertation on biblical literature in the seventeenth century, and publish half a dozen peer-reviewed articles on the Old Testament without ever learning one of the most basic and obvious things about the biblical Book of Job: that it—or at least most of it—is a poem.

I might very well have lived forever in my ignorance had it not been for my first job after graduate school, which required me to teach two sections each semester of a general-education, Plato-to-NATO survey course in world literature. To my delight, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" was on the common course syllabus. So was the Book of Job. The first time I read the introduction to Job in the *Norton Anthology of World Literature*, I realized how absurdly little I knew about one of the Bible's great literary masterpieces. With the guidance of a few basic footnotes, I quickly learned that almost everything I knew about Job was wrong. Since that first semester, understanding the Book of Job has become a mild obsession for me. I have taught Job dozens of times in college courses, and a few times in LDS Gospel Doctrine classes. I have read it many times, and, each time, I understand a little bit more. I have a "Job shelf" in my office, devoted to different translations of and commentaries on this great poem. It has become increasingly clear to me that, in order to understand Job, I must wrestle with it

the way I once wrestled with "Ode on a Grecian Urn"—only for a lot longer, as it is a much longer and much greater poem.

As I continue to teach and study both Job and "Ode on a Grecian Urn," I remain impressed by similarities between the two poems that I could not have imagined as a college sophomore twenty-five years ago. Both, for example, are built around narrative questions that are really philosophical puzzles for readers to solve. And both ultimately fail to answer their questions convincingly but do create a vocabulary for discussing them productively. Both poems have been responsible for volumes of criticism and commentary that interpret them in wildly different ways. And most importantly for my purposes, both poems—for very different reasons—require us to consider very seriously what exactly we mean when we say that a poem, or any other work of art, is "true."

II.

The truth of art is the central problem of "Ode on a Grecian Urn." Throughout the poem, a narrator—we can call him "Keats" as long as we don't confuse him with the poet—meditates on three simple scenes painted on an ancient urn. The images are fairly typical pastoral fare—a young child playing reed pipes, a shepherd boy about to kiss a shepherd girl, and a group of villagers participating in a sacrifice outside of their village—but for the narrator they raise profound questions about art and imagination and eternity. Can any song, Keats asks, match "the spirit ditties of no tone"? Can the consummation of love ever compare to the anticipation of a first kiss? Must experience always be a pale shadow of imagination? For the Romantic poets, at least, these were big questions.

In the poem's first four stanzas, the narrator tries valiantly to draw some sort of conclusive meaning from the images on the vase. But the questions keep multiplying until they "tease us out of thought." In the final stanza, the urn itself speaks in response to the narrator's questions. But it gives a spectacularly unsatisfying answer: "beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all / Ye know on earth and all you need to know." It is pretty much anyone's guess what this means. Some interpreters read it as an anticipation of the late-nineteenth-century aestheticism of Wilde and Pater, something like, "nothing in the world is inherently true or mean-

ingful, so the only truth we have access to lies in subjective aesthetic experience." Or it might mean something more like "so great is the power of truth, that anything true is also necessarily beautiful." This would align Keats with the Platonists and Neo-Platonists who came before him. Or it could be an ironic joke: "get a life, dude, and stop talking to pottery!" Like the incessant "nevermore" of Poe's raven, the words of the Grecian urn resist (even more than most poetic phrases) any kind of final or authoritative interpretation.

To make the matter even more puzzling, we have multiple drafts of the original poem that punctuate the last lines differently. Some versions enclose all of the last two lines in quotation marks—"beauty is truth, truth beauty, / That is all you know on earth and all you need to know"—thereby attributing the entire sentence to the urn. Other versions include only the words "beauty is truth, truth beauty" in quotation marks, which means that the rest of the sentence could be read as the narrator's response to the urn ("that is all you need to know, you stupid old vase") or the narrator's or the poet's closing advice to the reader (Keats's use of the plural "ye" would tend to support this reading). Nobody knows for sure. Or, rather, a lot of people know for sure, but they do not know for sure in the same ways. During the first half of the twentieth century, most of the towering figures of the New Criticism —T.S. Eliot, Cleanth Brooks, M. H. Abrams, Douglas Bush, Hugh Kenner, and Walter Jackson Bate to name just a few—spent a considerable amount of time offering their own reading of these two perplexing lines of poetry.[2]

Nearly all interpretations of these last lines begin with the assumption that, according to the poem's internal logic, truth (an entirely objective judgment) and beauty (a wholly subjective judgment) are related to each other in fundamental-but-not-entirely obvious ways. Here, at least, the vase is on solid ground. Cognitive psychologists have long believed that our judgments about "truth" and "beauty" directly influence each other. We know that attractive people are perceived as more honest and more intelligent than unattractive people.[3] And researchers are now discovering that it works the other way too. People perceived as honest are more likely to be considered physically attractive than people per-

ceived as dishonest. These connections appear to be cross-cultural and do not depend on any particular definition of either "truth" or "beauty." Whatever an individual considers beautiful will tend to correlate highly with whatever that same person considers true. Beauty IS truth, and truth IS beauty—and we can prove it under rigorous experimental conditions.[4]

Though ultimately unsuccessful, the narrator's struggle to find meaning in the urn produces a work of great beauty. So too does the reader's struggle with the poem. And, because they are beautiful, these struggles are also true under the terms of the poem itself." A poem, like a vase, can be quite true, even if it does not provide final answers to any of the burning questions that it raises. Just asking the right questions, and giving a voice to thoughts that many people have had but nobody has ever expressed, constitutes a type of truth all its own. And this is why millions of people in every age and culture have turned to poetry—to Lao Tzu or Valmiki, or to Homer or Dante, or to Bob Dylan and the Beatles—to find the truths that give meaning to their lives. In the lived experience of the human race, poetry has at least as strong a claim to truth as history and science do.

Yes, poems are true. But they are almost never true in the same ways that history and science are true. They do not present us with the same kinds of fact claims, nor are they subject to the same kinds of hypothesis-testing and falsification protocols. It doesn't really matter, for example, whether or not John Keats ever saw a Greek vase. Nobody has ever found an urn like the one described in the poem (and, yes, a lot of people have looked), but this does not mean that Keats is a liar or that the poem is not true. Similarly, we need not be terribly concerned by the fact that Grecian urns can't really talk. Talking pottery is a useful artistic conceit; it is not a claim of scientific fact. We can read and appreciate Keats, and even learn important truths from him, without having to change our understanding of physics to account for the possibility of talking urns.

Poetic truth also works differently than revealed truth of the "thus-sayeth-the-Lord" variety. We find very little poetry in, say, the Doctrine and Covenants or the letters of Paul. These works of scripture are designed to convey specific ideas from one mind to

another, and poems just aren't very good at that sort of thing. But poems are very good at other types of "revelation." Poems encourage us to notice things that we have missed and to see common things in new ways. They teach us how to name what we have always felt but could never describe, and they show us how to ask questions that we didn't even know were questions. To be successful, a poet must convey impressions and images with the force of revelation. But this is not quite the same thing as conveying facts or transmitting instructions. Great poems almost always mean multiple things at the same time, and they rarely coalesce into a single interpretation that everybody agrees upon. Those few poems that outlast their immediate context invariably do so because they allow new generations of readers to interpret them in new ways—often in ways that their original authors could never have foreseen. Poems are true in ways that devolve a great deal of the truth-making power to their readers.

But how should we read poems that are themselves part of sacred texts? Most religious traditions have poetic scriptures that can be clearly distinguished from sacred writings in prose. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the most impressive scriptural poetry is found in the Wisdom books of the Old Testament: Psalms, Proverbs, Lamentations, the Song of Solomon, and, above all, the Book of Job. With the exception of the Song of Solomon (which Joseph Smith labeled non-canonical) Latter-day Saints believe these books to be scriptures—books with a divine provenance and an uncontestable claim to truth. And so, I believe, they are. But an important consequence of the argument that I am making here is that we can fully accept the truth and divine origins of these books without insisting that they be true in the ways that we expect books of history, or science, or prophecy to be true. We can affirm, rather, that they are true in the ways that poems are true.

Unfortunately, however, Latter-day Saints often adopt an unnecessary fundamentalist position that says that, for these books to be true in any way, they must be true in every way that any kind of text can possibly be true. I call this position "unnecessary" because Latter-day Saint theology does not require or even accept the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. Joseph Smith closed the door of biblical literalism for all Mormons forever when he produced

his "inspired version" of the Bible that, among other things, added lengthy passages to Genesis and Matthew, emended other passages with no reference to the primary texts, and declared one canonical book—the Song of Solomon—to be "not inspired." No biblical literalist could support such declarations and alterations. Nonetheless, contemporary Latter-day Saints often seem compelled to adopt a sort of default biblical literalism—that is, we regard everything in the Bible literally true unless somebody in authority has specifically instructed us to think otherwise. When we do this for the Wisdom poems of the Old Testament, we end up insisting on truth claims that the poems themselves do not make, and we often end up having to defend the theological equivalents of talking urns.

All I am really trying to say here is that there are different kinds of texts in the Bible that require different reading strategies to understand. The Bible that we have is not as much of a book as it is a library—and what we call the Old Testament contains the most significant writings of an entire ancient culture. Like any good library, the Old Testament contains history books and instruction manuals. It contains overtly religious works that declare truth directly through prophecy, but it also contains works of literature that teach spiritual truths imaginatively, through poetry and narrative. Like most of the cultures in the Ancient Near East, the Israelites had a wealth of such literature, much of which ended up in the Hebrew *Ketuvim* (Writings) that, together with the *Torah* (Teaching) and *Nevi'im* (Prophets) constitute the *Tanakh*, or the Hebrew Bible. Many of the works in the *Ketivum* identify themselves clearly as poetry. They claim divine inspiration—much as Dante and Milton claimed divine inspiration—but they do not claim to have been written by prophets or angels. They claim to be true as poems.

In what follows, I will suggest—using the Book of Job as my primary example—that the books of the Old Testament that present themselves to us as poetry should be read as poetry, and that the primary kind of truth that we should look for in these books is poetic truth. I am not suggesting that all scriptures should be read as poetry, or that the Bible is primarily a literary text, or that there are not books in the Old Testament that make strong claims to his-

torical and doctrinal truth. Clearly, a large portion of the Bible, including many of the books of the Old Testament, do make such claims and must be approached accordingly. But the Old Testament is a library that contains an entire people's history, law, prophecy, and literature. It would be remarkable if such a collection did not contain some texts designed to be read primarily as literature, just as it would be tragic if the collective consciousness of a great people contained no poetic truth.

III.

Did a man named Job ever exist? A great many people believe this to be a very important question, partly out of a reflexive biblical literalism, but also because references to Job appear in other scriptures—including the Book of James in the New Testament and the Doctrine and Covenants. The passage in the D&C 121:10, in which God comforts Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail by telling him "Thou art not yet as Job," has been particularly compelling evidence of Job's historicity for Latter-day Saints. In the LDS Institute Manual, one of only seven major headings in its commentary on the Book of Job is entitled "Was Job a Real Person?" As an answer to the question, the manual reprints portions of an address by BYU religion professor Keith H. Meservy:

> Now, if Job were not real and his suffering, therefore, were merely the figment of some author's imagination, and Joseph Smith on the other hand was very real, and his suffering and that of his people were not imaginary, then for the Lord to chide him because his circumstances were not as bad as Job's were, would provide an intolerable comparison, since one cannot compare real with unreal things. On the other hand, since the Lord did make the comparison, it must be a real one. I would, therefore, conclude on this basis alone, that Job was a very real person.[5]

I see two legitimate objections to this position. First, it is not at all obvious that the circumstances of a literary character cannot be considered a valid comparison to those of a real person. Indeed, I would suggest that Jesus, during his earthly ministry, made such comparisons frequently by answering real people's concerns with instructional parables. Modern prophets and apostles frequently refer to the Good Samaritan or the Prodigal Son in conference talks knowing full well that these are not historical fig-

ures. Literary parables have long been able to serve an important role in prophetic teaching without staking any kind of historical claim.

Even if we grant that Job was a real person, however, it does not follow that the Book of Job should be read as an accurate historical account of that person's life. Many of the world's greatest poems have been based on the lives of historical figures without actually being history themselves. *Gilgamesh*, *Faust*, *El Cid*, *The Song of Roland*, *Sundiata*, and *Richard III* are all stories of people who actually lived, and they all have some basis in fact. But they are also all works of art and can only be read profitably as such. Anybody who looks to *The Song of Roland* for information about the Battle of Roncesvalles will have some very strange ideas about history, physics, and the number of soldiers that can fit comfortably in one narrow mountain pass.

Ultimately, I do not believe that it matters much whether there ever was an actual man named Job. And even if it does matter, there is no way to settle the issue with textual analysis. Those who believe in a historical Job do so for reasons of faith, not history. Given the fog of 3,000 years or more, there is no objective way to assess the historicity of Job. In a 1990 article, former BYU Provost John Tanner treats this question in a way that I would consider definitive: "One question . . . that many readers seize upon as they wrestle with the text is 'Is Job historical?' Personally, I am not persuaded that the answer to this question makes much difference for the interpretation of the text."[6]

A much easier question, and one that we can answer with greater objectivity, is "does the Book of Job present itself to us as a historical work?" This is an extremely important question. If we must take every bit of Job as a historical narrative of God's dealings, then we have some serious theological problems to solve—as nothing else in the standard works supports the image of a God who goes around making side bets with Satan and killing off whole families just to win arguments. Fortunately for God's reputation, nothing about the Job prologue signals that we should read it as history and quite a bit suggests that we should read it as literature. For example, the first words of the original Hebrew text—'*ish hayah*, or "a man there was"—invert the normal word or-

der for historical narratives in Hebrew (*wayehi 'ish*, or "there was a man") in a way that, as the eminent Hebrew scholar Robert Alter explains, "signal[s] the fable-like character of the frame story."[7] The English phrase that comes the closest to sending the same signal is "once upon a time."

Perhaps the most important literary observation that we can make about the Book of Job is that it consists of two very different literary genres. Chapters 1–2, 3:1–2, and 42:7–16 constitute a fully self-contained, fairly simplistic prose narrative about a man who suffers greatly and never complains. Both internal and external evidence suggests that the prose portion of Job came from an earlier story (probably reworked by the author) that would have been very familiar to the first readers of the poem.[8] The rest of the book is a long, complex poem in which "the man who never complains" complains to anyone who will listen.[9] In nearly every commonly available translation of the Bible, readers can distinguish between the Job frame and the Job poem scanning the pages and looking at the line breaks. Alone among major translations, the King James Version makes no distinction between poetry and prose. Every word of the King James Bible is typeset as prose, and, at the same time, nearly every sentence was rendered by the King James translators in the high style and elevated diction of poetry. For all of the considerable advantages of such a translation strategy, it makes it very difficult for untrained readers of the KJV to understand the Book of Job.

The Job tale works as a prose frame for the Job poem. The Job frame tells the familiar story of "Patient Job"—the only part of the story, unfortunately, that many people ever hear. Patient Job is a righteous man with a large family and a prosperous estate. But when God gets into an argument with Satan and points to Job as a righteous man, Satan complains that Job's righteousness is simply a form of enlightened self-interest, since God gives him everything he wants or needs. To win the argument, God gives Satan permission to take everything away from Job. In rapid succession, Job's children die, his property is destroyed, and his body is inflicted with "running sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head."[10] Against the counsel of his wife, who tells him to "curse God and die," Job remains steadfast and keeps repeating the famil-

iar doggerel verse: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." In the end, God rewards him for his patience by doubling everything that he lost.[11]

More than anything else, the Job poet wants us to know that the frame tale gets the moral of its own story wrong. By testing Job by taking away his wealth and well being, and then rewarding him with more health and well being when he passes the test, the frame ends up embracing exactly the theological narrative it should be rejecting: that our material circumstances on earth are tied directly to our moral choices. If we are righteous, God will reward us; if we are wicked, He will punish us. This is often referred to as "The Law of Retribution" or "The Law of the Harvest" ("as you sow, so shall ye reap"), and it is one of the most important unifying principles of the Old Testament, which begins with the punishment of Adam and Eve in Genesis and it continues all the way through Ezekiel and Jeremiah, which narrate Israel's Babylonian captivity as God's punishment for worshipping false gods.

Assuming that Job was written after the Babylonian exile, the Law of Retribution would have been all but universally accepted among his contemporaries—even (and perhaps especially) among other wisdom poets, such as the authors of the Proverbs and the "Wisdom Psalms."[12] Take, for example, the text of the First Psalm, which is often taken as a preface to the entire collection:

> Happy is the one
> who does not take the counsel of the wicked for a guide?
> or follow the path that sinners tread,
> or take his seat in the company of scoffers,
> His delight is in the law of the Lord;
> it is his meditation day and night.
> He is like a tree
> planted beside water channels,
> it yields its fruit in season,
> and its foliage never fades.
> So he too prospers in all he does.
> The wicked are not like this;
> rather they are like chaff driven by the wind.

> When judgment comes, therefore, they will not stand firm,
> nor will sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
> The Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
> but the way of the wicked is doomed.

The Psalmist's point could not be clearer: God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked. This is the theology of the Job frame, of the Psalms, of the Proverbs, and of nearly every other book in the Old Testament. It remains a rigid orthodoxy for many people of faith today.

But, along with being the greatest poet in the ancient Hebrew world, the Job poet was one of the bravest, and he dissents vigorously from one of his culture's most cherished orthodoxies. The poem portion of Job is an elaborate thought experiment designed to test the proposition that righteousness leads to rewards while unrighteousness leads to suffering. The original Job story provided an excellent vehicle for testing the hypothesis. The great masterstroke of the Job poet was to interrupt the familiar narrative before the standard happy ending and insert a few thousand lines of exquisite poetry that undercuts nearly everything upon which the fable stands—especially the image of "Patient Job," who never complains about his suffering. In the poem, Job complains pretty much all the time. As his so-called "Comforters" try to explain his suffering by telling him that he must have sinned, Job responds with more anger and sarcasm directed at them, and at God, until we arrive at his final speech (Chapter 30), in which he swears an oath of innocence and demands that God appear before him to refute the oath. Nobody in the poem talks about coming to or going from the world naked. And Job does not sing praises to the Lord.

To understand the Book of Job in any but the most superficial sense, we must understand the extreme tension between the frame and the poem. I explain it to my students like this: imagine a version of Cinderella that begins and ends with a simple paraphrase of the Disney movie but contains, in between, a 15,000 word poem called "Cinderella's Lament"—a feminist manifesto challenging most of the sexist assumptions underlying the Cinderella story and the portrayal of women in folk literature gener-

ally. Imagine that the poem is written primarily from Cinderella's perspective but includes speeches by the stepmother and stepsisters—and by the presumptuous prince who says that she is his one true love, even though he can't remember what she looks like. And finally, imagine that the brilliance and technical sophistication of "Cinderella's Lament" makes it unequivocally the best poem of its age. This is how the Book of Job would most likely have looked to its first generation of readers.

When poetry suddenly interrupts the frame in Chapter 3, Job himself immediately gives lie to the "Patient Job" narrative by cursing—roughly in order—the day he was born, the night he was conceived, his mother's womb, the knees that received him, and the breasts that gave him suck. And after that, the Book of Job consists mainly of people arguing. Chapters 4–27 consist of formal interchanges between Job and the three "Comforters" mentioned in the prologue: Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.[13] Each comforter makes a speech, followed by a response by Job, until each of the three has made three speeches and Job has given nine responses. These speeches are highly formal, extremely stylized exchanges that show a deep knowledge of the poetic, rhetorical, and legal conventions of the rhetorical conventions of the Ancient Near East. Though each man shades his argument somewhat differently, their overall point is remarkably consistent: Job must have done something wrong to earn God's punishment.

The first comforter, Eliphaz, leads with the core assertion that the rest of the speeches all develop:

> For consider, has any innocent person ever perished?
> Where have the upright ever been destroyed?
> This is what I have seen:
> those who plough mischief and sow trouble
> reap no other harvest.
> They perish at the blast of God;
> they are shriveled by the breath of his nostrils. (4:7–9)

Later, Bildad continues:

> If only you yourself will seek God
> and plead for the favor of the Almighty,

> if you are pure and upright,
> then indeed he will watch over you
> and see your just intent fulfilled. (8:5–6)

And Zophar wraps up the first set of speeches:

> If only you had directed your heart rightly
> and spread out your hands in prayer to him!
> Any wrongdoing you have in hand, thrust it far away
> and do not let iniquity make its home with you.
> Then you could hold up your head without fault;
> you would be steadfast and fearless.
> Then you will forge trouble,
> remembering it only as floodwaters that have passed.
> Life will be lasting, radiant as noon,
> and darkness will be turned into morning. (11:13–16)

Job, in other words, is a sinner. And for this, God must punish him with suffering. If Job wants to stop suffering, all he has to do is stop sinning. The Comforters' speeches never stray much from this line of reasoning. As readers, however, we know from the outset that they are wrong. God himself has introduced Job as "a man of blameless and upright life, who fears God and sets his face against wrongdoing" (1:8). This means that we can never even think that the Comforters might be right. The Job poem creates an *ad absurdum* scenario to test the argument of the Job frame (and much of the rest of the Old Testament) that personal righteousness correlates to material prosperity. This proposition can be expressed more specifically in four distinct propositions: (1) that good people will be rewarded; (2) that bad people will be punished; (3) that those who prosper have been rewarded and are therefore good; and (4) that those who suffer have been punished and are therefore bad. The Job Poem is a sustained, full-scale attack on proposition #4: that material suffering is a sign of God's punishment.

But all four of the propositions must be true for the overall argument to be valid, and this is why the Comforters react so strongly against Job. He challenges, not only their belief that suf-

fering is a sign of God's displeasure, but the logically connected belief that prosperity is a sign of God's favor and that, therefore, morally correct action guarantees material success. By simply existing, Job rebuts one of their core beliefs. And in the process, he also challenges one of the most cherished illusions of human beings in all times and places: that we we can predict and control the world we live in. Religion is one way that we indulge this illusion. Science, politics, and history are others. And in nearly every era, human beings have been willing to engage in stunningly irrational forms of magical and conspiratorial thinking to avoid having to accept the proposition that things simply happen for no apparent or controllable reason.

Throughout the poem, Job never gives the Comforters what they want. He persistently claims to be innocent of any wrongdoing that he understands as such. Otherwise his worldview is much the same as that of his Comforters. Over and over again, he asks God to tell him what he has done wrong. He is as eager as his friends are to square his suffering with his understanding of the Law of Retribution. "Tell me plainly, and I shall listen in silence" he pleads. "Show me where I have been at fault" (6:24). Later, he insists that, if only God would lay out the case against him, he could respond to it in full:

> If only I knew how to reach him,
> how to enter his court,
> I should state my case before him
> and set out my arguments in full;
> then I should learn what answer he would give
> and understand what he had to say to me
> Would he exert his great power to browbeat me?
> No; God himself would never set his face against me.
> There in his court the upright are vindicated,
> and I should win from my judge an outright acquittal. (23:3–7)

It is clear from these lines (and many others from Job's speeches) that he accepts precisely the same relationship between morality and prosperity that his friends do. He does not think that their

views of God are mistaken generally; he just thinks that God has made a mistake in this one instance.

As readers we have no choice but to reject both Job's reasoning and that of his Comforters. The poet has carefully structured the poem to make us confront the fact that Job is innocent and yet suffers. To read Job with any integrity, we have to stare this uncomfortable fact in the face from the beginning—when God assures us that Job is righteous and yet sanctions his suffering—to the end, when God speaks to Job from a whirlwind without ever telling him what his suffering means. The poem does not even grant us the possible outs of atheism or nihilism. Whether or not God exists in the real world, He exists in the Book of Job more or less as Job and his friends imagine Him. The only possible conclusion that we can come to is that both Job and his Comforters dramatically misunderstand the nature of the universe.

In the dynamic between Job, his Comforters, and their understanding of reality, we begin to see the interaction between the layers of meaning that the Bible's greatest poem offers us. Like most great literature, Job works equally well on multiple levels of abstraction. For the majority of ancient readers, it was no more than a poetic meditation on the whims of their mercurial tribal god. But the poem flourished with the advent of Christianity—and continues to speak to people of faith today—because it speaks to one of the most vexing problems of monotheistic religion: How can a loving and all-powerful God permit unmerited suffering? For centuries, philosophers and theologians have grappled with this problem—often referred to as "the problem of evil"—without coming to a satisfactory conclusion. At some point, however, almost all of the grapplers have had to deal with the Book of Job as the first and greatest "theodicy," or attempt to address the problem of evil through imaginative literature.

On a deeper level, the Job poem deals with an even more profound—or at least more universal—question than "Why does God allow bad things happen to good people?" It also asks, "Why are we willing to ignore the evidence in front of our faces, and even become bad people, in order to hold on to our incorrect beliefs"? We all do this, and human beings—of any religion or no religion at all—must ultimately identify with Job's Comforters, whose actions

are quintessentially human in ways that cognitive scientists are just now beginning to understand. As humans, we constantly struggle to interpolate the facts we encounter into narratives that we already accept. Human reason evolved to defend conclusions, not to arrive at them, and we are almost infinitely capable of creating comforting narratives out of any facts that happen along. But we cannot do this without incurring costs; and, in many cases, those costs include our relationships with people whose realities do not conform to our perceptions.

The Job poet soars when dramatizing the human cost of maintaining our illusions. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar are introduced in the frame as Job's friends who set out, at some sacrifice to their own affairs, "to condole with him and comfort him" (2: 11). But they become Job's greatest tormentors because they must. His very existence represents such a profound challenge to their understanding of the universe that, if they cannot seize control of Job's narrative, they will have to stop being who they are. This is a very human reaction. None of us wants to reject our core assumptions about the universe and start all over again. It's hard work, and it deprives us of nearly everything that makes us feel secure. When pushed, I suspect, most people would rather sacrifice a relationship with a close friend or family member than go through the work and pain of fundamentally changing who they are and how they perceive reality.

To read Job honestly, I believe, we must eventually read ourselves into the role of the Comforters by asking what plain evidence we may be aggressively dismissing—and what human relationships we might be actively destroying—in order to remain possessed of our comforting, and comfortable, narratives. Such questions can be dangerous to religious orthodoxies, whose primary function is to provide comforting and comfortable narratives. But the comfortableness of a religious orthodoxy exists in direct proportion to its rigidity, as people will always go to drastic lengths to preserve what gives them comfort. The Job poet dared to critique, and dismantle, the most powerful religious orthodoxy of his culture by confronting it with a set of facts that it could not accommodate. And he demonstrated in excruciating detail how those who hold to rigid orthodoxies will end up renouncing both

overwhelming evidence and basic human decency before abandoning their beliefs. The most profound readings of Job, I believe, recognize that it is not just about suffering, or retribution, or God, or Satan, or knowing that Redeemers live; it is about how rigid orthodoxies can and do destroy our humanity.

V.

Like "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the bulk of the Job poem consists of a narrator asking a very difficult question. And just as Keats has the Grecian urn speak at the end of the poem, the Job poet has God speak in response to Job's final demand for an accounting of the charges against him. Like Keats's urn, Job's God does not answer the major question of the poem (why do innocent people suffer?). He does not even answer the major question of the poem's protagonist (why does Job suffer?). In fact, God refuses to answer any questions at all. He simply asks them:

> Who is this who darkens counsel
> with words devoid of knowledge
> Brace yourself and stand up like a man;
> I shall put questions to you, and you must answer.
> Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations?
> Tell me, if you know and understand.
> Who fixed its dimensions? Surely you know?
> Who stretched a measuring line over it?
> On what do its supporting pillars rest?
> Who set its corner-stone in place,
> while the morning stars sang in chorus
> and the sons of God all shouted for joy? (38: 2–7)

Commentators frequently note that, not only does God not answer Job's question, he uses rhetorical questions to invoke his own power—even though nobody actually ever questions His power. In his recent book *The Book of Job: When Bad Things Happened to a Good Person*, Rabbi Harold Kushner explains why this answer is so unsatisfactory:

> Chapters 38 and 39 are an eloquent tribute to God's power, but God's power was never the issue. Everyone . . . acknowledged God's awesome power. It was his fairness and kindness that were at issue. . . . Throughout the book, Job's lament has been, What can I do? It's

> His world and He can do what He wishes with it. But I was hoping that He would treat good people kindly. Is this the answer of the Book of Job? God saying, You accuse Me of being a bully? I'll show you what I do to people who accuse Me of being a bully![14]

But here is the problem: God cannot give Job a good answer because Job has not asked a good question. Job wants to know what he has done to cause his own sufferings. He has followed Jewish law, given a complete accounting of his life, and essentially served God with a writ of *habeas corpus*, demanding a full accounting of the charges against him so he can prepare a defense. Job still does not understand how things work. He still sees God as a being who doles out material rewards and punishments in exact proportion to our moral worth. Underlying all of the incorrect beliefs of Job and his Comforters is the assumption that God works according to motives and purposes that can be easily understood. What the poem's God needs to prove to Job, then, is not (as Kushner suggests) his great power, but his fundamental incomprehensibility to human beings.

The Jews, of course, already believed that God was mysterious and unknowable. This is precisely what separated Yahweh from the idol-gods of the Canaanites who could be contained in one place and time. All that the poet really had to do was convince people that their core belief about God (that He was infinite and beyond human comprehension) contradicted their understanding of reward and punishment (which required God to act in finite and understandable ways). The poet does not teach any new principles; rather, he places two existing principles in conflict with each other in a way that forces readers to confront the contradiction without any way to mitigate their cognitive dissonance. In this way, the poet can lead readers to understand what they already know, which, I would argue, is the primary function of Wisdom Literature.

And this is also how poems in every era and culture have always been true. When we read something like the Book of Job trying to prove that it is true in ways that it does not claim to be true—say by trying to locate Uz on a map of the ancient world or determine whether the Leviathan mentioned in 41:1 was a dinosaur or just a plain old crocodile—we end up ignoring all of the

ways that is true on its own terms—as a work of great poetry whose truth cannot be separated from its beauty—both the beauty of its language, for which we are usually at the mercy of its translators, and the beauty of its ideas, which transcend its unfamiliar language and speak to our minds and our hearts. That it does not ultimately solve its central problem is not important; it gives us a vocabulary for asking the right questions of ourselves, which is all that any work of literature can do.

In the Proverbs—one of the other great books of Wisdom Literature—another great poet tells us something important about wisdom: *Sagacity in a man's mind is like deep water / The intelligent person will draw from it.*[15] The image of deep water is particularly powerful: it suggests something that is already there, but buried and inaccessible without an equally deep well. So too, the Wisdom books suggest, are the reservoirs of wisdom in the human mind. This wisdom does not need to be placed there by an external authority; rather, it needs to be made accessible, unhidden, and revealed to the mind that has always contained it. This is what poems are good for.

Notes

1. The current LDS Gospel Doctrine Manual for the Old Testament includes Job 1–2, 13, 19, 27, and 42; the Institute Manual contains commentary only on Job 1–2; Job 13:7–28; Job 19:26; Job 29:16–17; and the final chapter. Both explicate the traditional frame narrative and highlight the few passages in the Job poem that have traditionally been given Christological readings.

2. A good sampling of the critical debate over the ending of "Ode on a Grecian Urn"—including essays by Bate, Bush, Abrams—has been anthologized by Jack Stillinger in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Keats's Odes: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968).

3. See K. Dion, E. Berscheid, and E. Walster, "What is Beautiful is Good," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 24.3 (1972): 285–90; S. Brownlow "Seeing Is believing: Facial Appearance, Credibility, and Attitude Change," *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 16.2 (1993): 101–15.

4. Sampo V. Paunonen, "You are Honest, Therefore I Like You and Find You Attractive," *Journal of Research in Personality* 40.3 (2006): 237– 49.

5. *Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings-Malachi*, 3d ed. (2003), 28–29.

6. John S. Tanner, "Why Latter-Day Saints Should Read Job," *Sunstone* 14.4 (1990): 38–47, 39.

7. Robert Alter, *The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010), 11.

8. Alter 4–5.

9. One other small section in Job was originally crafted in prose: Chapter 32:1–6. This passage sets up the speeches of Elihu, Job's fourth interlocutor, which are generally considered by scholars to be a later edition to the text.

10. Job 2:7. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical citations are from the Revised English Bible published by Oxford University Press (1989), which I chose after much deliberation as the translation that strikes the best balance between scholarly integrity and literary merit in its translation of the poetic books.

11. Job 1:21.

12. A handful of Psalms are traditionally considered "Wisdom Psalms" because they show strong evidence of coming from the wisdom tradition that produced Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. The list of such Psalms varies from commentator to commentator, but almost always includes: 1, 37, 49, 112, and 128

13. In Chapters 32–37, we hear from a fourth Interlocutor named Elihu, who interrupts the other Comforters and gives a summary statement of the strongest arguments against Job's position. Most commentators believe the speech of Elihu to be a later addition to the text, both on linguistic grounds and because it interrupts the flow of the narrative, coming between Job's declaration of innocence and God's answer. See Alter, *The Wisdom Books,* 133.

14. Harold Kushner, *The Book of Job: When Bad Things Happened to a Good Person* (New York: Schocken, 2012), 144.

15. Proverbs 20:5. Here I use the Anchor Bible translation by R.B.Y. Scott (*The Anchor Bible: Proverbs and Ecclesiastes* [New York: Doubleday, 1965]), 119.

Soul as Seen by Joseph Smith

Ronald Wilcox

See why soul consists of tiny stuff so small
we see no trace when gone but body drowned
in God gives breath of splendid fire flaming ash
up the sleek flue our eyes see, to be shining sun in
shadows red as bloody dawn to draw by swift whirls
aspiring to be the sky while silken robes slip silently by
like clouds become what they seem when we see them fly
in azure puffs of breath & we know for sure our God is love.

Jungle Walks

Mark Penny

The gods of asphalt and pure dirt
Do not disdain each other's tread.
The jungle's feet
Stalk through the city like lost deer
Or bears
Or monkeys.
There's no line
That says this corner is for man,
This for the simians.
Among the trees—
Tall, twisted, stringy, aged trees
And young—
The tea stand,
Razor wire,
The chin-up bar all creep.
Small gardens grow
Deep in the thickets,
Secretly,
Like rough roots seize a wall
Downtown.

There is an island
Called a hill
Lapped by a restless liquid town,
The green of Eden
Long before the Fall,
The green of leaves,
Self-willed,
The darkest green the sun can feed.
To this hill they flee
From offices,
From wheels,
From lists of things
To do,

To buy,
To be.
I flee there, too,
By night at times,
To breathe the darkness of the leaves,
To hark the heartbeat of the stars.
Yes, of the stars.
It shakes the windows like a scream,
A werewolf scream.
I hear it answer in my throat.
I shed the trail,
Claw through the kitchen-curtain veil,
Crawl with the snakes,
Who also scrape their skin
On rocks and jagged moments of the trees,
Climb with the monkeys,
Talk with God,
Who blesses every atom
With itself.
Long-fallen leaves
And bits and pieces of the earth
Slip past my citified veneer.

Then I go home
And wash the jungle off,
Not out.

An Interview with Rabbi Harold Kushner

Note: Rabbi Harold Kushner is the author of When Bad Things Happen to Good People, *along with numerous other books addressing the relationship between religion and lived adversity. He served as the congregational rabbi at the Temple Israel of Natick for over twenty-five years. Gregory A. Prince cofounded Virion Systems, Inc., a biotech company dedicated to the prevention and treatment of pediatric diseases. He is the author of* David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism *as well as several other books on the history of the priesthood.*

Interviewee:	Rabbi Harold Kushner
Date:	November 11, 2013
Place:	Temple Israel, Natick, Mass.
Interviewer:	Gregory A. Prince

Prince: Let's start by considering the question of how religions understand themselves in relation to other traditions. I think if we had enough data points we would probably find that most, if not all religious traditions at some point in their maturation process either said, "We are better," "We are the best," or, "We are the only." I think that the ones that I would consider more mature have softened those stances.

Kushner: Yes, due to reality.

Prince: The Mormons immediately populated the top one and have been very reluctant, or incapable of vacating it.

Kushner: My take on that was that to say, "Our religion is the best" is like saying, "Our baseball team is the best." It's not a statement of fact; it's a statement of loyalty.

Prince: Yes, and "My family is the best."

Kushner: Yes, right. "My mother is the best cook." It's not factual.

Prince: My mother was—I don't know about yours.

Kushner: My mother was a very indifferent cook, but I loved her food anyway. It's not a statement of fact, but it's a statement of identity.

Prince: And you would hope that that is the expression of their identity. You would hope that any group, be it religious or otherwise, doesn't think that it is mediocre.

Kushner: Yes. I think what we want people to believe is, "This religious system works for me."

Prince: Yes.

Kushner: It doesn't have to mean, "It's better than your system."

OK. Let me start with the disclaimer that the ideas you are about to hear are the personal reflection of Rabbi Harold Kushner, and there may be nobody else in the world who agrees with them.

My first reaction, looking at the questions you sent me, is that there is a unique difference between the Jewish and the Mormon ways of responding to these questions, and it's rooted in the fact that Judaism sees itself, first and foremost, as a community, and only secondarily as a theological system. We don't have to believe the same things, we don't have to practice the same things, we don't have to agree on anything except that we feel like members of a family. That makes it a little bit easier to be flexible on issues of definition. More than that, I think theology has never been that prominent in Jewish thought. It has been present over the generations, but we never really defined ourselves in theological terms.

Prince: As I think about the role of any religious tradition, to me it seems to have two components. One is that it tries to impart meaning and value to the congregants. The other is that it tries to give them access to the Infinite. If it can succeed on both counts it's amazing, but even if it only goes one-for-two, that's not bad.

Kushner: I would add a third: it sets you in a community. I think that's more important in Judaism than maybe in other faiths, perhaps because our theological system is not as important.

Prince: This is an area where I think Judaism and Mormonism have some stronger parallels, though through different pathways. Our congregations are defined geographically. Very few tradi-

tions do that. We draw the line right down the street and say, "If you live on this side you go here, and if you live on that side you go there." That has pluses and minuses, but it does tend to give a stronger sense of community than other traditions whose membership in a particular congregation is arbitrary.

Kushner: An idea that is probably more emphasized in Judaism than in any of the Christian traditions is to minimize the theology and maximize the sense of community. We had a service here on Saturday morning and we had maybe 180 people. I have no idea what they believed. I suspect if you gave them a yes-or-no quiz you would get a very low rate of coherence in believing the same things. But they are loyal and they find kinship. It's a way of being assured that you are not alone in this frightening cosmos.

Prince: And this is a lesson that Judaism has to teach us. If we could get there, we would be in a much better place.

Kushner: Yes. It's easier to conjure up the presence of God in the presence of other people who are trying to do the same thing.

Prince: And who are defined more by their struggles than by a list of catechisms.

Kushner: I found the first question on your list to be the key question, the one I think is the most interesting: "What do you do with the claim that scripture is God's will?" I read a marvelous book, the most intellectually exciting book I read last year. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, who is retiring as the chief Orthodox rabbi of the United Kingdom, has a book called *The Great Partnership*. It deals with the relationship of science and religion, and the fact that there doesn't need to be an antagonistic relationship between them. The key to his thinking is to draw a distinction in theology between right-brain and left-brain thinking.

Left-brain thinking is linear. It starts with a statement, a corollary, a derivative, a conclusion. It's unassailable. If you acknowledge the question and the evidence, you have to end up with the same conclusion that the speaker has.

Right-brain thinking is different. It is more diffuse. It is more individual. Perhaps the best example that I can think of—and Rabbi Sacks is an Orthodox rabbi, and doesn't bring this—every Christian friend I have, when I asked him, "What do you remem-

ber about when you first started studying the New Testament? How did you respond differently to the Gospels and to the Epistles?" They all said the same thing: "I could understand the Gospels. I could relate to them. But the Epistles lost me." The reason is that the Gospels are right-brain thinking. They don't come to a conclusion; they tell a story.

For us as Jews, this is a key idea. It means we can relate to the narratives in the Bible either in a left-brain mode or a right-brain mode. When we read, "King David reigned for forty years in Jerusalem. He died, and his son Solomon succeeded him"—I have no problems with that. I can say, "Yes, that's true." When I read that God created the world in six days, alternating between this task and that task, I don't take that as fact. I take that as suggestive. It's a story. It doesn't mean it's not true—it's true at a different level. It's true the way fairy tales are true and the way Shakespeare is true. It captures an essential truth, and the essential truth of Genesis chapter 1 is not, "How long did creation take?" but "What can we learn about this tale of creation?" We learn that it's an orderly process. It is a creation that has within itself the seeds of its own creation. It alternates between the celestial world and the earthly world. And it says some important things about human beings—and I think, by the way, that Western culture has totally misunderstood the Adam and Eve story. But that's a different story.

That approach makes it a lot easier to deal with the question, "Do you believe this is true?" My answer to somebody who asks, "Do you believe the story of the six days of creation is true?" is "Yes, I do; but not as an accurate report of historical fact."

If one can acknowledge that, without feeling that one has given away the store, then I think it's a lot easier to relate to some of the problems in scripture. Did God really divide the Red Sea so that Moses could walk across on dry land? Probably not. I have no idea what happened, but what I know is that at one point the Israelites were on the western side of the water—probably the Gulf of Suez—and somehow they got to the other side. How they got there doesn't matter. What happened was that they escaped and they saw this as God's providence. Did the sea literally have to split, or was this a poetic exaggeration?

The best example of this is Joshua causing the sun to stand

still at Gibeon. As you may remember, Clarence Darrow, in his debate with William Jennings Bryan, said, "If that literally happened, every building on the planet would have collapsed. We don't have evidence of that, and therefore it didn't happen." Now, I see it as a right-brain story. It's a poem. To say "May the sun stand still in Gibeon until our battle is over" is a poetic way of saying, "I hope the day is long enough for us to finish what we have come here to do." I don't have to take it at a factual level.

Now, that works if you can get devout believers to accept it. What's your idea of the feedback from the devout of the Latter-day Saints?

Prince: We are primarily a left-brain outfit.

Since you mentioned the Genesis creation narrative, a Pew survey done in 2010 showed that the level of acceptance by Latter-day Saints of biological evolution was only 22 percent. Only the Jehovah's Witnesses, with 8 percent, had a lower percentage. As a scientist I find that deeply troubling.

Kushner: You could put some orthodox Jews in that category too. I have had orthodox colleagues who, when I asked them about dating of dinosaur bones, say, "Either God planted all the bones there to test us, or Noah's flood messed up all the dating."

Prince: There *are* strong parallels between the two traditions, because our people could have said the same thing.

Kushner: Yes. But the orthodox are at least a minority, and they do have some intellectuals who are prepared to say, "I don't have to take it literally."

Let me frame the question this way: Is this a problem for people who hold these ideas, or is this a problem for people who are embarrassed by having co-religionists who hold these ideas?

Prince: I think it can be a problem for both of those. In the first instance, if it somehow impairs their interaction with the world around them, then I think it becomes problematic. Those who are able to build a wall of insulation—and some do—may be able to function without impairment. I don't envy that lifestyle.

The others, for whom it's an embarrassment, maybe that's a lesser issue. I think they can still get along with life in spite of the embarrassment.

Kushner: How would the Genesis story have any practical implications?

Prince: If they were in my field it would be a big problem for them. Acknowledging what the processes of biology are is crucial to being a biologist. The young-earth story of creation and the denial of biological evolution would make it pretty tough for a person of that bent to be a successful experimental biologist. That's an extreme example, but nonetheless it shows that there is a practical handicap to that type of worldview.

Kushner: Where else does this problem come up? Finding the tablets of Mormon scripture?

Prince: Yes. There we are talking about something that is mythical in the sense that we have no current evidence of those tablets. We have the word of people who say they saw them, but even that is nuanced, because one of those key witnesses later said, "It was with my spiritual eyes that I saw the plates." Whether there were literal gold tablets or not turns out, in my opinion, to be much less problematic than a worldview that denies biological evolution.

Kushner: Yes, I suppose the latter would be more of a practical problem.

Prince: Either viewpoint of gold tablets can embrace the Book of Mormon as canon.

Kushner: Right.

Prince: Its position as canon does not depend on being a literal history versus a figurative history. So we can come at that from either direction, and it works.

Kushner: Yes, and that's the way that I handle scripture. Some of the embarrassing passages of scripture were written by people long ago who either didn't know better or were articulating what was an accepted point of view back then. But I have to believe that as human knowledge has increased, we have left some of this behind.

One of your questions, for example, was about handling the acceptance of gays. We have gone through this with some pain but came through the other side in the last couple of decades. It's been rather astonishing how quickly that changed for us, but your church still has a problem with that.

Prince: I don't know how deeply embedded with the laity the problem is. As you go down through the age range, certainly young Mormons are much more pliable than old Mormons; and probably young Mormons are on an equal ground with their chronological peers in other traditions.

Kushner: Is it possible to make a distinction here between believing that sex between two people of the same gender is a perversion and acting politically to rule it out-of-bounds?

Prince: I think it is, absolutely.

Kushner: I believe you and I think it is, but is it possible for the elders of the Mormon Church?

Prince: Yes. We need a "Pope Francis moment," but we don't have a Pope Francis right now who can cut through that and say, "There are more important issues facing the world and facing the Church, and we need to pay attention to those and not get sidetracked." That's an approach that I would love to see them take.

Kushner: I think that would be ideal.

Prince: Now that said, we have made an enormous leap just in the past twelve months. There is now a Church website called mormonsandgays.org that has moved the needle 180 degrees by saying, "This is not a chosen behavior." For decades, from the top, we were on the opposite side of that.

Kushner: That was the whole argument.

Prince: Yes.

Kushner: "People have chosen to behave perversely."

Prince: Yes, and once you remove that foundation, then all of the structures you built on it, in terms of policy and doctrine, are going to collapse, and will have to be reconstructed on a new foundation.

Kushner: Yes, this was my approach. Once you realize that this is innate, if you have a problem with it, complain to the manufacturer. In terms of gay marriage, once you recognize that people are born with this inclination—I have spoken to any number of gays who have told me, with a sense of horror, that they discovered at the beginning of adolescence that they were attracted to their own sex, with dismay and fear—once you realize that this is

not a choice, then these people are going to form erotic associations just like we do, and we have to honor that.

Several years ago I gave a high-holiday sermon on the first day of Rosh Hashanah. We read the story of God commanding Abraham to sacrifice his son. I said, "For years I have hated this story, but what I finally came to terms with was that I recognized that God speaks twice to Abraham, once telling him to sacrifice the child, and once telling him to spare the child. Abraham's challenge is to identify which is the authentic voice of God."

Then I talked about the whole argument we were having about ordaining gay men as rabbis. One very traditionally oriented colleague of ours said, "My heart goes out to those candidates. I think a lot of them would make superb rabbis, but what can I do when the Torah says I am forbidden to endorse what they are doing?" My answer was, "What can you do? You can do what Abraham did. Hearing two messages from the Torah, one of condemnation and one of compassion, you could say the compassionate one is the more authentic." And I think that's what we have done.

Prince: I think other policies that are in the Torah could be interpreted similarly.

Kushner: Absolutely.

Prince: I don't see much stoning going on these days.

Kushner: I know. I think it's kind of a cheap shot for some of my Christian colleagues to compare the morality of the New Testament to the morality of the Hebrew scriptures. You have between five hundred and a thousand years of evolution. Compare it to what other Jews were doing in the first century.

Okay, on to the next question that you sent me: "Mormons have been obsessive record-keepers almost from the day the Church was founded in 1830. While this allows us to examine our past in almost unmatched detail, it also obliges us to confront many 'inconvenient truths' that other religious traditions lacking such records never confront. At the same time, our internal narrative has become increasingly burnished, to the point where there is a *de facto* expectation of infallibility. Largely because of the Internet, data and infallibility often clash. How do you move people from an idealistic view of their tradition and its leaders that is

not consistent with the historical record, to a realistic view that is consistent with the record, while at the same time preserving their internal faith and their loyalty to their tradition?"

First, I have to tell you my favorite Mormon story. After I wrote one of my books—I think it was *Who Needs God?*—I was invited to speak at Brigham Young University. I had no idea what sort of reception I would get. The turnout was so heartening—they had to move it from the auditorium to the gymnasium. I began my talk by saying, "Thank you for inviting me, and thank you for turning out in such numbers that you had to change the venue. I have to tell you that one of my dreams when I was a teenager was that one day I would be cheered by thousands on a college basketball court. That it happened this way proves to me that God answers prayers and God has a sense of humor."

But I got a very nice reception, and at a lunch afterwards Rex Lee, who was the BYU president, said to me, "You've created a real problem for those students. Here you are—somebody who doesn't believe in Jesus and doesn't believe in the tenets of the Latter-day Saints, and you come across as such a profoundly spiritual person."

When you talk here about the "inconvenient truths that other religious traditions lacking such records never confront" and the internal narrative becoming increasingly burnished to the point where there is a *de facto* expectation of infallibility—what do you have in mind? Do you mean something like the exclusion of African American men from the priesthood?

Prince: That would be a minor data point compared to the overall narrative. We have crafted a very sanitized, glossy, "faith-promoting" version of our history; and yet at the same time we have this mountain of data, with records going back almost to the founding hours of the tradition. The dissonance between the two is a real problem. It was less of a problem before the Internet era, because people could content themselves with the burnished version and not be confronted with the fact that there was anything else in the background. Now, with the Internet, it is inescapable. That was what caused the crisis for Hans Mattsson, the Swedish Area Authority. Your letter to the *New York Times* was in response to his crisis. I have spent quite a few hours with Hans, so I have some fa-

miliarity with what he encountered. For a third-generation Mormon at that level of the hierarchy not to have been aware of these data is appalling.

Kushner: Remind me of the specifics. I reacted to it comparing it to the infallibility-of-scripture problem that we have with the Orthodox.

Prince: I think that is an apt comparison. In the process of carrying out his ecclesiastical duties—his official title was Area Seventy, which roughly is the equivalent of a Catholic Cardinal—Hans would be confronted by local ecclesiastical officials who would say, with increasing frequency, "Our parishioners are bringing to us tough questions that we haven't seen in the past. We're handing them off to you because we don't know the answers." I think at first he boldly thought, "Okay, I'm the ecclesiastical authority and so I'll answer these." But he found out that they were tough questions, and so he did what most people do, and that was to go to the Internet for the answers. What he found almost tipped him over. It almost caused him to abandon the tradition. On the first level, his question was, "Why didn't I know the answer to this?" But the deeper and more troubling question was, "Why did my tradition shield from this question and other questions?"

Kushner: Let me make a distinction between the infallibility issue—that is, statements we are asked to believe that defy belief—and the misbehavior issue—that is, stuff that was done by people in positions of responsibility that are very hard to countenance as religious. The second one I can handle. I gave a Yom Kippur sermon about two months ago, and I spoke of the story of Moses going up Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments. They were inscribed in stone by God himself. Carrying the statements down, Moses saw the Israelites worshipping a golden calf, and he threw the tablets down and shattered them. Then God told him to go up the mountain again, after God had reconciled himself to the people. This is the crucial part: This time God told him, "I will tell you what to write, and you write it down." My interpretation—and this is not original with me—is that the original tablets, written by God, carried the perfection of God. But human beings cannot be perfect. The ones that Moses was inspired

by God to write, and translated into human language, are tablets meant for fallible human beings. They leave a margin for error.

It will happen sometimes that the perfect will of God, as to how we should behave, is misunderstood by human beings because of our limitations—because of our selfishness, because of temptations we are subject to—and that we simply have to learn to see religion as an ideal translated into action by fallible human beings. So even if one were to posit that the inspiration behind Mormon scripture—or the inspiration behind Jewish scriptures—was direct from God, the implementation of this by flawed human beings will always have mistakes.

At one extreme this could be priests who abuse little children sexually. At a lesser extreme it could just be a misunderstanding. Somewhere in between it could be the idea that informs the Book of Leviticus, that homosexual behavior is a perversion chosen by people who didn't want to play by the rules; and it has to yield to discoveries later.

The same thing about the inferiority of women—women as communicators of impurity because of the misunderstanding of the whole menstrual problem. God knew what he was saying to us, but we human beings either misunderstood it, because we are not God, or willfully distorted it for our own benefit.

Prince: What you hope, with any tradition, is that in the long play you get better at it.

Kushner: Yes.

Prince: Maybe the chief paradox of Mormonism is that, on the one hand, a foundational belief is continuing revelation, but on the other hand is almost the inability of the tradition to handle change.

Kushner: Interesting! Change is where we all come from.

I'll tell you what I do with the issue of infallibility in Judaism, and what I tell my Christian colleagues about the infallibility of the Church. I think the Pope is infallible in the sense that the umpire is always right. Even when he makes a mistake, he calls it. Sometimes he has the grace like the umpire last year, Jim Joyce, who blew the call that cost the pitcher a perfect game, to say, "I blew it." That was to his credit, but the call still stood. That's what

I would suggest for infallibility. The people who have to make decisions will have those decisions accepted. If, in retrospect, it turns out they were wrong, they can amend the decisions. But once those decisions come down, you have to have the discipline to say, "I am a member of this system, and this is one of the rules of the system."

Prince: And we can always say, "Wait until next season!"

Kushner: Yes—or even next week. But it's a matter of somebody being in charge. What you don't want is, "On the one hand/on the other hand."

Prince: Too often, on various levels, our first impulse is to throw the baby out either by openly criticizing the leaders or leaving the tradition, rather than acknowledging both the fallibility of our leaders and the necessity of accepting their sometimes flawed, and yet well-intentioned leadership.

Kushner: Yes—we want to simplify, make things black-and-white.

Your third question is interesting: "During the first century of the existence of the Mormon Church, diversity of thought was generally tolerated and often encouraged. As the twentieth century unfolded, however, the tradition moved in the direction of an orthodoxy built on a foundation of fundamentalism. In an increasingly pluralistic society, this orthodoxy is increasingly challenged. How do you move a religious community from orthodoxy to pluralism without weakening members' sense of identity and tradition?"

How did Mormonism move towards fundamentalism? Do you have any sense of it, having lived it from the inside?

Prince: I think that it was largely a response to the "modernist heresy," or "higher criticism movement" of the early twentieth century. Particularly as the Protestant biblical scholars—because the Catholic scholars were kept on the sideline by the Pope—employed a scientific approach to the study of the Bible, the fundamentalists reacted by panicking. Rather than seeing that this may take them to a better ground, they dug in and were fearful that the whole game was lost. I think that was an existential-level fear within Christianity in general, and some branches of it reacted by taking an anti-modernist approach to scripture.

At the time that happened, Mormonism was under a second assault. In 1902, Apostle Reed Smoot was elected to the United States Senate. His election touched off a firestorm of protest. Initially he was accused of being a polygamist, but that was taken off the table very quickly when it was clear that he was not. The more troubling allegation was that, as a general officer of a church that was viewed as being un-American—with substantial justification given what had happened in Utah Territory over the prior half-century—he was not fit for office. The protest started a three-year hearing in the Senate as to whether he could retain his seat, but it really was a three-year tribunal concerning Mormonism.

Kushner: Let me guess that the response of the Mormon community was to huddle inside the faith system, close the windows and shut the door.

Prince: Yes. The President of the Church at that time, Joseph F. Smith, wrote what was initially a course of study for the male priesthood, which is an all-lay priesthood in our tradition, and later was published as a book, *Gospel Doctrine*, that has remained in print ever since—nearly a century now. I think that was the first fundamentalist approach to Mormonism. Because his son, Joseph Fielding Smith, became an apostle and ultimately the President of the Church, and his grandson-in-law, Bruce McConkie, followed in the same footsteps, the thread of fundamentalism became the predominant theme in the fabric of Mormonism, and still remains so.

Kushner: There was a somewhat parallel process in Judaism. The founder of Conservative Judaism, for example, has been quoted as saying, "Higher criticism is the higher anti-Semitism. An attack on the accuracy of the Bible is an attack on Judaism." We have, for the most part, outgrown that. I think the position we came to is that Truth is one of the names of God, and if something is true, it has to be something that is compatible with God. One response, of course, is to say, "If it contradicts God's word, it can't be true." But faced with scientific evidence, the fact that things make sense, predictability—all the things that you and I are familiar with, you as a scientist and I as a student of the modern world—if it's true, you have to make room for it.

The secret weapon of Judaism is what I alluded to at the be-

ginning of our conversation: the sense of community. We feel we belong to each other like a family, and a family can tolerate ideological differences.

Prince: Including crazy cousins.

Kushner: Exactly. The initial response was to withdraw into the circle of the people who agree with you, and not let anything else in—not only don't read books by atheists, but don't read books by modern Jews. That Spinoza was excommunicated, for example, remains an intellectual embarrassment for Jews. But even at that point we still saw each other as kin, and we can tolerate this.

I am increasingly convinced that human beings are shaped less by what they believe, and more by who they belong to. I have read a number of books recently that tend to endorse that. I recommend to you Jonathan Haidt's book, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. He is a psychologist who teaches at New York University. It's an analysis that begins with the question of why Republicans have been more effective at changing peoples' minds than Democrats. He said there are something like six emotional appeals that people respond to, and while Conservatives operate five out of the six, Liberals operate only two or three out of the six. Conservatives are better salesmen. But there are ideas that people recognize as true, and we form communities based on what we share.

Prince: A book that had a profound influence on me, that I read over thirty years ago, was Wilfred Cantwell Smith's *Faith and Belief*. He was raised in Asia by missionary parents. His exposure to Eastern religions allowed him to segregate faith and belief as two different entities. He said, "Western religion has combined the two, and muddied the water in the process."

Kushner: Precisely.

Prince: He said, "In the East there are religious traditions that have virtually no belief system, but that engender intense faith." I think this gets at what you are talking about.

Kushner: Absolutely. I cut a column out of the *New York Times* a couple of months ago that I am going to use somewhere. The author describes herself as a liberal Evangelical. She said that at the time the King James Translation was being made, the age of

Shakespeare, "belief" did not mean what it means today—assent to a proposition. Belief meant something closer to "cherish." It's related to the German "lieben"—what you love. Belief is not what you believe is true, but what matters to you.

Prince: And to what you are willing to surrender yourself.

Kushner: Exactly. I connect that to the faith of Abraham. It's interesting that we have learned to speak of the Abrahamic traditions, including the Muslims, but while we all look back to Abraham, we all see Abraham differently. To Judaism, Abraham is the smasher of idols, the iconoclast. To Christianity, he is the paradigm of faith. To Islam, he is the model of obedience. Three very different Abrahams.

Prince: You used a term a few minutes ago, and I'm sure you didn't use it loosely. You talked about "God's word." I think it's crucial to know the difference between "God's word" and "God's words."

Kushner: Yes.

Prince: If we could get our parishioners to understand the difference between the two, a lot of the problems we are discussing would either dissolve or be reconciled easily. "God's word" means "Yes, it is God's word *as it flows through whoever the prophetic figure is who is delivering it.*"

Kushner: Precisely. I have used an example, and I try to make the case to bright adolescents who challenge me, "I'm sure you've had the experience dozens of times of having an idea and trying to put it into words. Somehow, the words never capture the purity and clarity of the idea." This is scripture: we suddenly, through the grace of God, realize a profoundly important truth, and we try to put it into words. The words are helpful, but ultimately inadequate.

Prince: Since you brought up basketball, I'll use another sports analogy. In Olympic diving you get two scores: one is performance, and the other is degree of difficulty. The degree of difficulty here is trying to translate the infinite into finite language.

Kushner: Exactly—aside from the fact that it can't be done! The purity of intent, God's will, is there in scripture. And I will concede that it is there in Mormon scripture as well. It is translated into hu-

man language, which will *always* be flawed and *always* be finite. Any attempt to capture the infinite in finite words is going to be less than perfect.

Prince: And I think it is flawed for two reasons. One is because that infinite-to-finite transition can't be done on a one-to-one basis, and the other is that the instrument of translation, the mortal person through which the process occurs, is a flawed individual. So it's a double-whammy.

Kushner: Yes. Having said that, what problems does that solve?

Prince: If you can understand that, then you say, "This process gives us access to something that is very dear, but it is a conditional access. We need to have the humility to step forward and say that we understand what the limitations of that are and that we rejoice in spite of those limitations."

Kushner: Yes. For us, as Conservative Jews, that was the key to extending certain privileges to women—becoming rabbis, becoming cantors, being called to the Torah. My Orthodox friends still shudder at the idea that a woman, during her menstrual period, might be called to touch the Torah. But what we are saying is that there was a time when women were seen in a certain way, and we have outgrown that. We have access to new information. The will of God about every human being fashioned in God's image is inviolate; but the way in which we understand that has been conditioned by what we have understood, how we felt, our emotional problems, the fear and anger men have of women—all this stuff. And you can translate this, as well, to what we do with gays, and on any issue. The revelation of God's will is perfect, but the human perception, translation and implementation of that will can never be perfect.

Prince: Doesn't this mirror what Martin Luther King said, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice"?[1]

Kushner: Yes.

Prince: This isn't a random process of jerking forward through time; there is some purpose, some direction *if* we are doing our part. I don't think it is inevitable.

Kushner: No, it is not. But that goes in several directions. One of the unfortunate developments in the modern world is that as peo-

ple were liberated from blind obedience to the word of scripture, they have given themselves the right to do all sorts of terrible things. To say that the Bible is an imperfect, human writing down of God's revelation is fine. But to say that the commandment about adultery reflects an ancient idea about wives as husbands' property and therefore can be disregarded is an interpretation that people will make. I don't think that is the intent of scripture, but they will say to me, "You have grown in your way, and I have grown in my way."

Prince: And yet if you measure the outcome of those two paths, there is a feedback loop that informs. It's not just an arbitrary decision with no consequences.

Kushner: And that's certainly what I believe.

Prince: And I think it goes beyond belief. I think that you can demonstrate that there are adverse consequences to going down one road versus the other. If you want to call that natural law, so be it. It may just be cause and effect.

Kushner: I think it says something profound about what it means to be a human being.

All right, we've been talking about your fourth question, "How can a religious tradition be responsive to changing conditions, while at the same time neither lessening nor abandoning its core messages?" Is there a dimension of that that we haven't faced up to?

Prince: No, although I would say that key to not abandoning the core message, at the same time you are moving along whatever that arc is to take you to a better place, is the prophetic voice. I think that that is a voice that all traditions, whether they acknowledge it or not, are trying to gain access to.

Kushner: Yes, I believe that. And I firmly believe that there is something in the human soul that responds differently to right and to wrong.

Prince: Yes.

Kushner: That is why the word "rationalize" exists in the English language. It's a way of saying, "I want to do this, but I know it's wrong so let me try and paint it over."

Can the leadership of the LDS Church accept and articulate the idea that the perfect revelation of God was imperfectly understood in terms of African Americans, or in terms of women, and we are slowly beginning to understand it more accurately, and I'm sure we have a long way to go?

Prince: On the pragmatic level of policy, yes. We have done that with our policy of denying priesthood ordination to black men of African descent. But on a different level we have yet to be able to step forward and dismantle the scaffolding of folklore that was constructed by well-intentioned people to prop up the policy for over a century. The policy was not there from the beginning, but once it was instituted, a larger and larger scaffolding was constructed whose sole purpose was to justify the policy.

Once the policy was abandoned, the scaffolding remained, and it continues to do damage. We have yet to be able to turn that corner, because some of the architects of that scaffolding were at the top of the hierarchy. We have yet to be able to figure out a way of saying, "You know, they were wrong." We may have started to turn that corner last month. [Several weeks after this interview, the LDS Church published a position paper, "Race and the Priesthood," (http://www.lds.org/topics/race-and-the-priesthood) that for the first time disavowed many of the elements of the referenced scaffolding.]

Kushner: Last month was pretty recent.

Prince: It's about as recent as it gets. We have an extraordinary, charismatic man who is very near the top of the hierarchy, a German national by the name of Dieter Uchtdorf. In the Church's most recent general conference, he got up and said, baldly, "There have been times when members or leaders in the Church have simply made mistakes." We're almost 200 years into our tradition, and we finally were able to articulate that message at that level. That may have opened the door to resolving some of these other issues. If we can have the humility to say, "We are always looking for the word of God but we haven't always gotten it right," we'll be fine.

Kushner: I can understand that at a certain point in time, having a certain perception of African Americans, of women, of Jews seemed clear. For example, people made what was an understand-

able judgment call based on the evidence of that time, when most blacks were uneducated, had no aspirations really, were on the margins of society through no choice of their own. But this was how we saw them, and we formed a judgment based on that. It was a long, slow process for society to realize that this was something that we had imposed on blacks, and not an accurate statement of what they were like.

Prince: We created a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Kushner: Oh, yes. And the same thing with women. We thought they were fragile—until all the men were drafted into the army during World War II, and women had to go out and take over their jobs. The same thing with Jews. We were marginalized, and then people came to certain conclusions because all the Jews they knew had been marginalized people. That perception probably changed when the G.I.'s served overseas with Jewish comrades and realized that they were just like themselves.

This synagogue—Temple Israel—was founded in 1945. For its sixty-fifth anniversary I was asked to speak. I took as my theme, "1945 as the turning point in American Jewish history." And I think it was. The G.I.'s coming home, having met Jews for the first time; the flight from cities into suburbs where all the guys from the farms found out they had to learn from Jews how to live in the city and in the suburb—things changed radically. There is a process in which what seemed like a totally reasonable judgment at one point, in the light of new evidence is seen as mistaken.

Prince: Was the turning point also informed, in part, by the Holocaust?

Kushner: I think it started before the Holocaust. I think you're right, however, that there was an element of that. The G.I.'s who had just spent three or four years of their lives fighting against Hitler were not about to come back and implement Hitler's policies in this country. So I think that was part of it, but I don't think it was the strongest part. I think it was the face-to-face encounter. If you lived on a farm in Iowa, you probably had never met a Jew.

My military service was at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, in Lawton, the southwest corner of the state. For a lot of the citizens of Lawton, I was the first Jew they had ever met. They had images based on old

books, old sermons, old ideas—the *Merchant of Venice*, Dickens, whatever it might be. It was an awakening—a slow awakening, but an awakening. This was 1960.

Again, we come back to what is the key of what you and I have been talking about for the last hour. If you recognize that the word of God is perfect, and the implementation, the understanding, the translation of the word of God is a task performed by flawed human beings—sometimes well-intentioned human beings, but sometimes human beings with agendas of their own—then you don't have to go against the word of God to revise the way in which the word of God was implemented. All you have to do is recognize that all of the people who took passages from the Book of Leviticus and turned them into doctrine regarding the isolation of women, were men, and some of them may very well have been having a complicated relationship with their own wives.

For example, one of the things I have been preaching is that we totally misunderstand the Garden of Eden story. I can prove, from the Book of Genesis, that Eve was not created from Adam's rib. It's clear. It is undeniably clear. First, the word used for "rib" twenty times more often means "side." What you have is the same thing you have in Plato's *Symposium*. The first human being was conjoined twins, one male and one female. Because God could not find a mate for that hybrid creature, he put it to sleep, cut it in half, closed up the incision and then, when they woke up from their sleep, they saw each other and God said, "You are now two parts, so when you come together you will become one whole."

What happened was that at some point male fear, male discomfort, male vulnerability, male resentment of the capacity of women to make us lose our cool translated into a strong anti-feminist, misogynist agenda.

Prince: And we have yet to resolve it.

Kushner: Absolutely.

Prince: The Mormons are in the throes of this right now. This is being called the Third Wave of Mormon Feminism. The First Wave was in the 1870s and '80s, and the Second was in the 1970s with the Equal Rights Amendment. This one may be more durable, and perhaps more far-reaching. It is now accompanied by a female demographic that we didn't have before: highly educated,

highly motivated, and with markedly different expectations than their foremothers.

Kushner: And not willing to put up with second-class status.

Prince: Yes. This Third Wave is broadly based, but it is bifurcated. The bifurcation deals with how we embody equality amongst the women of Mormonism. One branch of it, which is a minority, says, "We want full ordination to the now-male priesthood." The other, which I think will be the more persuasive arm of that bifurcation, says, "We want authentic voice. We're not so much concerned with how that is embodied, but we are concerned that it be embodied." There is a growing acknowledgement—perhaps even consensus—right now that the status of women within Mormondom is not of equal voice.

Kushner: Right. And it makes it less attractive to a lot of people out there, not simply as prospective converts, but as people evaluating Mormonism as a credible voice.

Prince: Yes. And adding to this wave is the fact that the LDS Church recently reduced the age for missionary service. It had been twenty-one for women, but a year ago it was dropped to nineteen. The result of that has been a tsunami of female applications. Before, female missionaries accounted for about 13 percent of the missionary force. Now, we may be approaching parity. When that occurs, you can project in broad outlines what is going to happen when these women come back from their missions.

Kushner: And I think that is what it is all about. The day I spoke at Brigham Young University, when I was sitting next to Rex Lee afterwards at the luncheon he told me that when he was a young man he did his missionary service in the Philippines. He said, "I came back after two years, and I had not made a single convert to Mormonism. But I had made myself a Mormon with a permanence I had never had before." I suspect this is the real benefit of the missionary program.

Prince: This leads into one of the other questions, and that is that I see, across the board, that the older generation has trouble keeping the younger generation in the same tradition—even if that tradition is atheism! I think this is a systemic problem, and none of the traditions that I have spoken to, including our own, has a real

good handle on it. How do you engage this generation now that is, by all measures, more spiritually inclined than their elders, and yet less churched? I have come to you for the answer.

Kushner: That was your first mistake! I don't know what the answer is.

Prince: Do you see it within Judaism?

Kushner: Oh, sure. We're having a difficult time with our young people because they find even the good congregations of their parents to be sterile, and the average congregations hopeless. I'm embarrassed to say it, but they are right. Some of them are attracted to a liberal orthodoxy. There is a movement called Chabad that does missionary work among Jews, mostly of college age.

Prince: As in Chabad House?

Kushner: Yes, that's exactly it. It's an alternative to the mainstream Hillel House. They will invite them to services with a lot of singing and a lot of liquor and a lot of good food, and no ritual or theological demands. Ultimately, they want people to become thoroughly observant and orthodox, but they want to get them in first. What they perceive is that they are looking for community, which I have been talking about all morning, and they are looking for magic. I wish I had a better word for it, but I think that's part of it. They are looking for something that transcends the understandable. I think liberal Judaism has failed this generation because we make sense. We are so insistent on making sense, and they say, "I don't need a religion that makes sense. I get that in college. I want a religion that touches my soul, that sets my soul on fire."

Prince: That respects mystery.

Kushner: Yes. That's a better word for it. I'm sorry that I didn't think of that. The word is really mystery. "I want something that speaks to the side of my mind that neither my history professor nor my philosophy professor nor my calculus professor is able to reach." I think you guys can do this. I think Orthodox Judaism, when it wants to meet us halfway, can do this. I think my kind of Judaism can do this if people would only hold still and listen to it.

Prince: But it becomes a very delicate balancing act to try to reach the youth without perverting the tradition in the process, and

we've seen plenty of that within the mega-churches of Christianity. They become religious country clubs.

Kushner: Yes.

Prince: That may work for a limited time, but we are already seeing that they don't have the same success with the second generation.

Kushner: And probably not even with the original generation, if what they are selling is not really Christianity. The "Gospel of Wealth," for example, which should be an embarrassment to any serious Christian, is much of what they are selling.

I hope you're enjoying this—I'm having a great time.

Prince: I think I'm as close to a state of ecstasy as a Mormon is allowed to get.

Kushner: Your next question is, "What advice do you have for shifting our emphasis from growth to maintenance?" I think it's going to be a problem for Mormons.

Prince: It is going to be a tough one, because when you define yourself by numbers for so long, you have a long journey to get to somewhere else.

Kushner: Not only that. While the public image of Mormonism is that they go out and try to convert, the perception in the non-Mormon world is that if you do convert, how long will it take to be accepted as a real Mormon?

Prince: Yes, and the answer to that question often depends on geography. I was a missionary in Brazil in the late 1960s. In the entire country at that time there were 20,000 Mormons. Now there are well over a million. So if you are part of a fairly new church, inclusion is a lot easier than if you are a convert on the East Bench of Salt Lake City.

Kushner: Yes. In Robert Putnam's book *American Grace*, one of the points he makes is in a table about the degree to which Americans of one religious identity are open to accepting people of other religions. What he finds is that Mormons are on the bottom of the list for acceptability. People are suspicious of them, along with Islam. Putnam suggests that the reason is that you tend to be insular.

Prince: Yes, we are insular.

Kushner: So how can you be insular and at the same time a missionary?

Prince: That is a paradox, and we pay a price for it.

Kushner: Yes. The opinion of Jews in America was fairly stingy until recent years, when it skyrocketed. One of the reasons is that so many people now have Jewish relatives. A cousin has married a Jew, a brother has married a Jew. This doesn't happen with Mormons. Few Protestant families have a Mormon brother-in-law, and so they don't know Mormons.

Prince: And there is another dimension to the problem. Several years ago I went golfing with David McAllister-Wilson, the president of Wesley Theological Seminary. My wife was the first Mormon ever to enroll in degree courses at that seminary, and that was how I made his acquaintance. I thought we were just going to go out and have a good time playing golf, but on the third tee he said, "All right, tell me about Mormonism." I had no intention of doing that when we started the day, but for the next sixteen holes we talked Mormonism.

When we got back to the clubhouse for lunch he said, "You have a good tradition. You should be at the table." I said, "David, the reason we are not at the table is that we have yet to acknowledge that there *is* a table." That still is our problem. I am on one of his steering committees now, but I am still the only Mormon who has ever served on a committee at that seminary. We need to fix our insularity.

Kushner: What you mean by that, Greg, is that Mormons perceive various Christian denominations as flawed?

Prince: I wish they would at least get to that depth of thought on the subject. I don't think they think it through at all. I think it's just a reflex that says, "That is other. We are here, and we will build a wall around ourselves." The president of Wesley said he used to do ecumenical events. "But," he said, "I found that that was the wrong way to do it. When I say ecumenical, that says to you, 'You need to give up part of your identity so that we can all get along.' What I do now is interfaith events, because that says up front, 'We respect what you are. Now let's come together and work for a common good.'" That's where Mormons need to be. They

need to understand that by getting involved on an interfaith level, not only do they not surrender their identity, but they will help define their identity at the same time that they gain fellowship with other traditions.

Kushner: Yes. We have a parallel situation with the Orthodox Jewish world. To them, everyone who is not a Jew is goyish. Distinctions between Episcopalian, Catholic, Mormon, Hindu—these are meaningless.

Prince: And we do the same thing. You know that in Salt Lake you can be a considered a Gentile. Where else in the world can you go and have that privilege?

Kushner: The dean of American Orthodox Judaism, a gifted, sensitive, charismatic man, was invited to take part in interfaith activities. He said, "I have no time for it. My only message to Christians is, 'Keep your hands off our children.'" He was saying, "I have nothing to learn from Christians." I can't say that. My faith has been profoundly deepened by encounters with Christian individuals, Christian resources, and love.

Prince: And my faith has even been deepened by interacting with atheists.

Kushner: Yes!

Prince: When I am dealing with an atheist who is of superb moral character, and many of them are, that takes the rug out from underneath what some of my assumptions were. They are doing something because they see inherent rightness in it, not because they seek a reward. To me, that is a profound lesson.

Kushner: Of course, what some people do is to consider atheists "anonymous Christians," or something like that.

These questions about religious pluralism lead back to the question of responding to the tendency of youth to leave the tradition. You asked what insights Mormonism might gain from Judaism's response to this problem? That's one thing we can't teach you. You're probably doing a better job than we are.

Prince: I have thought that it would be a fascinating exercise to get perhaps a dozen traditions around the table informally—no scripted papers to read. The entire conversation would respond

to this statement: "Tell us what you perceive to be the problem in retaining youth in your tradition. What have you tried, what has worked, and what hasn't worked?" I think by the time you made one lap around the table, everybody would realize that there are some good ideas out there, but in order to make this thing work, everyone has to get together to come up with common denominators that will work for everyone.

Kushner: That's interesting. I like the idea and I'd be fascinated to be part of that discussion. I'm finding myself with a very ambivalent answer. Part of me says that we are not retaining our youth because our inflexible, tone-deaf articulation of our values is turning them off. They are more idealistic than we give them credit for being. But part of my perception is that we are not reaching them because they are more selfish than we would like them to be.

I attended a debate between Christopher Hitchins and a rabbinic colleague whom I regard very highly. It was in downtown Boston before an audience that I suspect was made up largely of graduate students. Hitchins's big applause line of the evening was, "I do not recognize the right of any religious tradition to tell me what I may or may not do with my sexuality." Outstanding applause. He brought down the house. I would have liked to confront him afterwards and say, "Did you really mean that? Do you really think there are no issues of right and wrong in how your articulate your sexuality? Is there nothing wrong with a young co-ed getting a fellowship she is not entitled to because she is sleeping with her instructor? Is there nothing wrong with having an affair with a person when you are married to somebody else? I think those things are wrong. I don't think they are wrong because the Bible is against them; I think they are wrong because that is my perception of human relationships."

There is something about the younger generation that says, "You cannot confine us, with these ancient doctrines, from things that we want to do." Sometimes they are right, and they are wonderfully idealistic; but sometimes they are wrong, and they are dismayingly selfish.

Prince: I agree with you that this is a two-sided dilemma. One side of it leads to an imaginary conversation with Bill Marriott, who has worshipped in the same building as I for decades. My imagi-

nary conversation goes like this: "Bill, what does your company do?" "We rent hotel rooms." "What did it do fifty years ago?" "We rented fewer hotel rooms, but we were essentially doing the same thing." "Couldn't you save a lot of money if you just ran the same ad campaign for fifty years? You're still doing the same thing." His response would be, "That shows how much you know about business."

You have to do the balancing act of on the one hand maintaining a quality product that probably isn't changing a whole lot after a certain stage in corporate development, but on the other hand presenting that to your potential clientele in such a way that it remains fresh and appealing over time. I see that as a challenge for all religious traditions. All of them are still providing "hotel rooms," but somehow they have to reach out to and engage a changing constituency over time. I think that most traditions, including ours, have dropped the ball on that. We have almost gotten so far as to hang out the banner saying "Truth," and go home, thinking that we have won the day.

Kushner: I'm in the middle of writing something now that may be the beginning of another book. It's about things I have learned since I was ordained as a rabbi that I wasn't prepared for. One of them is that I received a superb rabbinic education at seminary. I came out of it full of answers, and the implication was, "These are the answers to questions your congregants will ask you. If your answers don't fit their questions, educate them to ask better questions." What I have had to do is throw that whole system out, and start with people's questions.

Prince: When I was a missionary we memorized a script, and if our investigators weren't giving the answers we wanted, we kept re-asking the question until they got there. Same dilemma, except we never learned our lesson, and you did.

Kushner: I did as an individual, but a lot of my colleagues don't. Many of them still believe that the answers they gave them in seminary should fit people's questions, and if not, they are asking the wrong questions.

So let's go back to the young people. Partly we have to listen to the questions they are asking; but partly I think we have to search for questions that they should be asking, that they don't realizing

they are not asking. I'm not quite sure how to articulate that without sounding like we are saying to them, "I know what you need better than you do."

Prince: Do they need something different than their parents needed? Or do we know yet?

Kushner: In some ways, probably. The assumption that a lot of synagogues have been working under—and it's a tricky one, because we lose a lot of people—is that we have very little to offer young adults before they get married and start having children; but then we have a nursery school and a Hebrew school and family events. But we don't seem to have anything for singles. Now this congregation is out here in the suburbs, and there are very few singles out here. It's a cruel environment for the unmarried.

Prince: I sense, in my kids' generation, that they are looking for something that my generation didn't ask for. I think they view the world in a much more coherent mental image than we did. We were focused inward. Maybe that's a Mormon thing, because we have become such an insular religion. But I see their generation as turning 180 degrees and looking outward instead of inward, and saying, "If my tradition is going to work for me, it also has to work for this world, because that is where I am going to be."

Kushner: I respond to a lot of that. I grew up in a very strong, very active congregation in Brooklyn, and I adored and idolized my rabbi. He was a wonderful preacher. To this day, every time I sit down to write a sermon I feel him looking over my shoulder and making sure I'm being authentic. He was considered one of the best preachers in the country, but when I think back to those sermons they were all about what we had to do to make Judaism stronger. My sermons are all about what Judaism can do to make your life better. I think it's in those terms that we have to speak to the younger generation. "Give me a better idea of where the shoe pinches. What bothers you about life? Is it your sense of insignificance? Is it your sense of the indestructibility of evil? Is it your discomfort with parts of yourself that you are embarrassed by? What is your spiritual agenda, and let me see if there is anything in my armamentarium that can be helpful to you."

Prince: I think that's half of it. I use the verbal image of two voices.

One is the priestly voice, and one is the prophetic voice. What you said to me is consistent with the priestly voice.

Kushner: Correct.

Prince: He is meeting the parishioners on whatever ground they occupy and helping them to solve their problems. But they also need the prophetic voice that is calling them to a level on which they don't function yet.

Kushner: You are absolutely right.

Prince: I think our tradition functions much better at the priestly level, and maybe that's something we share with other traditions. Getting the prophetic voice articulated in such a way that the people both hear it and respond to it is the real trick.

Kushner: I think Judaism tends to be stronger in that direction. We make a very strong case for social justice, but we still have trouble getting the average person to respond.

Prince: I have been meeting with a new officer in the State Department. Secretary of State Kerry set up a new office several months ago that is similar to what other branches of the federal government already had, of faith-based outreach. I said, "Shaun, do you have any guess at the ratio of Mormon missionaries to Peace Corp volunteers?" He didn't, and I hadn't until the day before, when I looked it up. It's 10-to-1. We have 80,000 Mormon missionaries, and we have 8,000 Peace Corps volunteers. I said, "Shaun, think of what we could do if we could convince my crowd to liberate even a portion of that workforce, and then create some type of faith-centered, but not exclusive humanitarian mission corps." Clearly the Peace Corps is running out of gas if it is only composed of 8,000 people after fifty years. I think about that, and about young Latter-day Saints—not being an enclave in a large, humanitarian effort, but working intermixed with all other religious traditions—and even people of goodwill who don't subscribe to a religious tradition. If that was focused worldwide on some of the truly important issues, it would not only make a difference in the world; it would transform a generation.

Kushner: You already know how to get these people to give you two years of their lives. I don't know if the leadership is capable of say-

ing, "Go out and use those two years to sell goodwill toward people," rather than to sell Mormonism.

Prince: Yes, but that's my dream.

Kushner: Good luck to you.

Note

1. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Our God Is Marching On!" in *A Call to Conscience: The Landmark Speeches of Martin Luther King,* Jr., edited by Cayborne Carson and Kris Shepard (New York: IPM/Warner Books, 2001), accessed December 27, 2013, http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/kingpapers/article/our_god_is_marching_on/. King, as is commonly acknowledged, was paraphrasing the abolitionist and minister Theodore Parker (1810–1860).

The Gift of Tongues

Annette Haws

Dead. The rose bushes, the dogwood, the spirea, and the green spreading yews, all dead: the entire hillside, a dusty memorial to her beautiful yard. The dry leaves crumbled between Mary's fingers and fell into the dirt. Her chest heaved and she wanted to bawl. What she wouldn't give for a couple of healthy purple irises. A few green shoots of Sweet William had pushed through in the spring, but in July's withering heat, they were a papery yellow. She leaned heavily against her winged weeder and contemplated the rows of struggling vegetables where her children used to play on a lush front lawn.

This unanticipated third act in her otherwise idyllic life was a bitter pill. Her family had been hungry last winter. Not starving, but she—and everyone she knew—was a few pounds lighter. Global warming, climate change, the silent menace, whatever the pundits wanted to call it, had slipped in the Earth's back door, drifted through the shadows, and then exploded like a natural gas leak, taking her sane life with it.

"Hey." Pushing a road bike, Warren called to her from the lane. "Mary, Mary quite contrary?"

Dropping her hoe between her tomato plants, she stepped over the bush beans to kiss her husband's cheek. "Mary's not so contrary."

He grinned at the rows of tomato plants in cages and squash mounds where her vinca used to bloom. "You and your amazing green thumb." He touched the dark circles under her eyes with the tip of his finger. "Make it a good day."

"Be careful," she muttered. "Watch out for trucks."

"They stay in the left lane." He waved imaginary vehicles away with the back of his hand. "They don't bother me." He pushed off, his tie tucked inside his button-down shirt, and his long torso

curved over the bike. A superficial truce existed between the thousands of bikers in the right-hand lanes and the eighteen wheelers and cars packed with commuters going fifty-five in the left. Traffic regulations had changed so quickly that an outburst of suppressed road rage posed a terrifying risk. A flat tire or a chain coming loose could toss a biker under the wheels of a truck driven by a man who had been awake for who knows how long. Anything could happen.

She glanced at the cloudless sky. So hot so early in the day. It had to be ninety-five. She wiped sweat off her forehead with the back of her hand and then walked around the garage where the huge plastic receptacle held water siphoned from the sewer line. She gagged as she swung her bucket into the brackish water. Wrinkling her nose at the stench, she hand-watered each tomato plant and watched the dry dirt suck up the water.

Her cell phone rang and she sighed listening to the sound of panic in her daughter's voice. "Mom, the baby's sick again." Or just flushed and sweaty, Mary thought. It was this July heat. She pushed away thoughts of the lethal virus that had decimated classrooms, emptied assisted living centers, and robbed cribs of their occupants. That horror of a year ago was still raw in everyone's mind.

"He won't nurse. I've had him in his little tub, but he's not cooling down. Can you come?"

The third time in a week. Mary exhaled softly. Babies fussed when it was too hot to sleep at night. By ten o'clock, he'd nod off for his morning nap. Crisis averted for the moment.

"Let me finish weeding while it's cool," Mary said. "I'll call you later. I hate to keep using my miles." What she really wanted was to snap the handle of the winged weeder over her knee, stab the two halves in a pumpkin, and run screaming down the lane. She was sick of grubbing in the dirt, sick of roasting in this relentless heat, but she took a deep breath instead. "I'll call you by ten. Okay?"

She dug around a morning glory vine and gave it a yank. Of all the plants to survive, morning glory? She'd never win that battle. What she wouldn't give for a quick blast of Round-Up. Poison

that sucker. She made it to the end of the row and lifted the brim of her hat to let the air dry her sweat.

As she dumped the bucket of stringy weeds in the garbage, her phone rang again.

"Mom, he has a rash on his tummy."

"Poor little guy. Has he been around other kids? Does Randy change his clothes when he comes home from work?"

"Honestly, we've been so careful."

"Well, if I come, I'm bringing you home for a few days. I can't keep going back and forth. I'll set up the porta-crib in the basement, and he can sleep where it's cool. This is just a heat rash." Silence on the other end of the line.

"Why do you always belittle me?" Vanessa said.

Mary squeezed one eye shut. "Oh, Sweetheart, I'm not. I'll jump in the shower. If I don't have to wait in line for gas, I'll be there in half an hour. Tops."

She set the timer for three minutes, stepped onto the tile, and felt the cool water on her shoulders. She turned off the tap while she scrubbed her feet and under her fingernails and shampooed her hair. Rinsing, she felt deliciously wet; her dry skin inhaled the water. She toweled off, ran her fingers through her hair, and examined the two-inch white streak down the part. Rummaging through her make-up drawer, she grasped the dark brown magic marker, pulled her hair taut, and started coloring the white roots, careful not to smudge tell-tale ink on her scalp. If she didn't look too closely, it was okay—not great, but okay. She scrunched her hair to tighten the curls and smiled at her reflection in the mirror.

Fifteen minutes later she stood under a yellow plastic awning and slipped her carbon card into the slot on the pump. It popped back out and she inserted her credit card. $19.35 for a gallon and a half of gas. Almost thirty-five years ago, she'd bought just enough gas to get herself home from student teaching for 67 cents. She couldn't believe what gas cost now. Sliding into the driver's seat, she turned on the ignition and checked over her shoulder.

Watch out for the white truck. Deep and clear, a voice penetrated the interior. She tried to turn off the radio, but the knob didn't move. The radio wasn't on. A tingle racing down her spine, she jerked against the shoulder strap and searched the back seat. Nothing there. No hidden mike, no miniscule electronic device.

She leaped out of the car and looked around. No people. No cars at the pumps. Pushing her hair off her forehead, she checked under the car but saw only oil stains on the pavement. Her heart pounded as though she were running a 10K up Emigration Canyon. Shifting her weight from one foot to the other, she examined the front seat and then the back, before she touched the open window, eased herself into the driver's seat, and closed the door. Grasping the steering wheel at ten and two, she forced herself to breathe slowly before she shifted into drive.

Watch out for the white truck–with the ladder. The voice spoke again.

Eyes wide, she glanced in the rear view mirror expecting to see a man's face inches from her own, because the voice was that clear, but the back seat was empty. "I'm losing it. I've finally snapped," she moaned as she pressed on the gas. With the sun in her eyes, she swerved away from two heavy-set women walking toward the bus stop under the shade of black umbrellas. Suddenly, all Mary wanted was to hold Vanessa's fat baby, fussy or not, and feel the heft of his little body in the crook of her arm.

Hugging the left lane, she searched on-coming traffic for a white truck. She couldn't help herself. How big was this truck? She imagined a glistening white eighteen-wheeler. Maybe an immaculate fire truck, part of the hook and ladder brigade, painted white with a gold logo on the door. But no trucks appeared, only loose dirt and gravel by the side of the road where straw yellow weeds had flourished two summers ago. The foothills were barren. No trace of snow lingered between the craggy granite peaks that loomed high above her. She barely noticed the paint peeling off the shops in Olympus Cove, because the voice echoed in her mind, settled in her chest. *Watch out. Watch out*. Rattled, she stared at the stop light turning yellow and pressed on the brake.

Traffic from Parley's Canyon split from I–80 and turned north on Foothill Drive. A canyon that narrow didn't offer civil engineers many choices, and now the mess was complicated by right lanes clogged with bikers. A dozen pedaling swiftly filled Mary's peripheral vision. What was she looking for? Certainly not a white pickup covered with cable-company decals, but the loose extension ladder caught her eye. A single hook held it against the

side of the truck, and every time the driver turned the wheel, the ladder banged against the hook. Why didn't he notice?

Swerving back and forth, the truck crossed the bike lane and veered in front of her. She couldn't change lanes. She'd hit a biker. A van on her tail was boxing her in. Concrete dividers crowded the shoulder. She couldn't hit her brakes. She grasped the steering wheel so tightly her knuckles felt pinched. Her mouth was dry, but she couldn't swallow. No spit. The cable guy hit a bump, and that ladder spiraled upward like a javelin. She stared as it hung in the air and then spun toward her windshield. She jerked the steering wheel to the left. Her car scraped the concrete and loose gravel spit as the car fishtailed. She struggled to gain control. The ladder hit the asphalt and bounced into the air again. The van driver slammed on his brakes. Horns were honking. A cloud of dust rose as her car rolled to a stop. Pressing her forehead against the steering wheel, she stifled a scream. If she hadn't been watching, if she hadn't been warned, that ladder would have crashed through her windshield and impaled her.

Knuckles rapped against her window. "You all right, lady?" Tears smeared across her face, she stared at the cable guy, his truck parked on the shoulder ahead of her. She nodded, then he dashed between cars to retrieve his ladder. "I'm sorry," he shouted as he made a show of attaching the ladder to the rack. Mary stared down at her hands, twisted the wedding ring on her finger, and remembered the voice.

She fumbled in the glove box searching for a napkin. She couldn't stay here. Checking for bikers, cars, and trucks, she eased back onto Foothill. Minutes later, she turned onto Kensington Avenue, lined with maple trees whose leaves were turning a rusty brown, and stopped in front of her daughter's home. A handful of spindly bean plants climbed poles anchored in the dirt by the front porch.

She clutched the railing and hauled herself up the steps. "Breathe," she whispered.

The screen door banged open. "Jeez, Mom, what happened to you? You're white as a sheet."

Mary shook her head and stepped into the kitchen to wash her hands at the sink before she took the baby. As though taking an inventory of loose body parts, she glanced at her trembling fingers.

She made quick fists then clenched and unclenched her hands. She reached for the baby, felt his weight, nuzzled the back of his little neck, and smelled the baby lotion. He grasped the chain on her glasses with his little fist. Moving some books and paper from the rocking chair with her free hand, she shifted the baby onto her shoulder and started to rock, pushing back and forth with exaggerated motions.

Hours later, with the baby asleep in his crib, the diapers washed and hung on a jerry-rigged clothesline in the backyard, and some semblance of order restored, Mary said, "I need a favor."

Vanessa regarded her mother over her shoulder. "What?"

"I want you to cut my hair."

"Are you serious?"

"I used my last box of color three months ago. I can't keep this up. Plus it looks silly. I'm starting to get white around my face, and it's only going to get worse."

Vanessa frowned. "Think about this a minute. It's a pretty dramatic shift. What if you let your hair go gray, and then in a couple of months they lift the ban on those chemicals? I mean, you can't go back to being brunette again."

"That's not going to happen. Not any time soon." Mary pursed her lips.

"It will age you ten years."

"Not really. I'll just have white hair."

"I can't believe this. You've always been so picky about your looks."

The remark stung. She'd been picky? Not pretty? Not a mother her daughter would be proud to introduce? A trim, attractive woman with stylish clothes and a beautiful yard. Picky? She inhaled before she spoke quietly. She always spoke quietly. She never raised her voice. "I want you to cut it so it's just two inches long all over." She scissored her fingers.

"White with brown tips. Very foxy. You'll look like an ermine."

Trying to smile, Mary nodded. "Let's do it right now. Before I change my mind." Before she got home and looked in the mirror. Maybe none of that really mattered any more: looks, hair, dress size. Maybe all these years she'd been a dog, chasing her tail. She didn't know. "Get your scissors."

Sitting in the middle of the kitchen floor with a towel draped around her shoulders, Mary felt each snip, watched clumps of brown hair fall on the dirty linoleum floor, and wondered why a voice had spared her life.

* * *

Labor Day weekend was a quiet affair. No terrifying news from the Middle East. The last hoorah of the summer came and went with nothing more than a few flags fluttering down the street. Sunday morning, Kate refused Peter's request to celebrate by staying home from church. Looking at her over his reading glasses, he responded with his cynical grin, "No rest for the wicked? No time off for good behavior?" She pinched his behind. With a battered straw hat on his head, Peter pushed the old tandem bike out of the garage and bowed low. "Okay, Daisy, hop on." And to the delight of their neighbors, his deep baritone sang all the way down the hill, "Daisy, Daisy give me your answer do."

Kate laughed, "You're half crazy. That part's right."

They wheeled into the church parking lot and chained the bike to a stand. It was warm and dry, and the high chapel windows were open and the doors were propped ajar. Women were already fanning their faces as Kate and Peter found their favorite wooden bench in the back. Two or three hundred people sat in family clusters, always on the same row as though seating were assigned or pews had been purchased. Children came and children went, until older couples sat alone holding hands or not touching at all. Kate could only see the backs of heads, but she knew everyone, young and old alike.

No speakers were assigned. The first Sunday of the month was given to outbursts, spontaneous and spiritual, recitations of religious epiphanies or expressions of faith. At least that was the plan. Kate closed her eyes and waited. In years past, members of the congregation used these meetings to express gratitude, but in the last few months, no one seemed particularly grateful. Anxious, wary, waiting for the next shoe to drop, or the next child to sneeze, or the next critical item to be rationed, the congregants looked a bit parched, as faded and tired as their scuffed shoes and worn clothes. No one seemed interested in speaking. The Bishop

rested his forehead in his palm. Kate glanced across the aisle and watched Mary wrestle Vanessa's baby, who was hot, sticky, and tired. Finally, Myrtle Furst stood and announced that she had given her burdens to The Lord, and he could take her any time He saw fit, and sooner would be better than later. She abruptly sat down. More silence. The chapel was filled with the dense quiet of a warm afternoon. Old men nodded off. Sunlight filtering through the windows caught the dust motes in the air and they drifted down like glitter onto the congregation.

Meredith Wilkes, a young mother Kate had only met a time or two, stood with a handkerchief balled tightly in her fist. No husband shared the bench, no ring was on her finger, and her children didn't have the same father—that was easy enough to see. Bouncing on chubby legs with a thread of drool dribbling down his chin, her baby reached for her, but Peter whisked him out into the foyer. The bishop looked up. A twelve-year-old boy made his way down the aisle with a microphone in his hand and a long black cord snaking behind him.

Wearing a rumpled cotton blouse, the young woman tugged at her flowered skirt and took a deep breath. Her skin was so pale and translucent she could have been an Estee Lauder model, back when stores sold cosmetics and women had money to spend. A slight draft lifted her soft blonde curls as she held the microphone close to her lips. "I just want to say." She paused, then started again. "I just wanted to say." But she stopped. Her chest rose and fell. When she opened her mouth the third time, words breathy and fresh tumbled out. Lovely sounds, beautiful thoughts that everyone felt—but forming words no one understood. Not a single syllable.

Kate expected some teary confession, a sinner searching for forgiveness, but not this. She stared at Meredith's back. What was the girl was saying? Surprised faces rubber-necked toward the back of the chapel. A half-dozen women twittered behind upheld hands. Teenagers giggled. The bishop leaned forward as though closer proximity might clarify what Meredith was saying. Mouth opened, Peter stood in the door way with sticky pink drool all over the front of his shirt. A red lollipop tight in his fist, the baby beamed at his mother.

Gradually, the whispering stopped until only the lilting sound

of Meredith's voice filled the chapel. Tears ran down cheeks and were daubed away with shirtsleeves. Children, calm in their mother's arms, smiled.

And then, Meredith stopped speaking. She turned toward Mary and whispered her name. Deliberately, slowly, Mary rose to her feet, the sleeping baby nestled against her shoulder, and spoke in a clear voice everyone could hear.

"We are living in a difficult time. Some of us have experienced terrible personal loss." She gestured with her free hand toward a mother sitting alone. "Worse things are going to happen. We will be tested beyond our ability to endure, and yet we will endure. None of us expected our lives to unfold in this particular way, and yet this is the life we're living. It's easy to torture ourselves with what might have been or what should have been. We lie awake at night wondering what terrible future these precious children will inherit." Mary cupped the baby's head with her palm and held him tight. "Anxiety and worry add to our burden. They are a fruitless weight. Cast them aside. Great trials and momentous events can co-exist with great happiness. Find joy in simple things. Don't let your hearts be troubled. Don't be afraid." Mary looked at Meredith and a smile passed between them.

Kate waited. The white-faced clock on the wall ticked away the remaining minutes of the meeting. No one spoke, but the miasma of fear momentarily lifted and a quiet peace settled over the congregation. His counselor scribbled a note to the bishop, but he shook his head. When the minute hand finally reached two, the bishop stood slowly and moved to the pulpit. "I'm not sure what happened here today, but I'm grateful I was here. We'll dispense with the closing song." The benediction was offered, and suddenly everyone was smiling. Laughing softly and crying, people embraced each other, patted old friends on the shoulder, and made no effort to move toward the doors and the warm September afternoon.

Peter strolled back in and stood by Kate. His striped tie hung down the center of his back in an attempt to save it from sticky fingers. He held the baby firmly around the middle like a small sack of flour, and the baby gurgled and kicked happily.

Peter whispered into Kate's ear. "She has perfect pitch."

"She wasn't singing."

"Who cares?"

* * *

A month passed. Outside, dusty brown leaves scattered on the ground. Inside, Mary tallied the number of mason jars in her fruit room for the third time. The harvest was in. A rough burn on her arm spoke of days spent lifting bottles in and out of boiling water. She grabbed a cardigan off the back of the couch and walked out the door heading to church. Kate was a half block ahead, and Mary hurried to catch up.

"I can't get used to your hair. I love it, but what a change." She elbowed Mary. "Are you nervous?"

"I don't know what I am. Maybe just confused."

"Maybe a conduit?"

"I don't know." Mary hadn't confided to a soul about the truck, the ladder, the voice.

"What does Warren think?"

"He watches me when he thinks I'm not looking." This morning Warren was attending ward council. An inventory was being organized as though one more survey or a half-dozen meetings could magically increase the number of plastic buckets filled with dried beans and oats. Hoarding was a nasty thought people were starting to whisper.

Conversations ceased as she and Kate walked through the chapel doors. Ruth Walker averted her eyes. Mary sidestepped clumps of people chatting and slid in beside her husband near the back of the chapel. She saw Peter wave Kate over to their familiar spot, but no Meredith. Mary's shoulders relaxed. Maybe Meredith had left as easily as she'd come. No furniture or boxes or baggage, she'd moved into her grandmother's basement, and after a visit from the Relief Society president, calls had gone out. Does anyone have a crib? A twin mattress? A high chair or stroller? An empty chest of drawers? Powdered milk? No one knew Meredith. She hadn't attended Olympus High with anyone's sons or daughters, hadn't dated boys in the neighborhood.

Halfway through the opening hymn, the doors opened and latecomers straggled in. Frowzy and wearing a tweed skirt several sizes too small, Meredith herded her little boy into a pew near the

back. Heads turned expectantly. She ducked, settling her olive skinned four-year-old onto the bench. Mary turned toward the pulpit and Warren grasped her hand.

People stood and spoke their piece, their eyes avoiding the back of the chapel. Then there was a long pause, as if the congregation were holding its collective breath. As though by assignment, Peter whisked the baby into the foyer, and Meredith stood. The quiet was almost palpable. Her clear blue eyes surveyed the congregation before words no one understood flowed from her mouth.

"The tongues of angels." Warren nudged Mary.

"It's not me." She didn't comprehend a single word. "Not today."

With a surprised expression on her face, Kate stood. Mary exhaled softly. This was a burden she was relieved to share, a reprieve from the weight she'd been feeling. Kate cleared her throat. "This is a time of trouble, but God is with us. Our beloved Wasatch Mountains could crash into the Great Salt Lake, but we don't need to be afraid. Our world is in an uproar, but we don't need to be afraid. Wars and famine surround us, but we don't need to be afraid. Everyone's angry, accusing each other for the mess that we're in, but there's nothing to fear, because there's a beautiful city where God lives. We need to go there in our hearts and minds. We need to let go of all this trouble." Kate groped for words. "Everybody, turn off the bad news, just let it all go. Trust God. Be still. Listen. But don't be afraid." Running her fingers through her hair, she smiled before she sat back down.

Warren flipped through his Bible until he found Palms 146. He pointed to a line: *Be still and know that I am God.* Mary nodded. In four thousand years the message hadn't changed.

* * *

The first Sunday in November the chapel was packed with the regular congregants, plus a couple of hundred strangers. Word had gotten out. Their whispers were loud enough to hear. *Where is she? Where does she sit? How does she sound? We came for the blessing.* They left with hearts lifted and shoulders squared to the task ahead. With the suggestion of hope on their faces, they resolutely told their neighbors, "We can do this." Whatever *this* happened to be.

At the crack of dawn the first weekend in January, news trucks with satellite dishes fixed to their roofs and flashy logos splashed across the doors, competed with hundreds of cars for spots in the parking lot. After their headlights had circled looking for a vacant space, the drivers left their cars on neighboring frozen yards, oblivious to home owners' raised fists. Hundreds more were arriving on foot. Waiting in the brittle cold, throngs of people pushed against locked exterior doors and each other. An elderly woman wearing men's work gloves and an ancient mink coat was passing out cards printed with the Articles of Faith, which people pressed to their lips.

With a ski cap pulled down over his ears and a scarf wrapped tightly around his neck, the stake president stood across the street watching the mob with Warren at his side. "We can't have this. Someone's going to get trampled."

"How are you going to stop it?" Warren said.

"Let's talk to Mary. Everyone trusts her. Maybe we could hold a private service in your living room. Include Meredith and the handful of women who understand her. How many has it been?" His white breath hung in the air.

"Five."

"Who was the last?"

Warren sighed audibly. "December was Fran Knightly. She's been a temple worker for years. These women are the backbone of our ward." He held his gloved hands out to his sides.

"Do they talk about this before? You know, plan what they're going to say? It's kind of funny that Mary let her hair go stark white just before this all started."

"Collusion? In a worthy cause?" Warren scoffed.

"Hope for the hopeless? I wouldn't blame them. I wouldn't call them to account." He wiped a drip off the end of his nose.

"Nope. It's right there in the Seventh Article of Faith. We either believe in the gift of tongues or we don't." They turned away from the chaos, a skiff of snow crunching beneath their feet.

A large fake wreath had been taken out of storage under the stage and hung beneath the organ pipes, its red bow a cheerful reminder of the season to those who bothered to notice. Christmas carols played on the organ couldn't drown out the din, but the

bishop flipped a switch and piped music into the rest of the building anyway. Assistant ward clerks, looking like frustrated sentinels in white shirts and ties, stood at each entrance checking off names of ward members who got first crack at the padded benches. Thirty minutes later it was open season for stake members on the rows of folding chairs in the gym. Jammed together in the hallways and foyers, discouraged visitors elbowed each other for a spot closer to the doors. The smell of wet wool filled the air.

A news anchor, a skinny woman in high heels, stood on the corner of the stage having an animated conversation with herself and a camera man. "Is she a prophet or a sham?" The woman's shrill voice carried over the organ prelude. "I'm standing here in a building packed with eager supplicants, waiting for a glimpse of the Mormon miracle, the beautiful mystery woman, who offers hope in a world that's increasingly hostile. Who is she? No one seems to know."

No children at her side, Meredith nodded at a clerk and slipped in the door unnoticed. Her coat was shabby and missing a couple of buttons and a plaid scarf covered her chin. She didn't remove the knit cap covering every strand of her blonde hair until a half hour into the meeting; then slowly, she tugged off her cap and shook the hair away from her face before she stood to speak. Instant quiet. It was like someone hit mute on a remote, or everyone in the building chose that moment to inhale. The young mother's words spilled over the silent congregation with a freshness that washed away guilt and fear. Every face turned toward her. Peace settled over the crowd like a fleece blanket or the soft quiet of snow falling on a winter night.

Mary glanced over at Kate who shook her head. They both knew this was the last time Meredith would speak. Tomorrow she would be gone, but this morning each word she spoke penetrated the core of Mary's being. She waited several minutes, until the echo of Meredith's voice faded. A weight, like an invisible hand, pressed Mary against the bench. Her knees felt weak, unsteady. Dry-eyed, she knew exactly what needed to be said, but she couldn't force the words out of her mouth. Would other people believe what she could hardly believe herself? What would people say— from the news trucks and mobs assembling outside the church doors to the leaders presiding within? Their reactions would dwarf the idle gos-

sip she'd weathered after cutting her hair. Speaking up today meant immediate notoriety and upheaval, controversy and rage, vilification by the press and who knew what else? Biting down on her bottom lip, she knew if she just sat here like a lump and pretended she didn't understand a word Meredith had said, she could hang onto the rest of her life, live quietly in her home, and love her little grandson until the end came. She could hide.

But she knew with more certainty than she'd ever known in her life that this was why she'd heard the voice in her car, this was why her life had been spared, so she could stand, right here, in this moment, and tell these people she loved, her neighbors and family, what Meredith had said. She had no choice. She couldn't deny what she'd heard.

The crowd was impatient. People were rustling around, looking at her, and whispering behind raised hands. She leaned against Warren and tugged on his finger, before she stood slowly, her hands clutching the wooden bench in front of her. The air shimmered, haloes glowed around light fixtures, and it felt like the chapel was expanding around her. She took a deep breath.

"No one has known the hour or the day when He's going to return. For thousands of years, wise men have assumed there's some celestial calendar, and when the moment's right, He'll come." Her voice rose, "But we've forgotten the blessing of our own agency. We, all of us who share this world, have chosen the time of his return. The gift of this earth is spent, gone, finished. There's no going back." She felt Warren's hand graze her thigh. "But you and I are not going to wait. No more watching those we love smother under another summer's withering heat until we gradually starve. No, that's not what we're going to do. Warren and I are leaving in the morning." She extended her arms. "Please, leave your homes and your belongings. Come with us. We're going to Him. To Adam-ondi-Ahman where this human journey began. We're going there to meet Him. He's waiting for us. We'll walk if we have to. To Missouri. Now."

Matter Made Graciously Present

Adam S. Miller. *Speculative Grace: Bruno Latour and Object-Oriented Theology*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013. 166 pp. Paper: $18.00. ISBN 978–0823251513.

Reviewed by Benjamin Peters and John Durham Peters

Once philosophy was not even taught at BYU for fear of corrupting the youth and Mormonism has had a famously rocky relationship with theology. But as with Mormon Studies in general, we are in the midst of a flowering in Mormon philosophy and theology. Our moment is full of possibilities and reconciliations once never dreamed of. Who would have predicted that radical continental thinkers would figure so prominently for young Mormon thinkers? Or that Mormon ideas would draw such wide intellectual interest?

Adam Miller, a professor of philosophy at Collin College, is one of the leaders in this flowering, and *Speculative Grace* is stunning, abstract, and poetic, a book that troubles the waters, mostly to healing but also to muddy effect. In contrast to his previous book, *Rube Goldberg Machines: Essays in Mormon Theology* (2012), this book makes no explicit acknowledgement of Mormonism. This however has not kept him from announcing to the "blogger-nacle" that *Speculative Grace* is "the most rigorous, speculative, and systematic attempt at a professional take on Mormon philosophy, ever." He has since shrunk this regrettably effusive claim by treating each word with such precision (e.g., noting that B.H. Roberts was not a professional philosopher) that the claim might end up applying to only this book! Miller says he hoped to stir people to read and disagree.[1] We both have since taken the bait and are glad to rise to his provocation, with our slightly different opinions.

In this slender volume, Miller promises and in many ways delivers a profound meditation on the intersection of an emergent strain of object-oriented philosophy with a theology of grace, a concept so often muddled with the remnants of the divine omni's as to render it as unbelievable in doctrine as it remains essential in

daily life. Miller's figuring of grace as that which is unconditionally given in a quotidian world teeming with messy and diverse objects is a breath of fresh air on the topic. There is much of Mormon resonance for those with ears to hear.

The insights of *Speculative Grace* are administered in 41 bite-sized chapters that mix pithy thoughts with insight-inducing koans and enigmatic reversals. The book has four main aims. It (1) brings the Christian notion of grace into a non-theistic object-oriented philosophy compatible with science; (2) offers an extended rehearsal of the French sociologist of science Bruno Latour's experimental metaphysics conceived in the fresh terms of "resistant availability"; (3) extends that metaphysics as it applies to, in yet another reversal, the practical immanence of grace alongside the transcendence of science; and (4) meditates on how an object-oriented approach can refresh religious practice. The result is a worldview fit for scientist, theologian, and ordinary human alike looking to extend grace to all things, however unevenly, from God to the poor and needy to the smudge on this computer screen. This short book seeks no less than a reconciliation of religion and science as objective marvels within a concrete universe of things and a vision of a world infused at once with suffering and grace.

Sound abstract? It is. Condensed and Zen-like, the book does not flaunt philosophical vocabulary and is all but completely free of academic name-dropping. Miller's focus is Latour, even as other voices clamor unacknowledged for recognition in the background. One of us finds this focus admirably disciplined; the other thinks it ungrateful to the rich literary network in which this thing, the book called *Speculative Grace*, is embedded. The sentences are short and style is plain, although we expect the stratospheric abstraction of thought may leave some readers feeling unmoored. All this makes for flint-like prose that bursts with sparks but leaves the reader to provide the kindling and logs.

Miller's choice and treatment of Latour reveals how suggestive a thinker Latour is theologically, just as it reveals something about Miller's work. Latour is the "it" thinker of our moment, the superstar scholar everyone wants a piece of, and showing his theological chops is a valuable contribution—a topic Latour himself recently featured in his 2013 Gifford Lectures. But *Speculative Grace*

adopts a curiously reverential attitude toward Latour. To twist Miller's terms, the book is intensely available to Latour, constantly quoting, extending, and at times improving his work, but never resistant. A reclamation without a critique, speculation without skepticism, *Speculative Grace* treats its main subject so gracefully, so generously that it neglects its own warning call to heed the multiplicity of things, including literate things. As far as we can tell, never once does Miller question Latour's account of the partial, incomplete metaphysics that makes up life. His method of reading Latour is familiar in LDS circles, although practiced here at a very high level—the selection of proof-texts from scripture. It is an odd yet highly illuminating way to read such a mercurial thinker as Latour. Miller shows us all that Latour's ideas bring, but nothing that they lack. His readings are unremittingly charitable. Meet Elder Latour, a new general authority!

If we are policing professional boundaries, Latour is no more a professional philosopher than B. H. Roberts was, though he is deeply philosophical. (Perhaps in France, land of *philosophes*, this label is doled out more generously.) Latour is a master of slogans and headlines. He likes to tweak scientific pretensions with paradoxes and witticisms. As such, his greatest brilliance comes not in metaphysical generalizations (which, as critics have shown, can be flat out wrong at times) but in case studies. He is the great anthropologist of science who showed how microbes, jungle eco-systems, and failed urban transportation networks are "imbroglios," tangled webs of making and knowing, of facts and feats. Latour's aphorisms such as "things are people too," "technology is society made durable" and "ontology is flat" are probably best taken as rhetorical gambits rather than as metaphysical dicta. To say that ontology is flat, for instance, is a lovely way to annoy Cartesian philosophers and Durkheimian social theorists, but is probably not the richest way to describe the universe.

Miller knows that Latour's claims are local and provisional, and the point of Miller's reading is to build a metaphysics out of local and provisional materials. But *Speculative Grace* sits uneasily with Latour's performative method in two ways. First, Latour brims with and excels in case studies; Miller has none. The contrast is striking: the Latour essay closest at hand "From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik, or How to Make Things Public" lists more exam-

ples in the first three pages (e.g., from the German Reich and Greenland's melting glaciers to Hobbes's *Leviathan* and Colin Powell's speech at the UN) than Miller manages in 160 pages. As far as we can tell, the only examples longer than a sentence in Miller are taken from Latour. Even with a generous allowance for the norms of professional philosophical writing, the shortage of examples risks undoing the argument. Darwin without the length of finch beaks is not Darwin at all. Here we have a book, virtually bereft of objects, advocating that everything must be understood as objects. Peculiar, the object-orientation of this book!

The examples that do make it into the writing affirm this point. Consider this list (a rhetorical fixture in all object-oriented writing): "my father's hammer, my neighbor's cheesecake recipe, my mother's preference for yellow, my brother's ideas about Spider-Man, my son's way of bounding down the stairs, my grandfather's curly hair" (152; just what, one wonders, does his brother think about Spider-Man?). Note how this list, compared to the shaggier ones of his object-oriented colleagues, luxuriates in local kinship relations. Also note that Miller does not follow this list or any other with annotation or discussion, save for a page on soil science (92–93; Latour's example). Collages like these push the scope of thought; they do not illustrate and concretize it. When he does use an example, it slips away so quickly that one senses it must have slipped through whatever mental sieve he has in place for filtering out examples from this meditation on objects (e.g., "rocks in a river" [65]). In its paucity of concrete examples *Speculative Grace* swims against the Mormon grain. Joke: Imagine if you can a Mormon thinker without object lessons! On the other hand, we suppose the book is meant as one big object lesson, as a meditation on the mute gospels that are the many things constitutive of Zion.

Second, it is obvious when you read Latour or hear him speak is that he is ever willing to play the brilliant buffoon to make a point. He is an inveterate scholar-trickster, as self-mocking of his own craft as Miller was in *Rube Goldberg Machines*. Latour once quipped that there are four things wrong with the term "actor-network theory," the intellectual brand he helped make famous: actor, network, theory, and the hyphen. Latour is playful to a fault.

(Indeed he would be the first to deny his being an authority of anything general.) If the two were in a room, Miller would be the only one not joking.

Both authors, at least, share the trait of being hard to pin down. Your reviewers split on how to take Miller's abstraction. One of us finds it one more beautiful contortion in a long line of preposterous stunts that philosophers have undertaken. Philosophy is often the task of seeing how long you can hold your breath—how long you can sustain a position that at first seems in stark defiance of reality, but turns out to offer much perspective by incongruity. There is no philosophy without the willingness to put the whole world in jeopardy. The other one of us, while sympathetic, worries that the abstract argumentation threatens to sidestep Miller's overarching project, taken as the search for a philosophical method for understanding grace and suffering. If grace and suffering might be understood as that which is undeserved and particular in life, then how can understanding advance without any undeserved particulars in the argument? Without fresh examples, his insights do not risk being tested; without critical context, his book cannot put them to work. After what amounts to the book's high mark in original examples (five pithy sentences on dating the earth's age.[111]), Miller quotes Latour that a good text should make the reader call for more details; by that standard, *Speculative Grace* is an extraordinarily good text!

In object-oriented philosophy (Graham Harman, Levi Bryant, Ian Bogost, etc.), Immanuel Kant typically plays the bad guy for having diverted philosophy away from substance and things. The technicalities need not detain us here, but the same philosophers might also recall that Kant also made critique the chief task of philosophy, opening up a florid tradition of critical thought in modern philosophy. We fear that the object-oriented philosophy offered by Miller and others arrives without the benefit of a sufficiently critical outlook. Leaving its social and political implications unexplored leaves the floodgates open for unpleasant waters to pour in. Where the context is unclear, one has to read the metaphors.

And Miller's metaphors wax political, even if the stakes are never clear (Bryant makes a similar point in the introduction). Consider this nearly neoliberal moment: "In a metaphysical de-

mocracy," writes Miller, "every object gets a vote" (103). If only all things operated in a parliament! Too often his world of things sounds like a marketplace scrum. In pushing his counter-intuitive insights, Miller not only does not take lessons from democracy among people, with its mess of special interests, rational voter apathy, senatorial wrangling, and billion dollar campaigns, but the commonsensical raggedness of things vanishes from view as well. We wish all things were free to speak in their own voices and haggle out their mutual relations, yet the world is not a big flat network of irreducible, co-existent, full-authorized agents; indeed, the Atonement authorizes certain agents to act, but to act within a world of hierarchies, asymmetries, and injustices which no actor-network can democratize metaphysically. Locks, passports, and strait gates are things too. Not all things are created equal. Infrastructure matters. Grand keys and narrow claims govern the Prophet Joseph's universe.

Miller can also sound techno-libertarian: his point that the "pluriverse lacks any formatting that is not produced locally and provisionally by the multitude itself" (16) sounds like the idealized world of the internet enthusiast. The vogue of Latour's thought—with its self-organizing, tangled networks and self-conscious riffs on object-oriented programming—clearly owes much to changing technological conditions, of which at least Latour is acutely aware. It is all too easy in an era of iPads and smart phones to think of things as intelligent, alive, personal, and networked. Indeed, in several passages of Miller's book you could replace "things" with "Apple products" without losing anything. This is not to say that Miller is boosting free-market capitalism or some techno-futurist wifi-enabled silicon transcendence, only that he offers nothing—no examples, no context, no criticism to the contrary—to keep such powerful discourses from coloring his text.

Nor does the work seek out or serve friendly conversations. That matter is vibrantly alive, capable of graceful stewardships is, for example, wonderfully pertinent to environmental debate, and yet not a word is said in this book. (He has written elsewhere on these themes in George Handley's elegant work.) This is the gamble of Miller's professionalism: that a philosopher need not worry

about society, politics, and historical context. We are not convinced he has won the bet.

Still, the flipside of our criticism finds *Speculative Grace* perhaps most eloquent in what it does not say or in what it only hints at. In the end this is a book of apophasis, of not saying. Its finest service to Mormon thought comes through what it can generate rather than what it has said.

Latour, a philosophically out-of-the-closet pragmatist, points Miller toward rediscovering the deep, unacknowledged affinities between Mormon theology and the insights of early American pragmatism such as William James and Charles Sanders Peirce: life is an evolutionary adventure, metaphysics is an empirical inquiry, and science rests upon the hazard of faith in the community of interpretation.

Mormon theology following that generation (Roberts, Talmage, Widtsoe, another soil scientist) centered on the relation of science and religion, and *Speculative Grace* is a worthy heir of that noble tradition, though of course with different methods and motives. Miller upends much either-or thinking that has shipwrecked many inquirers over the past century. He presents an experimental religion that is just as fierce a schoolmaster of our relation to reality as science ever was. His line that "the work of 'saying' the truth is indistinguishable from the work of 'making' the real" (71) should be the definitive word on what Mormons call testimony. Religion is a discipline of transformation rather than information, and we err in measuring its experiential worth by epistemic standards. Religion is not about new knowledge, but about the old truths that stare us in the face so hard that we stop seeing them. Religion is both epistemologically indifferent and abundantly true. Although it may be too concrete for Miller's tastes, some of *Speculative Grace*'s words on science and religion deserve to be carved in granite.

This review began in conversation as the two of us were cleaning out a garage over the summer, so perhaps there is no surprise that it has dwelled on dusty, old things and mechanics. We were up to our elbows in "things," the heroes of the object-oriented philosophy Adam Miller champions, and they weren't always pleasant! They were often lonely, mucky, obsolete, derelict, dispensable. But we also found stashes of old cassettes and older family

photos—forgotten gems of memory and markers of kinship. In the mess, we uncovered truths that Miller teaches: that religion "practices not only prayer but family history" (152) and that things, like people, live in communities of relation. Grace can break out in local squalls in any place, whether a manger or a garage, and even God himself depends on it. We owe gratitude to Adam Miller for making such matters so graciously present.

Note

1. Blair Hodges, ed., "Ask the Scholar: Adam S. Miller on Grace, Faith, Theology, Boredom, and Other Matters," May 20, 2013, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship Blog*, accessed July 16, 2013, www.maxwellinstituteblog.org/ask-the-scholar-adam-s-miller-on-grace-faith-theology-boredom-and-other-matters.

The ISPP Way and the Navajo Way

Robert S. McPherson, Jim Dandy, and Sarah E. Burak. *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life: The Autobiography and Teachings of Jim Dandy.* Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2012. 292 pp. Paper: $27.95. ISBN: 978–1–60781–194–7.

Reviewed by Patricia Karamesines

Months after we moved to Blanding, Utah, an LDS Navajo neighbor asked if my ten-year-old daughter would like to play a role in the Voices of San Juan Pageant, a local, outdoor LDS production then staged every year. I'd never seen the pageant but said I thought that she'd like taking part. Then my neighbor told me my girl would be playing a Navajo toiling among other Navajos in a scene portraying the Long Walk. The suggestion that my very white child assume the role of a Navajo in this reenactment of one of the most tragic events in Navajo history startled me so deeply that I laughed out loud. My neighbor laughed, too. But she still wanted my daughter in the role.

My daughter happily accepted the chance to play Indian and performed for three nights. I attended on the final night to see exactly how she fit into the pageant, becoming even more unset-

tled when she suddenly appeared next to me in costume wearing a faux-buckskin dress. I wondered, *What in the world is going on here?*

After a smorgasbord of cultural performances, the pageant began. I've attended many kinds of LDS-themed productions, including the Hill Cumorah Pageant, but, more than once, Voices of San Juan blew my mind.

At one point, there emerged a theme very strange to me. Mormons and Navajos share a common narrative: white authority drove both groups from sacred homelands. As spotlights shone stage right, a shuffling crowd of Navajo men, women, and children trudged into view, dogged by a soldier escort: the Long Walk. I found my daughter among the Navajos, walking head bent down, her stride slow and labored. She wore a cradleboard containing a "baby." Her demeanor was that of the exhausted and forlorn.

The spotlight swung to the next scripted storyline: Mormons making their own Long Walk. Portrayed were two founding settlers of the Bluff Utah Mission, Jens and Elsie Nielson, handcarting it across the plains. A voiceover narrator told us that Jens's feet froze on the trek. Elsie ordered him into the cart and pulled him to the next camp. As Elsie towed Jens, the beleaguered pioneers crossed metaphorical paths with the Navajos, who reentered the scene continuing the Long Walk. The Nielsons fell into step behind them, and the two narratives flowed together into a single, symbolically shared storyline.

Confused as I felt, I was struck by the generosity with which area Navajo converts to Mormonism share their cultural history with the white establishment surrounding them. Yet this commingling in a Mormon performance of what, to my thinking, were two distinctly different storylines caught me completely off guard. Since seeing the pageant, I've thought about it often but felt I lacked a key that would unlock its secrets and give me a glimpse into the underlying insight that everybody else seemed to treat as a given.

Robert S. McPherson, Jim Dandy and Sarah E. Burak's book, *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life: The Autobiography and Teachings of Jim Dandy*, is such a key. Besides unlocking for me some of the mysteries of the pageant, it also provides a unique view into the LDS Church's controversial Indian Student Placement Program (ISPP). While not positioning itself polemically as a defender of the ISPP, *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life* clearly seeks to show that,

at least for some Navajos who entered the program, the future changed for the better because the program opened opportunities not available in their communities. Furthermore, the Church and Navajo Nation's investment in the elementary and high school educations that ISPP Navajos received—specifically, Jim Dandy, but other ISPP Navajos also have their say—paid off both for the participants and for their Navajo communities when they returned to them. The book also argues that, whereas other Christian religions required Indians entering their folds to renounce their native cultures, the LDS Church adopted a freer stance, in part because LDS teachings and the Navajo Way contain enough similarities to make it possible for practitioners of the Navajo Way to preserve key traditions when they were baptized into the Church. As McPherson and Dandy sketch it out, Dandy's life is a bridge between the Navajo past and present and between Navajo tradition and LDS practice; he's the showpiece for all three objectives mentioned.

To set the stage for understanding Dandy's and other Navajos' experiences of the placement program, McPherson provides some historical context. In the 1940s an economic crisis on the reservation prepared the ground for the placement program to "[take] root" (9). At that time, Spencer W. Kimball headed the Church's Committee on Indian Relationships. He enthusiastically embraced any chance for improving the Church's bond with the group of people he thought to be Lamanites, descendants of a prophet that the Book of Mormon describes as having fled to the American continent from Jerusalem prior to its destruction. McPherson quotes Kimball as declaring, "The difference between them and us is opportunity" (9), and it was Kimball who, in 1947, facilitated the first informal foster placement of a young Navajo woman who wanted to continue her schooling off the reservation. By the 1953–54 school year, more Navajo parents, seeking better educations for their children, requested that their children be fostered into the program. From this start thousands of Navajo children entered the ISPP and were educated in public schools in the communities where their foster families lived.

McPherson argues that this was far from a case of mass kidnapping from a vulnerable population. In most cases, Navajo parents

requested their children's placement. While baptism was a requirement for entering the program, McPherson suggests that continued commitment to Church practice—or, in the majority of cases, lack of commitment—did not at the time affect the Church's overall program goal of helping Navajos gain improved educational opportunities. In fact, as an instrument of integrating Navajos into Mormon culture, the program could be seen as a failure.[1] One reason for this shortfall may be that Navajo culture provides no context for baptism. Children baptized into the Church at their entry into the ISPP probably found little meaning in the ordinance and certainly had no reason to consider it the opening step in a continuing commitment to Church practice.[2] While McPherson doesn't go so far as to speak of baptism as being a mere formality, his evidence suggests that, like the delousing step also implemented, baptism was in effect little more than a procedural practicality.

While McPherson acknowledges that "the ISPP received mixed reviews from participants and outsiders" and that various groups' claims that it was "a vehicle of cultural genocide" (12) contain some truth, he cites studies of former students to show that the fruits the ISPP bore for the Navajo population have mostly been good ones. His counterarguments to charges of racism and cultural raiding leveled against the Church are balanced in tone and seem, for the purposes of this book, well-researched. I would have liked to read more from Navajos who felt the program did them or their communities disservices or harm, but exploring such cases is not among this book's aims.

On a personal note, I've talked with former ISPP Navajos who view the opportunities the program gave them as profoundly improving their chances for success and well-being, especially by way of education. My colleagues at Utah State University-Eastern Blanding include some ISPP participants, and I am acquainted with other Navajos named in the book. Some are more traditional than others. Jim Dandy swings toward the far end of traditional Navajo practice and belief. Furthermore, USU-Eastern Blanding hosts a large Native American student population. The cultural spectrum—from "traditional" to "non-traditional"—that former ISPP participants display is reflected in the current student body, few members of which took part in the ISPP. Whatever the reasons may be for this range in traditional practice, many Navajo students sig-

nal in their writing, conversations, and other pursuits a strong cultural faith in the power of education to provide them with better prospects, just as their ISPP instructors and counselors do. This faith is commonly voiced in the song, "Go My Son,"[3] performed in this area at many social functions where Navajos take part.

Indeed, many Navajo parents, elders, and Navajo leaders urge each generation of school children to seek education as a means for improving their opportunities for success and for raising the condition of their people. For example, at the 2013 graduation ceremonies for USU-Eastern Blanding, Navajo Shirlee Silversmith, the first woman appointed Director of the Division of Indian Affairs to Utah Tribes, herself a graduate of the ISPP and a first-generation graduate of the public school system, told students, "Learning is for life; education creates opportunities beyond your dreams. Find the path that connects your head to your heart and allow passion to guide you on your journey to success." She then urged students to give back to the *Diné*, the Navajo Nation. McPherson, Dandy, and Burak's book describes and explains this cultural drive for education and argues in compelling manner that the ISPP aided in its acceleration, all misidentifications of Navajos as Lamanites aside.

Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life contains interviews with other Navajos whose involvement in the ISPP eventually led them to choose careers in education. However, the book highlights the program's striking effects upon the Utah Strip of the Navajo Nation's educational infrastructure through the story of Jim Dandy's placement program experience, spotlighting his consequent lifelong career as a sports coach, an educator, and a tenacious champion of increased educational opportunities for Navajo children. In fact, Dandy's story is deeply braided into the history of changes in the reservation's educational environment.

Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life shows that Dandy didn't start off as a fan of education. When he was a child, the choices for schooling lay between the Indian[4] boarding schools and the Church's ISPP program. Boarding schools were often notorious for their severe treatment of Indian children. Many of them engaged in wholesale cultural stripping, forcing Native American children to cut their hair, to abandon traditional clothing, to stop

speaking their native languages, and to use only English. In a chapter titled "Boarding School and Placement," McPherson provides historical background and interviews to highlight the contrasts between boarding school practices and the generally more culture-friendly nature of the ISPP. Jim himself was first sent to the boarding school at Shalako, Oklahoma, and found it a hostile environment. He relates how children from other tribes behaved aggressively toward him and describes the trouble this caused him. Most telling, however, are his memories of how boarding school officials described his prospects:

> Instead of helping, they treated me as if I was ignorant, saying, "Jim Dandy you're just no good. You'll never learn. This is not the place for you. We're just going to have to do something, send you somewhere." There was no warmth in anything they said or did. After they told me that I would never succeed in school, my behavior changed and I was in trouble constantly. It really bothered me to think that I was no good and that I did not belong there. I still have in the back of my mind that I can't learn. I had completed two years at Shalako, but the third year I started a different program. (101)

The boarding school ushered him into a vocational school, and from there his life took a plunge. The story of how he became involved in the LDS Church is, in some ways, typical. The story of his becoming enrolled in the placement program is wholly unique. He entered the program at age eighteen or nineteen, well past the age for eligibility. That he got into the ISPP at all was, as he says, "a miracle" (104). He was relocated to Plymouth, Utah, where he lived with a family who he says, "taught me a lot and treated me like one of their own, which helped me to get an education" (105). Eventually, his older age drew the Church's attention, and Jim reports that "they determined to send me back to the reservation" (105). The story he tells of his foster family's resolve to keep him with them, despite Church expectations, may seem understated. Yet the family's dedication to Jim, who had been led to believe he wasn't worth the trouble, comes through in the tale. This kind of "family" intervention in behalf of a member is common in strong Navajo families, and it wasn't lost on Jim. Of his foster parents, he says, "They were just like my own parents" (105).

Was Dandy and other Navajo kids' tenure in the program a misfortune that befell their respective communities, or did the

education that Jim Dandy received advantage those communities? In the chapter titled "Education as a Life's Work," Dandy answers these questions in his own words. His lifelong involvement in helping improve education for Navajos living in Utah's San Juan County led to the building of two high schools and an elementary school on the reservation, as well as to the instituting of bilingual/bicultural programs at each school. In this chapter, Dandy describes his involvement in the *Sinajini v. Board of Education* lawsuit, a lengthy legal action that led to those schools' constructions. His role in facilitating change for school-aged Navajo children required him to negotiate on both sides of the cultural divide, on the one hand maintaining pressure on the San Juan School District to provide school facilities and funding, and on the other hand, working with Navajo community members to secure land and rights of way for building the schools and to gain trust and support for his bilingual/bicultural programs. Throughout this chapter, Dandy speaks in what Arthur Henry King called "plain style"—unembellished yet authentically tuned, straightforward language that numbers his accomplishments not as crowing triumphs but as testaments to the benefits the ISPP gave to him, and, through him, to the Navajo Nation.

While the entire book positions itself as a work whose *raison d'être* is to bring balance to ongoing discussions of the ISPP, perhaps the most eye-opening part of *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life* is its final section, titled "Jim Dandy's Teachings." Its sketches of similarities between the Navajo Way and LDS teachings provided "aha!" moments that made it possible for me to put to rest much of my uneasiness over aspects of the Voices of San Juan Pageant as well as other local cultural phenomena. As Dandy lays it out, the dovetailing between the two belief systems is a real phenomenon, not just an instance of one culture's coloring over another culture's narrative as the next act in a long series of acts of subjugation. These similarities have helped Dandy carve a niche for himself as a priesthood holder and faithful member of the LDS Church while at the same time serving in a position of cultural importance to the Navajos and local Euro-Americans as a cultural mediator. Through what seems the most unlikely of social and religious pairings, Dandy demonstrates, at times with stunning clar-

ity, how, despite his deep commitment to the LDS Church, much of the Navajo Way is still his way.

Without being strident or resorting to apologetics, *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life* gives its readers a chance to hear Navajo voices speak up about the ISPP successes in empowering the *Diné* to "lift their people up." Theirs is a side of the story often ignored or dismissed in the public discourse about the ISPP and its effects on tribal cultures. For instance, in her book *Trespass: Living at the Edge of the Promised Land*, writer Amy Irvine,[5] who lived for a while in Monticello, twenty-two miles north of Blanding, says of the program,

> As late as 1990, the Church also operated the LDS Placement Program, which relocated Indian children into Mormon foster families under pretense of offering them accessibility to a better education—for the best schools and social services were in white communities, not on reservations. Though the program was touted as being strictly voluntary, there was a catch: in exchange for participation, the children were to become members of the LDS faith. (90–92)

Irvine's complaint is against what is commonly called the LDS Church's (and other Christian cultures') colonizing practices. The Church, Irvine says, pretended ("under pretense," "touted," "there was a catch") altruism in its practice of helping Native American children get better educations. The real purpose, she asserts, was to absorb Indians into the body of the Church. The best answer to Irvine's and others' criticisms comes perhaps from Jim Dandy himself:

> When the LDS Church ended the placement program I was upset. There were a lot of things said about it that were false. People accused the program of doing away with Navajo culture by removing young people from it. That is not true. A lot of the people I know who were on placement are now principals, school superintendents, and in other leadership positions. They have sought out their culture, understand it, are good Navajo speakers, and continue to learn. . . . [A] lot of the placement students who went through the program have done well in both worlds. It is sad to see this program gone, because a lot of children now do not have a place to go, especially if they come from broken homes. If they had the program, it could help them along as it did me. (108)

In the competition for control of the narrative about the nature and effects of the placement program, *Navajo Tradition,*

Mormon Life opens a space for Navajo voices. To dismiss this book's authentic and authoritative stories as cases of the enslaved embracing their enslavement or of LDS brainwashing is to risk that very imposition of a worldview upon Native Americans and their cultures that critics accuse the Church of committing against the Indians. Beyond speaking to balance the discussion of the ISPP, McPherson, Dandy, and Burak's book provides an important historical account of the development of the educational infrastructure in the Utah Strip of the Navajo Nation, a history whose effects continue to open the future for generations of Navajos. It's also a unique work that catalogues similarities between the LDS and Navajo religious cosmos. It's a delightful, surprising, and revelatory cultural, historical, and autobiographical work that anyone interested in the Church's placement program or in Navajo tradition should include in their scholarship library. As a bonus, it also illuminates the Voices of San Juan Pageant, perhaps the most unique of the Church's many public, testimonial spectacles.

Notes

1. McPherson: "Statistics are not available to determine how many [other Indians] [experienced LDS teachings as a wider opening of Navajo teachings]', but a large number certainly did not remain faithful after placement ended. Many returned to traditional practices, joined another Christian denomination or the Native American Church, or, like Ella Bedonie [an ISPP student], had no strong religious beliefs. My personal observation suggests that well over fifty percent fall into this latter category. Today wards and branches on the Navajo reservation have far more names on the rolls than ever attend a meeting or participate in any type of activity" (19).

2. McPherson, quoting from Kendall A. Blanchard's study, *The Economics of Sainthood: Religious Change among the Rimrock Navajos*: "Most Rimrock Mormons contend that the Navajos who are baptized rarely, if ever, understand the significance of this most vital of sacraments, and therefore they do not expect radical change. In light of this, the majority of the Rimrock Navajos have never felt the traditional lifestyles threatened by the tenets of Mormonism" (19).

"Go My Son" lyrics

Spoken introduction:

Long ago an Indian War Chief counseled his people in the way they

should walk. He wisely told them that education is the ladder to success and happiness. "Go my son, and climb that ladder. . . ."

> Go, my son, go and climb the ladder.
> Go, my son, go and earn your feather.
> Go, my son, make your people proud of you.
> Work, my son, get an education.
> Work, my son, learn a good vocation and
> Climb, my son. Go and take a lofty view.
> From on the ladder of an education,
> You can see to help your Indian Nation,
> And reach, my son, and lift your people up with you.
> Go, my son, go and climb the ladder.
> Go, my son, go and earn your feather.
> Go, my son, make your people proud of you.
> Work, my son, get an education.
> Work, my son, learn a good vocation and
> Climb, my son. Go and take a lofty view.
> From on the ladder of an education,
> You can see to help your Indian Nation,
> And reach, my son. Lift your people up with you.

3. Hozho Nahasdlii', Language of the Holy People, 2006, accessed May 26, 2013, http://www.gomyson.com/gmssong.html.

4. *Navajo Tradition, Mormon Life* uses the word "Indian" predominantly to indicate all Native Americans. The authors' choice of using "Indian" reflects the trend here in the Four Corners region, including among Navajos, and, increasingly, in scholarly venues. For instance, my Navajo supervisors say "Indian," "Native," or refer to a specific nation when referring to the students or to their own families.

5. Amy Irvine, *Trespass: Living at the Edge of the Promised Land* (New York: North Point Press, 2008).

Eternal Families: Persecution Days or Rapture?

Jenn Ashworth. *The Friday Gospels.* London: Sceptre, 2013. 336 pp. Paper: £8.99. ISBN: 978–1444707748.

Reviewed by Julie J. Nichols

In his introduction to the 1996 Signature publication *Tending the Garden*, Gene England refers to "President Kimball's 1977 call for a literature that includes the full range of Mormon experience: 'struggles and frustrations; apostasies and inner revolutions and counter-revolutions . . . counter-reactions . . . persecution days . . . rapture.'"[1] I love that list—persecution days and rapture, yes!

But who can make a complete list? Let us hypothesize that the "full range of Mormon experience" includes the full range of *anyone's* experience, with the addition of two crucial overlays. The first: at least an awareness, at most a strong certainty regarding the truth, of doctrines that declare humans, in all their frailty, to have a certain spectacularly implicative relationship to God. Here's where readers might argue. The doctrine that we're literally gods in embryo, evolving toward material and/or purposeful oneness with beings of an order different from us and yet the same, may not be the distinctive feature of Mormonism. But the metaphysical and material intersection of godliness in human endeavor certainly seems central to our scriptures and our aspirations, perhaps not completely unique to Mormonism but certainly not universal in religious or secular thought.

The second, related, overlay that we might hypothesize as essential to any notion of "the full range of Mormon experience" consists of at least an awareness, at most a conviction regarding the necessity of, Church members' efforts to create a milieu where the evolutionary/generational relationship between humans and gods can be enacted. In other words, Mormon literature that answers Kimball's call rejects no part of human experience, but includes (unlike "non-Mormon literature") the poignant, complex, occasionally incongruous peculiarities of Mormon institutional culture as it seeks to embody a stunning Mormon doctrine within any larger culture.

If we can agree that literature encompassing the "full range of Mormon experience" can be widely varied and diverse, as long as it acknowledges a spiritual-relational purpose for humanity, and the need for active community attempts to put that purpose into practice, perhaps we can explore the idea that Mormon lit becomes problematic in the attitude it presents regarding that spiritual purpose and those community attempts at practice. Over-

whelming adherence to a particular purpose and a particular set of practices, as if they were unalterably right or true, renders the story as ineffective as overwhelming rejection of them, as if they could be neither. Too much adherence, too much rejection trivializes the tension that arises in the effort to discover how the practices can support the purpose. Jenn Ashworth's *The Friday Gospels* presents an intriguing ratio, a delicate balance. As Mormon lit, this novel deserves our attention.

Five voices speak in alternate sections in this problematically Mormon novel, published in the U.K. in January of this year to positive reviews. All five first-person narrators are members of the Mormon working-class Leeke family of northwestern England. In order of appearance, they are daughter Jeannie, a young woman in early-morning seminary, but neither innocent nor clear, any more, about what's good and right; father Martin, wretched husband to an incontinent fanatic, trapped in a life he's ready to abandon, if he only knew how; twentysomething oldest son Julian, trapped, like his father only differently, by forces over which he's desperate to have more control; disabled mum Pauline; and missionary son Gary, returning home in honor tonight, the Friday of the title, to a set of circumstances he could only imagine in his worst nightmares.

The five voices are brilliantly distinct. As each member of the family speaks and then steps back to let another forward, the mitigating circumstances are revealed slowly, bit by bit. From the beginning, Jeannie is confused and afraid. A very bad thing has happened, but she's heard enough lessons on chastity and putting on the armor of God that she's convinced she could have, should have, handled it differently. Her shame is overwhelming. Something's gotta give. Gary's coming home from America today, if his plane can make it through the ash of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull (we can pinpoint the very date of this Friday: April 16, 2010), and she's hanging on just until he gets home. Surely he can make it right.

Martin loves his dog Bovril more than he loves his disabled wife. (His ruminations on dogs reflect most amusingly his beliefs about women, both positive and negative.) Bovril has led him to Nina, another dog lover, and he dreams of moving in with her,

making a new life, leaving the wretchedness of his family behind. But he makes a mess of it.

Julian is as obsessed with the wrong female as his father is, equally obsessed with getting away. It's just a matter of figuring out how. From the moment we comprehend his plan, we're squirming. We know it can't go well.

Pauline's sections have no paragraphing. That's one way we know it's Pauline. Actually, who's speaking is never in question. Each section is clearly titled by the name of the narrator, for one thing, and for another, among the many technically admirable aspects of this novel is that each character's speech patterns and personalities are clearly discernible from the others by subject matter as well as by vocabulary and syntax. As for Pauline, her most defining trait is the Mormon-cliché-ridden, hackneyed worldview she clings to in order to keep herself from despair. Damaged when she gave birth to Jeannie, she's become despicable even to herself, except that Heavenly Father loves everyone, and the ladies in the ward are supposed to be charitable, and Gary's been a good missionary, and those are things to hang on to with the grip of death. Aren't they?

Chapter by chapter, scene by scene, Ashworth develops a creepy tension born of each character's effort to live with Mormonism. This is her third novel; her first, *A Kind of Intimacy* (2010), received a Betty Trask Award for "beautiful, provocative prose and [a] dangerous, quirky protagonist"[2] and won for Ashworth the honor of being named one of the BBC Culture Show's Best 12 New Novelists of 2011. Reviews of her second novel, *Cold Light* (2012), call it "a hauntingly beautiful and shocking psychological thriller," "bleak . . . gritty . . . in the best possible way an uncomfortable read," comparing Ashworth to Kate Atkinson and Tana French.[3] Ashworth is the product of "a small, working class family in the North of England" whose "mother was a convert to mormonism in the 1970s" but who left the Church several years ago.[4] She told me in private correspondence that she always knew she would write something with a Mormon setting, but she was glad she could

> establish my reputation with other topics first. . . . I needed to mature as a human and as a writer in order to be able to inhabit per-

> spectives that aren't my own without parody or cruel stereotype. The idea came right away—I wanted to find a way to talk about eternal family, about being sealed, and to demonstrate that through the form of the book—that these individual voices together make up a complete story.[5]

So this novel is, among other things, an exploration of what it means to be "sealed" as a family. A review by Stevie Davies of the *Guardian* says that each of the characters is "hampered in some way by the bizarre ideology that twists the Leeke family out of true: wheelchair-using mum Pauline is only the most obviously disabled . . . Mormonism, with the 'aprons and the mirrors, the veils and hats and handshakes and chanting,' is a comic writer's dream."[6] I squirm at Davies's assessment of Mormonism. I don't want the temple accoutrements to be laughed at. I don't want their comic potential to be what Martin, the father, is remembered for. His problem is wider than his utter lack of comprehension of the temple ceremony he's only attended once, on the day of his marriage and never since. Personality, money struggles, working-class family dynamics, and British or Western social (dis)graces are part of the equation here.

None of the family members is misled by false doctrine or led into sin by Mormonness. None of them fights against contradictions gnawing at their intellectual testimonies; none of them wrestles with politically-charged Mormon issues like same-sex orientation or polygamy. (In fact, Ashworth told me she couldn't see this particular set of characters in that kind of wrestling match at all.) Instead, each of them separately struggles with great gaps between what they are and their perception of what they ought to be, according to the Church (in the case of Jeannie or Pauline) or according to Pauline (in the case of Martin) or according to their own hopes and dreams (in the case of both sons, I think it's safe to say).

Jeannie remembers (to me, horrible) lessons on chastity and "putting on the armor of God," so that how she determines to respond to her situation has roots in the Mormon culture she can't avoid. Gary's stutter has been an affliction all his life, but it doesn't go away during his mission, and doesn't help him baptize anyone, and though he doesn't doubt the gospel, he doubts *something* deeply—and yet he knows what must be done in the end. Pauline's

affliction is the result of bad decisions by incompetent doctors during Jeannie's birth; her obsessive personality grasps at Mormon doctrine and institutionalized Mormon kindness to find uneasy meaning and comfort in her life despite her incontinence. It's the non-Mormon Nina who shows her a real, practical solution, which Pauline embraces fully, deciding it's a gift from God. Ashworth has said,

> what surprises me is how much I wanted to write a happy ending for these people, and have each of the characters undergo a 180 degree change, or reversal—or conversion, perhaps. My original conception of the book had quite a dark ending, but after living with these people for so long (the novel took about two and a half years, from initial idea to final draft—though the first draft was written in four very intense months) I knew I needed to find a little light for them, and that light needed to be because of their Mormonism, not in spite of it.[7]

Yet though the nurse's advice for Pauline is, perhaps, redemptive, and the missionary son's stutter is gone at the end of the novel and he is a strength for the rest of his family, in other ways the resolution is in the tradition of Ashworth's other novels: dangerous, shocking. Despite the family's unity, this is not what I'd call a happy ending. Without spoiling it, I can only say that given the story as Ashworth writes it, the ending seems inevitable. Jeannie has to do what she does, and because she does it, her brothers must act as they do; and because Pauline's problem looks to be alleviated, she can bear it, though it is awful. A different ending that doesn't cloy is hard to imagine. But there's as much darkness as there is light there, as much hell as eternal life.

In an email interview this April, Ashworth wrote:

> I wrestled over the definition of "Mormon fiction" and what it could/should do. In the end I decided that a very open, exploratory, character-first narrative stance, and one that didn't work too hard to reconcile different kinds of truths or different accounts, would be a very Mormon-flavoured book to write. . . . I draw a distinction, I think, between what it means to be LDS and what it means to be a Mormon. I have no links to or affiliation with the institution—but the culture is still very much part of me, and that's the part I'm interested in. Faith wise—I see what a powerful positive influence it is on people's lives. I see how faith and doubt are essential to the writing process . . . I always wanted to be a writer, and for me, being a writer

> means it just isn't possible to be certain about anything. I find the way some kinds of Mormonism require certainty totally impossible.[8]

The key phrase here may be "some kinds of Mormonism." Is there one kind of Catholicism, evident uniformly in Chesterton, Joyce, O'Connor, Heaney, and the host of other Catholic writers whose works make up Catholic literature? One kind of Judaism as clarified by Bellow, Roth, Potok, Paley? Of course not. The Leekes are kinds of Mormons, their story—individual and family—bound up with their Mormonism. Mormon lit need not be bizarre or comic, but it *can* be. Persecution days abound for each of us; rapture comes occasionally to us all. Ashworth may never write another "Mormon" novel (she tells me her next one is about faith and healing, though not about faith healing), but *The Friday Gospels* wrestles with doctrines and institutional flaws unique to Mormons, and her notion of a family sealed on earth by trials and by story may be one right way to consider the meaning of that doctrine. Families may be forever, but if each of us is flawed, how we are to support each other becomes a key question in the full range of Mormon experience. *The Friday Gospels* suggests one answer in the full range of Mormon literature. You should read it.

Notes

1. Eugene England, "Introduction," in *Tending the Garden: Essays on Mormon Literature*, edited by Eugene England and Lavina F. Anderson (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996).

2. Publishers Weekly starred review at http://www.amazon.com/Kind-Intimacy-Jenn-Ashworth/dp/1933372869/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1386790746&sr=1-1&keywords=A+Kind+of+Intimacy.

3. From the descriptive blurb at http://www.amazon.com/Cold-Light-Jenn-Ashworth-ebook/dp/B005PMWKV0/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1386798651&sr=1-3&keywords=Jenn+Ashworth.

4. Personal correspondence with Jenn Ashworth, May 2013.

5. Personal correspondence with Jenn Ashworth, May 2013.

6. Steve Davies, "The Friday Gospels by Jenn Ashworth—Review: A Moving but Comical Tale of Life in a Mormon Family," *The Guardian*, January 18, 2013, accessed May 24, 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2013/jan/18/friday-gospels-jenn-ashworth-review.

7. Personal correspondence with Jenn Ashworth, May 2013.

8. Personal correspondence with Jenn Ashworth, April 2013.

Not a Rigid Framework

Patrick Q. Mason, J. David Pulsipher, and Richard L. Bushman, eds. *War and Peace in Our Time: Mormon Perspectives*. Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books, 2012. xx, 290 pp. Includes index. Paper: $29.95. ISBN: 978–1–58958–099–2.

Reviewed by Rachel Esplin Odell

The authors of this volume's concluding essay argue that "Latter-day Saint theology does not constitute a rigid framework which insists on either an idealist or realist approach to war in the scheme of human existence" (262). It is this room for ambiguity that makes *War and Peace in Our Time* such a valuable contribution, as it highlights the diversity of perspectives on war and peace that can be informed by LDS teachings and history. The contributors range from strict pacifists to advocates of preemptive offensive war—though, as Patrick Mason acknowledges in the introduction, the essays are weighted toward "the peace camp." In particular, the essayists insightfully analyze the morality of war as informed by LDS scripture (and the conditions, if any, under which war is just), assess case studies of violent conflict in Church history, and discuss the attitudes of prominent individual Latter-day Saints toward war and peace. To a lesser extent, the authors also address contemporary Mormons' attitudes on war and overview the concrete realities confronted by LDS national security professionals.

Several of the essays—especially those that seek to articulate interpretations of LDS doctrine on the morality of war based on LDS scripture—come across as overly eisegetical, with omissions or interpretive stretches that belie the ambiguity of Mormon teachings on war and peace. The volume also lacks a systematic discussion of the ways in which fundamental LDS doctrines on such matters as the plan of salvation, the purpose of mortality, and the nature of God and man (as opposed to scriptural accounts of wars or explicit teachings on war) could shape an LDS position on violence and conflict. More attention to complex present-day security issues, such as humanitarian military intervention, likewise would have been worthwhile. Overall, however,

this volume is an instructive contribution that expands, deepens, and refines conversation about questions of war and peace in the LDS tradition.

Scriptural and Doctrinal Analysis

Many of the essays in the volume endeavor to advance specific understandings of LDS doctrine on the morality of war by drawing upon LDS scripture. Some of the essays (especially those by Joshua Madson, Robert A. Rees, F. R. Rick Duran, Gordon Conrad Thomasson, Jesse Samantha Fulcher, and Ron Madson) approach the question from a more or less pacifist orientation. Others seek to occupy some middle ground (J. David Pulsipher and the concluding essay by Henshaw, Hudson, Jensen, Kartchner, and Mattox, as well as the afterword by Richard Bushman). Still others (Morgan Deane and Eric Eliason) offer a defense of preemptive war or war aimed at spreading freedom, which includes, in their views, recent wars waged by the United States.

The scriptural analysis in these essays focuses primarily on narrative interpretation—that is, examining the behavior of scriptural characters during times of war and evaluating the moral implications of that behavior. Many of the essays that adopt this approach assume the actions of the groups or individuals evaluated—particularly the "prophet-generals" in the Book of Mormon—and the assessments of those actions provided in the scriptural text to be morally prescriptive, or at least exemplary.[1] The most explicit departure from this hermeneutical attitude can be found in Joshua Madson's provocative "Nonviolent Reading of the Book of Mormon." Madson describes the Book of Mormon as a politically motivated history produced by one faction of a civilization built upon a foundational act—Nephi's slaying of Laban—that established a myth of violence justification. He argues that the mutual scapegoating in which both Nephites and Lamanites engaged encouraged a pattern of violence that "only reinforce[d their] enemies' traditions and fail[ed] to address the underlying causes of conflict" (23).[2]

Beyond discussions of explicit scriptural teachings on war and narrative readings of incidents of war, the essays contain comparatively little exploration of how basic LDS theology might shape Mormon approaches to war and peace. Few of the authors deeply

explore the question that must be asked by anyone, LDS or otherwise, seeking to outline an ethic of war or peace: what, precisely, makes war, violence, and killing morally wrong?[3] LDS understandings of the nature of God, the purpose of mortality, the plan of salvation, and the role of agency could all provide rich fundamental material for analysis of the ethics of violence and war. For example, does LDS belief in a corporeal God and an eternally disembodied Satan render the physical body comparatively more sacred and divine and the harm or extermination thereof comparatively more evil and satanic? Conversely, does the fact that Mormon doctrine teaches the possibility of repentance and progression after this mortal life actually make death less victorious and thus killing less morally egregious?

The most direct engagement with such questions can be found in the essay by Henshaw et al., wherein the authors posit that the "great calamity" in LDS theology is not death, but sin. As a corollary, they write that the motive behind a violent action—not the action itself—is where the morality of the action is manifest. A similar perspective is espoused in the essays by Deane and Eliason, who point to the examples of Book of Mormon prophet-generals to suggest that the intent of the heart is of primary importance in determining the morality of a person's violent actions in war.

Although there is much to recommend this perspective, the emphasis on the sinfulness of the ill-motived warfarer as the chief tragedy to some extent discounts the temporal suffering inflicted by war, including upon individually guiltless soldiers on both sides of the conflict, their families, and innocent civilians. The gospel of Jesus Christ strongly decries the evils of causing or failing to alleviate temporal suffering—arguably not only because of what such evil signifies about the moral state of the perpetrator's heart, but also because of the real pain and sorrow inflicted upon the victim. Without appropriately accounting for this factor, quixotic military interventions could be much more easily justified. As Pulsipher's essay and Bushman's afterword both note, if a nation is seized with a conviction that its motive is pure and just, righteous fervor could lead it to ignore or downplay the potential for

unforeseen consequences, collateral damage, and long-term instability that often result from violent intervention.

Historical, Biographical, and Cultural Accounts

In addition to the efforts to advance particular understandings of the morality of war, several of the essays also provide a more descriptive account of war and peace issues in Church history and teachings. Robert H. Hellebrand's essay, for example, provides a useful survey of positions adopted by Church leaders toward specific conflicts and war in general since the Joseph Smith era. Fulcher draws upon the example of nonviolent responses to polygamy persecutions during the 1880s as an example of how Mormons can and should act under the threat of violence. And in an in-depth look at the initial years of the Restoration, Mark Ashurst-McGee delivers a refreshingly frank account of the ways in which Joseph Smith's early Zion revelations have led many Mormons to espouse a pessimistic attitude toward the prospect of peace among nations and instead view Zion as a refuge from the wars that will inevitably consume the world prior to the second coming of Christ. In his convincing conclusion, Ashurst-McGee argues, "Any genuinely Mormon pacifist agenda . . . bears the burden of finding a way to come to terms with the worldview and resultant Church mission that pervade the revelations of the religion's founding prophet" (91).

The brief section on historical context in the essay by Henshaw, et al., in contrast, comes across as an exercise in historical apologetics. For example, the authors insist that throughout the history of the early Church—both during the Missouri era and the period of the Utah War—"Latter-day Saints responded violently only when they felt they were under violent attack or under imminent threat" (239). Perhaps the caveat here is in the phrase "they felt," but those two words are insufficient to justify their omission of any references to the historical realities of the Danites' violence, the complexities of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, and the bellicose rhetoric employed by leaders such as Brigham Young and Sidney Rigdon, the latter of whom called for a "war of extermination" between the saints and their persecutors if necessary, prior to Governor Boggs's issuance of his infamous extermination order.[4]

Other authors take a more reflective approach to Church history. Ron Madson points to the case study of the behavior of Mormons in Missouri in 1838 as a cautionary tale, arguing that "God's covenant people [lost] Zion . . . because they rejected His word" (especially as articulated in section 98 of the Doctrine and Covenants) and committed violence against non-Mormons they perceived as threatening (229). Similarly, Jennifer Lindell emphasizes the belligerent turn in Church policies toward Native Americans that occurred in the early 1850s, giving a compelling account of how the Mormon settlers went from viewing Native Americans as Lamanites to be missionized to seeing them as the feared "Other" to be defended against with violence. However, her implication that intensifying notions of racial difference or superiority motivated this rising violence would have benefited from more evidentiary support.[5]

Analyzing later periods in Church history, the biographical essays in the volume give engaging accounts of how three different men—J. Reuben Clark, Hugh Nibley, and Eugene England—wrestled with questions of war and peace. D. Michael Quinn documents the evolution in Clark's attitudes over time, Boyd Jay Peterson recounts how Nibley's wartime experiences shaped his perspectives, and Loyd Ericson describes England's commitment to "effective pacifism." Quinn, however, could have improved his essay with a deeper discussion of the potential factors motivating the seemingly stark shifts in Clark's views that he documents. Moreover, as these essays illustrate, Clark, Nibley, and England are all known for their more pacifist orientations. A valuable addition to this section could have looked at Church leaders or scholars who have adopted different postures on matters related to war and peace—for example, Ezra Taft Benson, whose views Peterson presents as a foil to Nibley's.

On the subject of contemporary Mormon cultural attitudes, Ethan Yorgason's essay provides an illuminating summary of original research he conducted through interviews with Latter-day Saints in Korea, including both Korean and American citizens. His interviews examined how members related their faith to their attitudes on security issues.[6] His methods could be fruitfully applied to LDS communities elsewhere, including the general

American Mormon population. Other essays contain anecdotes and allusions to prevailing notions about war and peace among Mormons, including at Brigham Young University. But more systematic research among the broader Mormon population would be useful in measuring attitudes toward war and how they may be informed by LDS theological sources.

Likening to Our Day?

A final question raised and only partially answered in the volume relates to the applicability of LDS scriptural teachings on war to a complex contemporary international and technological security environment. Can lessons about war in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants really be "likened" unto our day? Can the reasoning adopted by leaders and soldiers in the Nephites' explicitly Christian government, which was led by both ecclesiastical and political-military officials, apply to a pluralistic nation that observes a separation between church and state? Similarly, can revelations received to govern the behavior of early LDS Church members within the context of a federal republic (that admittedly was plagued by mob violence and inconsistent rule of law) apply to countries engaged in an anarchic international system? And how should individual members working in the governments or militaries of modern nation-states, as well as a range of international and nongovernmental organizations, approach these questions?

Rees cites Hugh Nibley in arguing that the Book of Mormon is in fact uniquely applicable to our present-day circumstances. Henshaw et al., however, emphasize the potential pitfalls involved in applying scriptural teachings on war and peace to a complicated modern international setting. They canvass a range of views held by LDS national security professionals on several specific subjects, emphasizing that LDS theology "allows for a wide range of expression of political opinion with respect to security issues and with respect to the more practical matters of security policy implementation" (263). An explanation of the methodology the authors used for collecting and reporting these views would have been beneficial, however, as it was unclear whether the summaries they provided were based on their own informed assump-

tions or actual interviews or conferences with LDS national security professionals.

This volume serves as a helpful springboard for more in-depth conversation among Latter-day Saints on specific topics related to war and peace, including deterrence (conventional and nuclear),[7] collective security and humanitarian military intervention,[8] the promotion of political and religious liberty through the use of force (including that aimed at regime change), and conflict avoidance and resolution strategies.[9] In particular, several of the essays suggest the need for analysis of what LDS doctrinal sources say about the influence of "first level" factors, such as societal inequality and the physical security of women and children, on the likelihood, conduct, and resolution of conflict. As Henshaw et al. write, the "linkage between sin at a lower level of analysis and problems at the national and international levels of analysis" (261) is emphasized by ancient and modern prophets alike and is particularly prominent in the Book of Mormon.

The diversity of LDS thought represented in this volume indicates that Mormon theological resources can inform an array of stances on both these complex concrete issues, as well as broader ethical principles regarding questions of war and peace. Indeed, given the varied and at times contradictory approaches to violence and politics in LDS history and scripture, it is difficult to identify a definitive Mormon paradigm regarding pacifism or just war. Rather than impede the growth of LDS thought on war and peace, however, the lack of such an obvious framework instead provides fertile ground for further discussion and examination of such subjects within the Mormon community.

Notes

1. This approach is particularly pronounced in the essays by Henshaw et al., Deane, and Eliason. However, even some of the more antiwar essays often either omit references to the belligerent actions of these men or seek to justify or reinterpret them in order to fit these examples within their pacifist moral structures. For example, in his essay casting the Book of Mormon as a "comprehensive pacifist injunction," Duran outlines a useful "conflict-morality grid," wherein a two-by-two grid is characterized by morality on the vertical axis and conflict on the horizontal axis (64). He then proceeds to identify examples from the Book of Mormon of behavior in each of the four cells. However, Duran's inter-

pretive argument seems strained when he argues that there are *no* examples of "Cell 1" behavior (moral war) in the Book of Mormon. When the author insists that "the highly moral always avoid conflict" in Book of Mormon narratives (70), the reader is left wondering how he would classify the behavior of the Nephites who defended the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi or the sons of those converted Lamanites who in turn came to the defense of both their people and the Nephites.

2. Similar arguments are also made by Duran, who articulates a holistic vision of the Book of Mormon as a "pacifist manifesto" (57), and Rees, who provides a moving literary-dramatic interpretation of Third Nephi as an "archetypal conflict between the forces of darkness/war and light/peace" (42).

3. Various essayists gave somewhat more attention to this question's corollary: What, if anything, could ever make killing morally right, or at least permissible? Defense of the lives and religious and civil liberties of oneself and one's family were the most commonly cited rationales, with several essays pointing to Captain Moroni's title of liberty speech from the Book of Mormon. Some of the more strictly pacifist essays did not look kindly on such rationales and seemed to argue that there is never any justification for violence.

4. The authors mention the Mountain Meadows massacre in an endnote, referring the reader to the excellent LDS Church–commissioned study by Walker, Turley, and Leonard. However, rather than using the massacre as an example of inexcusable violence perpetrated by a group of Latter-day Saints contrary to the tenets of their faith, as does the study they cite, they instead objectionably herald the incident as an example of how Latter-day Saints "responded violently only when . . . they believed they were under imminent threat" (241). While perhaps true in some general sense, such an excuse belies the evil complexities of the massacre (and of violence and mass atrocities in general), the main event of which was ordered by local Church leaders who felt ensnared in a commitment trap that made them think it necessary to cover up two murders and other violence that had already been visibly perpetrated by white Mormon men (as the study by Walker et al. explains).

5. Lindell suggests that conceptions of Native Americans during the Joseph Smith era were unambiguously positive, omitting any reference to the Book of Mormon's racially inflected description of latter-day descendants of Lehi as "a dark, a filthy, and a loathsome people" (Mormon 5:15). Such terminology could have reflected preexistent attitudes in Smith's (and his fellow Mormons') cultural background, indicating that the racist shift she describes in the early Young era may not have been such a stark reversal from the Smith era. In fact, such language in the

Book of Mormon could have even fanned the flames of the Brigham Young-era racism that she decries. Moreover, it is possible that the shift in racial perceptions she describes was a consequence of the Mormon settlers' heightened sense of threat from Native Americans due to increasing competition for resources, rather than a cause of that heightened competition and violence.

6. Yorgason ultimately concludes that "each person comprehends war and peace in significant measure through their own national background" (113), observing that the Korean Mormon interviewees "did not turn *quickly* to specifically Mormon scriptural war narratives" (108). However, it was not entirely clear that Yorgason fully accounted for each member's degree of identification with the LDS Church (for example, level of activity, intensity of belief, time since conversion, and LDS genealogical heritage). Such a factor could influence, in particular, the likelihood that a member would see Mormonism as relevant to questions of war and peace, and even a member's familiarity with or understanding of LDS teachings on the subject.

7. For instance, Deane gives some examples of the deterrent methods employed by Book of Mormon peoples, though he inappropriately conflates offensive tactics used in the context of an ongoing military conflict (which he highlights in the Book of Mormon's war chapters) with preemptive war and the broader Bush Doctrine. Deane also argues that weapons of mass destruction create an even more compelling justification for preemptive offensive military action than was present in Book of Mormon times. On this same topic, Henshaw et al. summarize several ways in which some LDS national security professionals have reconciled their work in America's nuclear armaments sector with their moral beliefs, including by justifying the U.S. nuclear capacity in defensive deterrent terms.

8. LDS tradition is not without resources for examining this subject, as evident in the Book of Mormon example of Nephites defending the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, whose sons in turn defend the Nephites. (See Alma 27:23; 53:10–12, 16–17.) However, this issue goes largely unaddressed in this volume—particularly by the more pacifist essayists.

9. The implications of the modern military industrial state for civil liberties and collective societal morality could potentially be another topic to analyze in the context of LDS thought and culture, particularly in light of the First Presidency message by Spencer W. Kimball, "The False Gods We Worship," published in the *Ensign* in June 1976 and referenced by several of the authors.

Ode to Joy!

Robert A. Rees

"Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God."
–Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

Note: Robert A. Rees delivered this devotional at the 2013 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, Utah, August 3, 2013.

One of the joys of being married to my late wife Ruth is that she opened the world of sacred music to me. I had grown up in a culturally deprived home, with no inkling of another world with such creatures in it as Bach, Mozart, Byrd, Beethoven, Hayden, and Handel. Shortly after we were married, Ruth took me to hear Bach's great *Passion According to St. Matthew* at the First Congregational Church in Madison, Wisconsin. My feeling was like that of a man I once saw in a film. After being institutionalized for some years, he had gone to a performance of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. He said simply, "I went to hear the music and I came alive!" I did indeed come alive that day. What I experienced hearing Bach's musical rendering of St. Matthew's gospel was overwhelming joy. I can remember it as a sensation that I felt all over my body and all inside it at the same time—somehow my entire being seemed bathed in that sublime, heightened emotion. At the memorial service we held for Ruth a few weeks after her passing, I said the following, "I had never known such music existed. As I listened that day to the arias, choruses and chorales, Bach's exquisite melding of truth and beauty resonated so deeply in my soul that I was transformed. My life has not been the same since."

Because I was blessed to be married to one of the truly gifted choral conductors in the Church, I had many opportunities to sing and hear such music. Ruth and I celebrated Christmas and

especially Holy Week by listening to these great sacred musical expressions. In the eighteen months since Ruth's passing, I have often recaptured the sweet, yet profound emotional intimacy we shared by listening to the masses, requiems, oratorios, passions, motets and other modes of "thought-felt" sacred expressions. Nothing puts me in a holy place more quickly and in a more sustained way than listening to such music, perhaps especially to Bach's great *Mass in B-Minor*, which many consider the greatest work of sacred choral music in the world.

What I felt that day in Madison and have felt many times since was joy, pure joy. It is a supreme, even sublime emotion, one which we share with divine beings and is, I am convinced, one of the great gifts our Heavenly Parents have created to tempt us back to their presence. According to modern revelation, out of love, our Heavenly Father and Mother designed the world and the plan of salvation in order that their children might, from the beginning, have opportunities to experience this elevated emotion—and experience it in abundance. Paraphrasing Nephi, "Adam and Eve fell that we might become mortal and we are—i.e., have being—so that we might experience joy." If Nephi is correct, then part of the object and design of our existence—of both our mortal and immortal/eternal lives—is that we might have some measure of joy in this life and a full measure of it in the eternal worlds.

That is, if we are created in their physical and intellectual images, as we believe we are, then it makes sense that we are also created in their emotional and spiritual images—male and female. Our enlightened Latter-day Saint doctrine of exaltation promises that through our faithfulness we can inherit all that God has and enjoys. From our pre-existent perch observing the laying of the foundation of our earthly habitation and the placement of the cornerstone (Christ, offering to make it possible for us to return to our mansions on high), as Job says, not only the cosmos ("the morning stars sang together") but all of us, the sons and daughters of God, "shouted for joy" (38:6–7). Our joy was not spoken nor sung, but shouted—a full-hearted, full-spirited exultation at this bright promise. We sang for joy knowing that joy would be our earthly and heavily inheritance.

Another way to put this is that the experience of joy may be

one of the ways the gods have designed for us to have a taste of the possible heightened emotional experiences that characterize their lives and our promised life with them. As Terryl and Fiona Givens state, "It is as if God's own nature spills over, and His goodness multiplies through a progeny that will share in His own capacity for joyful activity and love-filled relationships."[1] As David sang, knowing that ultimately God would free him from his own self-created hell: "In thy presence is fullness of joy" (Psalm 16:11), or, as Isaiah says, "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy" (51:11).

We could not experience joy if we didn't also know sorrow, but we are promised in the same scripture from Isaiah that our "sorrow and mourning shall flee away" (Psalm 51:11). This is the promise Jesus made to his disciples as he was about to leave them: "You shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. . . . I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John 16: 20, 22). Perhaps that what "re-joice" means—to feel joy again. As Paul says to the Philippians, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (4:4, NIV). The joy we feel in Christ here, we will feel again there. Peter uses both words when he tells us: "Rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

In attempting to understand the depth and breadth of our joyful feelings, I find a clue in Peter's words. To begin with, he calls it "unspeakable,"—suggesting that had we all the power of heart and tongue, we would still not be able adequately to describe this experience, perhaps partly because it is more than an emotion—at least in the way we normally think of emotions. The dictionary suggests one added dimension when it says that some emotions are "usually accompanied by certain physiological changes." This appears true of joy in that we seem to feel it all over and throughout our entire being—in our brain, our heart, along the surface of our skin, in our bones and, somehow, deep in our gut and in our souls. Earlier, I suggested that we may experience it on the cellular and perhaps even the genetic level. Some scholars consider that joy is one of the emotions which "combine physical, psychological, private, public, conceptual, and cultural dimensions."[2] The Free Dictionary says it is "an intense and especially an ecstatic or exultant happiness."

The reason why we are unable to fully articulate what we expe-

rience when we feel joy might be suggested by King Benjamin's reminding us that such inarticulateness may be a direct result of God wanting us to simply experience this emotion, not talk about it. King Benjamin says, God has "poured out his spirit upon you and has caused that your hearts should be filled with joy, and has caused that your mouths should be stopped that ye could not find utterance, so exceedingly great was your joy" (Mosiah 4:20). Perhaps the reason this is so is that as soon as we try to describe joy, we move away from the clarity and purity of its emotional resonance. We turn our attention away from our hearts, which God fills with joy, to our minds that we fill with linguistic and cognitive queries—or, in other, clearer terms, words or the search for words—which unfortunately we feel compelled to do, even as I am doing at present.

The other clue to unraveling the mystery of joy is found in Peter's phrase, "Rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." What is a joy "full of glory"? Elsewhere, I have suggested that the kingdoms we are promised in the next world are essentially kingdoms of love and light and that we choose our kingdom and its glory based on the level of light and love we desire and embrace here. Thus, as I speculate, "The celestial kingdom is reserved for those who have learned to love themselves, others, and God; the terrestrial kingdom for those who have learned to love themselves and others; and the telestial kingdom for those who chose to love only themselves. The love of the first will be as bright and as warm as the sun, while the love of the second and third will be comparable, respectively, to the light and warmth of the moon and stars. Outer darkness is reserved for those who, in spite of all the opportunities given them in mortality, are unable to give or receive love of any kind. . . . Thus, outer darkness is merely the reflection of inner darkness, the heart of darkness in which there is no love and therefore no light."[3]

As I have continued to probe the meaning of joy, I have come to the conclusion that joy, love, and light are somehow deeply, inextricably interconnected and, further, that such a combination creates glory. This seems inherent in Peter's speaking of joy which is "full of glory" and of Psalms 16:9, which associates joy with glory: "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth."

The dictionary defines glory as "a state of absolute happiness,"[4] which comes close to definitions of joy as a "deeper form of happiness" or "an abiding sense of happiness," although none of these seems adequate to describe what I have earlier called an indescribable feeling. In relation to "glory," another dictionary uses words like "magnificence," "resplendence," and "gratification" and calls it "the splendor and beatific happiness of heaven,"[5] which may come closer to describing joy. Joy is feeling of fullness, abundance, and plentitude.

Christ's prayer to His Father, in which He gives an accounting of his mission (John 17:1–26) includes some insight into the relationship between his teachings and joy: "And now I am coming to thee; but while I am still in the world I speak these words, so that they may have my joy within them in full measure" (17:13, NEB). Earlier, He had given a similar message to his followers: "I have spoken this to you, so that my joy may be in you, and your joy complete" (John 15:11, NEB). Thus, Christ is not only the Lord of love and light, but also the Lord of joy. Those of us who have taken Him into our hearts experience that joy—his joy.

The "good tidings of great joy" of which the angels (that is, all of us!) spoke to the shepherds on that star-blessed night were inextricably bound to the cross, for as Paul wrote to the Hebrews, "For the joy that was set before him [Christ] endured the cross" (12:2). That is, his joy in redeeming us makes possible our joy in being redeemed by him. This is beautifully expressed both in words and music in the last movement of Bach's Cantata 147, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring":

> Jesu, joy of man's desiring,
> Holy wisdom, Love most bright,
> Drawn by thee, our souls aspiring
> Soar to uncreated light. . . .
> Thou dost ever lead Thine own
> In the love of joys unknown.

The skein of joy connecting Christ's birth to his crucifixion is made most explicit in Nephi's vision which he had sought after hearing his father speak of a tree whose fruit "filled [his] soul with exceeding great joy" (1 Nephi 8:12). When the angel asks Nephi the

meaning of the scene in which he sees Mary bearing the Christ child in her arms, Nephi recognizes it as a manifestation of "the love of God which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men" which he exclaims is "most desirable above all things." To which the angel, echoing Lehi's words, adds, "Yea, and the most joyous to the soul" (1 Nephi 11:20–23). Immediately following this scene, Nephi is shown a vision of the tree which his father saw, which is a representation not only of the Tree of Life but of the broken tree on which Christ will be crucified and which Nephi recognizes as also "a representation of the love of God" (26:25) whose fruit "is most precious and most desirable above all other fruits; yea, and it is the greatest of all the gifts of "God" (26:36).

Not only does Christ find joy in his suffering and sacrifice on our behalf, he promises us that we too will find joy in our trials and tribulations. As Paul wrote to the Romans, "We also rejoice in sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance" (5:2, NEB). Or, as James says, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds" (James 1:2). Perhaps this is what it means to take up our cross and follow Christ—or, as with Enoch—to weep with God. Joseph Campbell admonishes us to "find a place inside where there's joy, and the joy will burn out the pain."[6]

The key to Christ finding joy even in the face of His great suffering is that in serving others with love (even when it involves suffering and sacrifice) both He and we find joy in bringing joy to others. As Rabindranath Tagore says, "I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy."[7] This gives new meaning to the line we sing in "More Holiness Give me": "More joy in his service" and makes concrete the welcoming Jesus promises to those who take care of "the least of these": "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21).

If joy is such a desired human experience, one is tempted to ask why we don't experience it more often and in greater measure? I'm no expert and certainly not a guru on this subject, but my limited experience leads me to conclude the following:

- Essentially, experiencing joy is a choice—or at least it is a

choice to put ourselves within the space where joy is more likely to occur. Joy seems related to giving of ourselves in service to God and to others.

- According to what Paul tells the Galatians, joy is one of the gifts of the Spirit (5:22) and therefore, one of the gifts we are invited to seek.
- Sin does not produce joy, nor does violence, hatred, unkindness, or any other behavior that attacks, diminishes or shames another. True joy is not possible for someone who is selfish or self-centered.
- We can find joy in reading the scriptures. As we read in Ecclesiastes, "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart" (3:12).
- Joy seems to be closely associated with music, the kind of music that resonates in our souls. Suzanne Langer says that "The tonal structures we call 'music' bear a close logical similarity to the forms of human feeling— . . . not joy and sorrow perhaps, but the poignancy of either and both—the greatness and brevity and eternal passing of everything vitally felt. . . . Music is a tonal analogue of the emotive life."[8] Langer would make a distinction between music itself, which is not a "language of feeling" because it "lacks one of the basic characteristics of language—fixed association," but music combined with words which can have a greater impact on our emotive life than either alone. This may be particularly true if the compositional expression comes from a great composer and is on a great or sublime subject. Any of the arts, but perhaps particularly poetry, may have a similar effect. When I think of a metaphor for joy, I think of Emily Dickinson's words about poetry: "If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way?"

At this time of year, joy and light and love are captured for me

in listening to the "Gloria" from the B-Minor Mass. The text is "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, good will toward men and women"—again, the song we all sang the night Jesus was born.

Perhaps it is another piece, or another kind of music altogether that resonates in your soul. I encourage you to find those things that make your heart open joyfully and to compose your own Ode to Joy—and sing it as fully and as often as you can.

Be joyful!

And, being so, do what Emerson says, "Scatter joy."

Editor's note: *Links to performances of several of the pieces mentioned in this talk can be found at dialoguejournal.com. We encourage you to listen!*

Notes

1. *The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Ensign Peak, 2012), 34.

2. Anna Despotopoulou, Elly Ifantidou, and Chryssoula Lascaratou, "Tracking Pain and Joy: Breaching Boundaries, Bridging Fields," *Introduction to Reconstructing Pain and Joy: Linguistic, Literary, and Cultural Perspectives* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008),1. See also, Maria Theodoropoulou, "Metaphor-metonymies of Joy and Happiness in Greek: Towards an Interdisciplinary Perspective," *Review of Cognitive Linguistics,* 10, vol. 1 (2012): 156–83.

3. Robert A. Rees, "Forgiving the Church and Loving the Saints: Spiritual Evolution and the Kingdom of God," *Sunstone* (February 1992): 18–27.

4. http://www.ask.com/dictionary?q=glory&qsrc=999&o=2801; accessed 6 July 2013.

5. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/glory; accessed 6 July 2013.

6. http://wwww.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/joy.html#FemaQIWb8gbvVjpe.99; accessed July 7, 2013.

7. *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1953), 27.

8. *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1953), 27.

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Jared Clark
Lil' Chair Bild, found chair, found objects, epoxy resin, 2013

Jared Lindsay Clark is a visual artist who mainly constructs installations, sculpture and drawings. During his years at Brigham Young University where he earned a BFA, he found himself drawn to abstraction and minimalism. Today we see this through his shown work across the state and country.

jaredlindsayclark.com

Jared Clark
Chair Bild, found chair, found objects, epoxy resin, 2013

Jared Clark
Painting, found styrofoam, resin, 2013

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