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The Truth, The Way, The Life: An Elementary Treatise on Theology (2nd Edition)

Author(s): B.H. Roberts

Editor(s): John W. Welch

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Abstract: Less than ten years before his death in 1933, B. H. Roberts, one of the most influential Mormon writers of the twentieth century, began work on “the most important book that I have yet contributed to the [LDS] Church.” A prolific and respected Mormon apologist, Roberts wanted to consolidate his theological thought into a unified whole and to reconcile science with scripture.

His final manuscript, “The Truth, the Way, the Life,” synthesized doctrine into three sections: the truth about the world and revelation, the way of salvation, and Jesus’ life in shaping Christian character. He submitted his completed work to the LDS First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, which, after a series of heated meetings, rejected it. Roberts’s views on evolution, the age of the earth, the pre-earth existence, and the eternal progression of God were deemed too controversial, so his “masterwork” went unpublished. With the support of the Roberts family, editor Stan Larson has corrected this sixty-year omission from the corpus of Mormon theology.

According to Leonard J. Arrington, former LDS Church Historian, “B. H. Roberts considered ‘The Truth, The Way, The Life’ to be the most important work he had written. While people may differ with him on that judgement, this ambitious treatise . . . shows a great mind grappling with great issues.”

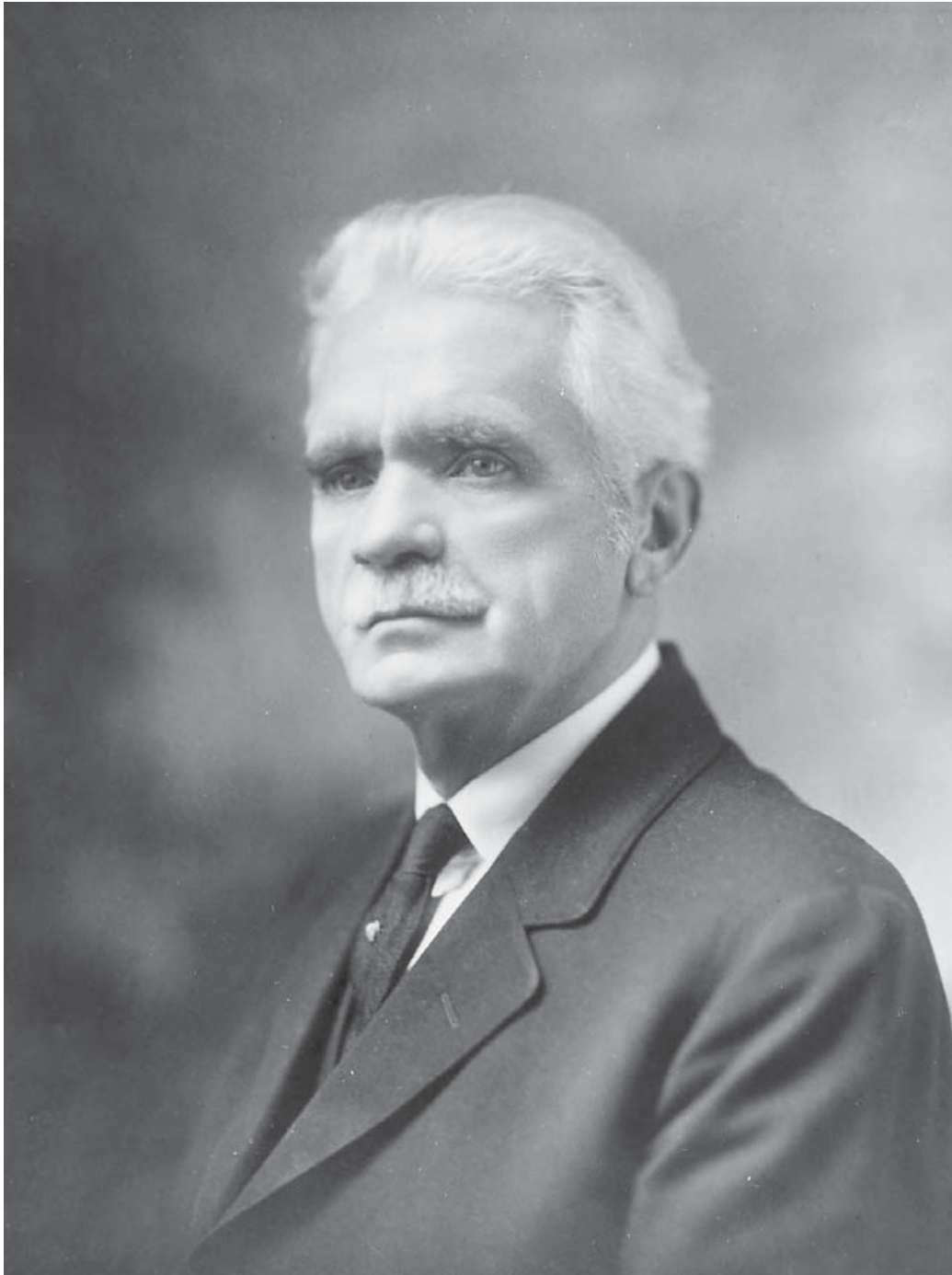


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The Truth, The Way, The Life

An
Elementary Treatise on Theology



B. H. Roberts ca. 1922. Around the time of this portrait, Roberts had been appointed Eastern States Mission president. He was sixty-five. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

The Truth, The Way, The Life

An
Elementary Treatise on Theology

by

B. H. Roberts

Second Edition

Edited by John W. Welch

Published by BYU Studies

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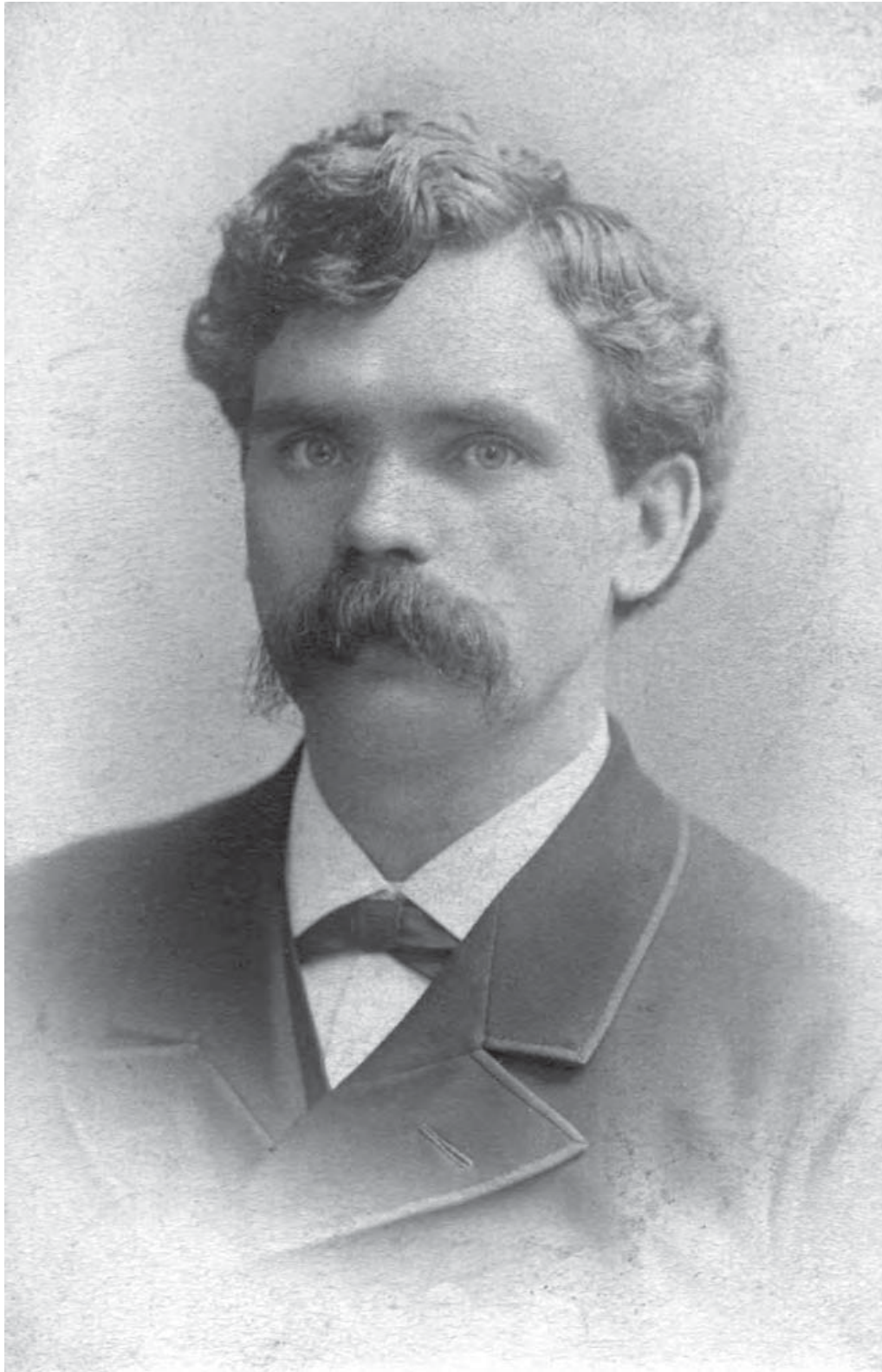
Preface and Acknowledgments

Many people deserve thanks and recognition for sharing their expertise and lending their assistance in the publication of this volume. Particular service was freely rendered by a team of scholars which was assembled to analyze several of the main topics in B. H. Roberts's manuscript and to write introductory essays about some of its salient characteristics. The group included James B. Allen, Terry B. Ball, Davis Bitton, Doris R. Dant, William E. Evenson, William J. Hamblin, Gary Layne Hatch, Truman G. Madsen, David L. Paulsen, Michael D. Rhodes, Richard C. Roberts, David Rolph Seely, Andrew C. Skinner, and John W. Welch. *BYU Studies* is very grateful to this group for their conscientious and insightful collaboration on this project. Being descendants of B. H. Roberts, Gary Hatch and Richard Roberts took added personal interest in their tasks. For example, Richard Roberts made a photocopy of Roberts's personal Bible available for consultation and also added family photographs to this publication. Each member of this group made valuable contributions to this volume.

BYU Studies also gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following other people and organizations in making this publication possible: the members of the *BYU Studies* editorial staff, John W. Welch, Doris R. Dant, Daryl R. Hague, Marny K. Parkin, and Karl F. Batdorff; Howard A. Christy, Jennifer Harrison, and Elizabeth Watkins of BYU Scholarly Publications; many student interns and volunteers, especially Angela Ashurst-McGee, NiCole Barzee, Valerie Bertch, Troy Blair, Kim Borders, Christina Broberg, Emily Buhrlay, Anita Cramer, Mandy Dalton, Laurel Davis, Jennifer Day, John M. Engler, Rosalynde Frandsen, Steve Harper, Sarah Hatch, Jennifer Hurlbut, Doug Larson, Tanya Levin, Michelyn Lyster, Jennifer Nyland, Nathan Oman, David Pace, Chad Peterson, Sara Pfister, Kelli Robison, Lu Ann Snyder, and Jane Young, with particular recognition to Keith Clayton for researching the sources used by Roberts and preparing the bibliography and appendix II, and to John Maddox for verifying the scriptures cited; Gary P. Gillum, who prepared the subject index; and members of the research staff in the LDS Church Historical Department, notably Larry Draper, Bill Slaughter, and Steve Sorensen.

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Finally, *BYU Studies* acknowledges the kind and ample assistance of the administration at Brigham Young University and of the Commissioner of the Church Educational System. Their steady support over the last thirty-five years has made possible the many publications of this scholarly LDS journal.



B. H. Roberts ca. 1888. Roberts published his first book, *The Gospel*, in 1888 while serving in England as editor of the *Millennial Star*. He was photographed by Brown, Barnes and Bell in either Liverpool or London. Courtesy Richard Roberts.

Introduction

John W. Welch

Welcome to *The Truth, The Way, The Life*. This work of study and faith invites the modern reader to step back several decades in time, take out the scriptures, think about the world and the gospel of Jesus Christ, ask the age-old questions about the purposes of life, and pay close attention as Elder B. H. Roberts unfolds the crisscrossing paths of his most cherished doctrinal truths and most treasured philosophical thoughts.

The Truth, The Way, The Life (TWL) has grown on me as *BYU Studies* has prepared this work for publication from its three drafts held in the Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City. Although *TWL*'s style and content are in some respects seriously dated, the work as a whole is engaging, imaginative, energetic, and interesting in many ways. Roberts is right on many points, wrong on some,¹ and obsolete on others. *TWL* is to Roberts's lifework on doctrinal topics what his *Comprehensive History of the Church* is to his historical studies.

In these introductory pages, I offer a few general comments about *TWL*, its contents, character, historical settings, and sources, as well as a description of the editorial procedures used in producing this volume. The subsequent analytic essays by Davis Bitton, Gary Hatch, Doris Dant, Truman Madsen, David Paulsen, William Evenson, William Hamblin, David Seely, Andrew Skinner, Richard Roberts, Michael Rhodes, and James Allen discuss further specific features of this work and its history.² The topics of some of these essays warranted extended discussion; others required only brief mention. Several of these scholars have also provided annotations to the chapters of *TWL* treated in their essays, with Terry Ball supplying a number of footnotes dealing with scientific subjects.

General Contents and Character

TWL is Roberts's personal effort to summarize the plan of salvation from beginning to end. Building upon scriptural authority, contemporary

scientific theory and evidence, and his own prior works on Church history and doctrine, Roberts systematically articulates a coherent view of God's great plan of life. Usually orthodox, but at times idiosyncratic and speculative, this book is a singular effort to express basic Latter-day Saint doctrines in a style reminiscent of certain theological treatises that circulated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

TWL was written mainly in 1927 and 1928³ toward the end of the author's very distinguished lifetime of Church service (Roberts served as one of the seven Presidents of the Seventy from 1888 until his death in 1933). Elder Roberts was a prolific writer. Intending this book to synthesize his main doctrinal writings and teachings, Roberts covers a wide range of topics in *TWL*'s introduction and fifty-five chapters. Topics include philosophy, cosmology, astronomy, natural law, metaphysics, intelligence, pluralism, intergalactic communication, ethics, theology, revelation, prophecies about Jesus Christ, world religions, ancient civilizations, the Creation, paleontology, prehistoric man, the origin of Adam and Eve, the Fall, biblical history, the atonement and resurrection of Jesus Christ, baptism, the sacrament, the Sermon on the Mount, and the commandments of God. This work is significant as a formative effort to synthesize into one coherent whole all that Roberts considered to be main Latter-day Saint gospel doctrines, together with related implications drawn from anything else that was known about the cosmos, where we came from, why we are here, how God reveals truth to people on this earth, how people have fallen away from God's light, and how the atonement of Jesus offers the way back to eternal life and exaltation.

In 1993, Elder Boyd K. Packer encouraged all members of the Church to seek greater understanding of God's great plan of happiness. Speaking especially to Church teachers, Elder Packer assigned each instructor to prepare a personal synopsis or overview of the plan of salvation setting forth the eternal principles that give meaning to life on this earth. He cautioned: "At first you may think that a simple assignment. I assure you, it is not. Brevity and simplicity are remarkably difficult to achieve. At first you will be tempted to include too much. The plan in its fullness encompasses every gospel truth."⁴ In the final analysis, *TWL* is Elder Roberts's attempt to give just such a synopsis; it was an ambitious undertaking. This tome is tangible proof that brevity and simplicity are difficult to achieve when trying to circumscribe into one great whole the entire plan of existence, as Elder Packer rightly stated.

Many verses of scripture speak of God's "way" in terms of "truth" and "life."⁵ Roberts adapted the title of this work from one such verse,

where Jesus declares: “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). While several chapters in *TWL* focus strongly and specifically on Christ as the emanating essence of all truth and life throughout the cosmos, Roberts also understands these terms *truth*, *way*, and *life* very broadly: *Truth* is all knowledge of things past, present, and future, particularly knowledge of the eternal plan that frames the gospel of Jesus Christ; the *Way* is that plan, embracing the Fall, the mortal existence, and the redemption of God’s children through the atonement of Jesus Christ; the *Life* means several things, including obedience to all the commandments of the gospel, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles, and life eternal with God and like God in celestial exaltation. The high degree of overlap between these definitions of truth, way, and life, together with their convergence in Jesus Christ, accounts for the extensive overlapping and repetition of themes throughout *TWL*.

Church leaders thoroughly considered *TWL* for possible use as a Melchizedek Priesthood manual, briefly as an adult Sunday School text, and later as an MIA study guide. After a careful one-year review by a committee of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1929, whose comments are included below in footnotes to the text,⁶ the work was found unsuited for official Church uses. This decision, which Roberts accepted with disappointment, was due mainly to a few speculative assertions in this work that proved insufficiently persuasive. The detailed essay by James Allen (681–720) presents for the first time the historical details of this particular review, which was similar to earlier reviews given by the Church to works of Widtsoe, Talmage, and others.⁷

One problem encountered in *TWL* by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve was Roberts’s belief that a huge cataclysm totally destroyed all plant, animal, and humanlike life on this planet before the coming of Adam and Eve, who opened a new dispensation. This destruction of all life supposedly explained why Adam and Eve were commanded to “replenish” the earth.⁸ Roberts also suggested that Adam and Eve were translated beings brought here from another world. Although Roberts and his brethren were in complete agreement on virtually all other significant points in *TWL*, and although Roberts’s views about the creation of Adam and Eve were not entirely novel, in these areas Roberts went farther than he or any of his predecessors had gone before, and that move overstepped the limits of secure scriptural knowledge.

Specifically, Roberts pushed too far when he postulated that a great pre-Adamic cataclysm had occurred on *this* earth. Nineteenth-century LDS writers (including Roberts himself) had commonly suggested before 1929 that this earth was created from pieces of *other*

worlds recycled by God in organizing this planet. Under that theory, evidence in the rock record of prehistoric life did not imply that death had occurred on this sphere before the fall of Adam and Eve. But by asserting that death occurred on this planet before the Fall and by arguing that Adam and Eve, as imported beings from other worlds, were not immortal before the Fall, Roberts appeared to contradict certain scriptures, especially 2 Nephi 2:22: "If Adam had not transgressed, . . . all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created." Rather than change his manuscript to remove all the traces and ramifications of his theory, the seventy-five-year-old Roberts preferred to have the work remain unpublished.

Readers today might wonder why Roberts was unwilling to eliminate a few offensive points in order to preserve what he and others thought to be some of his best work, a volume to which he had devoted substantial time and effort. Perhaps the reason was just stubbornness, but actually Roberts made a few changes in response to the requests of the committee. In at least eleven cases, the manuscripts show some evidence that Roberts revised his text, presumably anticipating or responding to concerns of the committee. For example, the committee questioned Roberts's claim in chapter 1 for the superiority of Joseph Smith's definition of truth; Draft 3 includes a handwritten elaboration by Roberts strengthening his claim of that definition's uniqueness. Apparently in response to the committee's comment in chapter 16, Roberts deleted his claim that the seeds of life, in addition to the seeds of death, were found in the tree of life in the Garden of Eden (158). Perhaps attempting to clarify his thinking about intelligence and spirit in chapter 27, Roberts inserted "intelligences as spirits" into one sentence (261); and where the committee found the use of the terms *mind*, *spirit*, and *soul* confusing in that same chapter, Roberts wrote by hand on Draft 3, "these terms are often used interchangeably in the scriptures" (267). Where the committee called for support regarding Roberts's theory of pre-Adamites, he added a list of corroborative sources and an addendum to Draft 2, which he read at a meeting of the Quorum of the Twelve on January 7, 1931 (318–22). Thus, although Roberts was sometimes agitated and stood his ground on most of his points (many of which have been proven by subsequent scholarship to be suspect or erroneous), one should not think that Roberts was unresponsive to criticism or that the committee was unreasonable or unjustified in their concerns. But in the final analysis, Roberts undoubtedly felt that eliminating the major points in controversy would destroy the genius of the entire work and that

altering the manuscript would be very difficult, given the extensive interdependence of its many logically interrelated parts. Indeed, readers should look for the extensive internal coherence of this interwoven volume in order to understand why Roberts felt that the entire argument was an integrated whole. Removing chapter 31 from the work, for example, could not be accomplished without disrupting many other parts of the text.

The interconnectedness of *TWL*, and hence this potential for disrupting the text, can be illustrated in several ways. In the opening chapters of *TWL* Roberts argues for communication and continuity between this world and other worlds in the cosmos. The motivation behind this argument is not apparent to the reader until later, when Roberts uses the idea of continuity to support the possibility that Adam and Eve and other life forms were brought to this earth from other worlds. In chapter 3, Roberts establishes the principle of the reign of law throughout the universe. This concept later becomes a fundamental element in Roberts's explanation of the Atonement in chapters 40–45, which chapters are heavily oriented toward a legalistic explanation of the Atonement's satisfaction of the demands of justice through a merciful sacrifice. The theme of replenishing the earth, which figures so prominently in the Creation account in this work, reappears in chapter 55, which deals with the importance of marriage in the Adamic race down to the present day. Even polygamy is explained in terms of evolutionary principles: the inspiring motive for polygamy was a "divinely ordered species of eugenics" (557). Echoes and repetitions come almost to the point of redundancy in certain cases, reappearing and reverberating throughout this manuscript. The challenge of trying to remove even one or two of the pivotal concepts from this work would have presented Roberts with a formidable challenge, a time-consuming task, and in many ways would have destroyed the character of the work. Roberts's reluctance to modify the document in any substantial respect, therefore, should not come as a surprise.

In the end, the issue of pre-Adamic humanlike life and death on this earth was not resolved one way or the other by the Church. On April 5, 1931, the First Presidency stated, "Neither side of the controversy has been accepted as a doctrine at all." Regarding pre-Adamic death in the plant and animal kingdoms, Talmage delivered a speech in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on August 9, 1931, that assumed as much. But Talmage remained less definite than Roberts. Talmage considered the question as to when this world began "unanswerable," and he went only so far as to say that "animals . . . lived and died, age after age, while the earth was unfit for human habitation."⁹ All else, he said, constituted theories that

“come, endure for a season and go, like the fungi of the night,” and thus we should “not try to wrest the scriptures in an attempt to explain away what we cannot explain.”¹⁰ His speech was published in the LDS Church News section of the *Deseret News* on November 21, 1931, and in pamphlet form by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints soon afterwards, with approval by the First Presidency.¹¹

While several questions about the Creation have not been answered as doctrines of the Church, the amount of controversy among the General Authorities of the Church surrounding the pre-Adamite issue and the review of Roberts’s volume has probably been exaggerated in the literature. As James Allen’s historical essay demonstrates, the memos and correspondence concerning these differences of opinion show that Roberts and all the other General Authorities affirmed their love toward one another and assured the absence of hard feelings as they vigorously and responsibly wrestled with the puzzles of cosmology and cosmogony. Essentially, statements of the First Presidency on the beginnings of the universe have looked away from the unknowns and have focused attention on affirming God’s primary role in the creation of this earth and the eternal origin of human beings as sons and daughters of God.¹²

Readers will undoubtedly find the coverage of some topics in *TWL* to be superficial. In spite of the length of the book, it is so inclusive that it can cover many subjects only very briefly. Roberts intended this book to be a comprehensive overview. Of topics that he had covered in previous publications (see pages 735–42 below), he often gives here only a synopsis or précis. In this regard, *TWL* tells readers important things about Elder Roberts. Here readers may find the points he considered most significant, the driving purposes behind the prior works, and the connections that logically link his concepts together.

To a considerable degree, Roberts produced an encyclopedia in *TWL*; many sections could serve as an encyclopedia entry. Modern readers may be interested to compare numerous entries in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* with Roberts’s treatment of the same or similar topics.¹³ Although many of its themes could certainly be developed further, *TWL* is probably the most encyclopedic doctrinal effort by a Latter-day Saint before Bruce R. McConkie’s *Mormon Doctrine* (1st ed., 1958).

Intellectual Historical Settings

TWL is an interesting artifact in the intellectual history of the Church. In many ways, it reflects the spirit of the times that produced it.

It is both a monument to the theological life's work of Elder B. H. Roberts and a window into the intellectual history of a stage in the history of the Church when the Church's highest councils emerged from the pioneer era to countenance modernity. There is much to ponder here. Roberts mixes powerful chapters solidly grounded in responsible interpretation of LDS scripture with sections spruced with speculation, inferences, and selective argumentation in order to present data and to arrange ideas to fit into an overall doctrinal construct.

Readers should contemplate the background of *TWL* from many angles of intellectual history. In the religious history of America, the decade of the 1920s has been described as “ten restless years roaring from jubilation to despair amid international and domestic dislocation, . . . a tragic display of obscurantism, superficiality, complacency, and futile conflict.”¹⁴ For example, Roberts wrote in the late 1920s surrounded by a shell of protective optimism. World War I had been a success as far as Roberts was concerned. He himself had served as a chaplain in France and appears to have come away from the atrocities of Verdun and the Maginot Line unscathed by the pessimism and existential despair that would soon rack Europe. He wrote most of this work before the October 1929 crash of Wall Street. In 1927 in Brooklyn, where Roberts worked, the world was booming, and the idea of progress was thriving, almost raging, out of control. Books like Bury's *The Idea of Progress* held out the invincibly attractive prospect that human civilization was destined for almost Utopian perfection.¹⁵ For example, in words that Roberts would have applauded, Bury boldly asserted: “The idea of human Progress then is a theory which involves a synthesis of the past and a prophecy of the future. It is based on an interpretation of history which regards man as slowly advancing—*pedetentim progredientes*—in a definite and desirable direction, and infers that this progress will continue indefinitely.”¹⁶ The idea of progress was seen as an optimistic theory, not only in biological quarters, but also in politics, sociology, and ethics, largely due to the works of Spencer (who is frequently quoted by Roberts), the most conspicuous interpreter of evolution as an optimistic and universal principle. While recognizing that the final articulation of the laws of progress remained for future thinkers to accomplish, Bury was confident that in “nearly every civilised country, . . . indefinite progress is generally assumed as an axiom,” even to the point that it was considered to be “a current creed.”¹⁷ The idealistic politics of national socialism in Germany and communism in Russia had not yet deteriorated into the atrocious totalitarianism that soon would arise under Hitler and Stalin. The Great Depression had not yet taken its toll, while

recent advances in communications and transportation had given Roberts and his world the exuberant confidence that little or nothing could not be known about the world and conquered by humanity.

Roberts clearly saw many reasons for optimism within a Latter-day Saint context. A spirit of unbridled optimism and unending hope permeates *TWL*. The benevolence of God, an optimistic and purposeful universe, the divine potential of human beings to progress to become as the gods, and the continuity that Roberts saw between this world and the eternal worlds made it possible for Roberts to argue that we can know what the eternal worlds are like by extrapolating from what we know about things as they appear to us in this world.

At the same time, Mormonism had emerged only a few decades earlier from its pioneer isolation. Utah became a state in 1896, and most Utahns wanted to become recognized and accepted members of the religious and intellectual world. In light of Roberts's political career, his involvement with the military, and his mission presidency in New York (1922–27), Roberts felt this public pressure as much or more than anyone else in the Church. His efforts to use the scholarly sources of his day and his desire to cast Mormonism in a mold that would be familiar to the thinkers of his day, that would ring similar to their scholarly modes of discourse, can be understood as part of a larger desire among some members of the Church at the time to achieve recognition from the world, at least to the extent of being able to carry on intelligent and well-grounded conversations with others, especially on religious topics.

Writing and reading works on “natural theology” was popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of the books in the library of B. H. Roberts was Paley's *Natural Theology*. Scanning the table of contents to Paley's book sheds light on the coverage of *TWL*. (Roberts subtitled his work “An Elementary Treatise on Theology,” but modern readers will find that only a small portion of *TWL* deals with God or current theological subjects as such.) Paley's respectable treatise on natural theology covers such topics as evolution, plants, animals, gross anatomy, animal instincts, chemical elements, astronomy, and many other features of the natural world before it finally, in the concluding chapters, employs these natural phenomena to develop theological propositions about the attributes, unity, and goodness of God. It is evident that *TWL* attempts to produce a similar theological synthesis, only it begins with a limited set of natural phenomena, namely truths which Roberts took to be irrefutable, and then derives from them theological propositions consistent with Mormon doctrines about the universe, the eternal nature of matter-energy, natural law,

creation as a process of organization, the premortal existence of human intelligences and spirits, and on into the full plan of salvation and the salvation history of the world. The doctrinal ends are different for Paley and Roberts, but their basic strategies and methodologies are similar.

The foregoing examples are offered only by way of illustration. Many other approaches to various parts of *TWL* can be imagined and should be explored. The essay by Davis Bitton (561–57) contributes several further ideas, not only about the intellectual contexts of *TWL*, but also personal dimensions of Roberts as an individual thinker and Church leader. Truman Madsen’s essay (595–617) explains Roberts’s philosophical background, his logic, epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. David Paulsen’s essay (619–32) analyzes his theology, his doctrines of eternalism, creation, Godhead, and godhood. William Evenson’s analysis (633–53) explores *TWL* with respect to science and religion, the physical universe, theories of creation, and evolution. Each of these studies places Roberts into the broad context of various intellectual disciplines.

Audiences

Another important part of understanding *TWL* is identifying its audience. The essays by Gary Hatch (569–77) and Doris Dant (579–94) give insights into the rhetoric and language of this work and grapple with the question of audience. Roberts’s intended audience in this book is unclear: was it an adult LDS audience, Mormon youth, readers outside the Church, or simply himself? Probably it was all of the above. Determining from chapter to chapter whom Roberts is addressing is not always easy. Once the work was completed, Roberts felt that it would be a great boon to all audiences within the Church; the book, however, would not appeal to many young readers, and presumably, it would have been heavy reading for many adults.

Sometimes Roberts appears to be addressing audiences outside the Church, explaining to them what Latter-day Saints believe. Similarly, although he usually cites the scriptures without any qualification as to their authoritativeness and absolute truth, he sometimes introduces them so as to be inoffensive to a person who did not have strong faith in the scriptures. Roberts does this especially in the early chapters of the book. He referred to Genesis 1 as containing “alleged revelations,” although he crossed out the word *alleged* in his proofreading (73). He speaks of “alleged descent to and appearances of God to men,” even in a section that he titles as actual visitations (115). He speaks of a revelation to Lehi as being “represented as” such (259). In most of the work,

however, he assumes that his readers believe that the four standard works are all authoritative and reliable, and he quotes them implicitly without any qualifications. In chapter 27, he extends this rhetorical style of appearing to accommodate an unpersuaded audience even by stating that innocence is only “impliedly unproductive of ‘joy’” (266). Roberts is willing to entertain and advance ideas in a cautious mode, at least on some occasions. Throughout most of the work, however, Roberts approaches his audience firmly, logically, and unhesitatingly.

Today, several audiences may be attracted to this book. To be sure, it will be of greatest interest to people interested in the life and thought of Elder B. H. Roberts. *TWL* is important in understanding what was being written and discussed in the Church in the early years of the twentieth century. But several of Roberts’s lines of reasoning are not likely to be quoted as authoritative propositions today, either for their scientific theories or for their doctrinal expositions. Some LDS readers are not likely to be overly impressed with a number of Roberts’s personal opinions, which he readily admitted were not “absolutely accurate or beyond fault. . . . My books are all down on the human plane and likely to be faulty. I proclaim them as such. They are only of value and useful as they may be in harmony with God’s revealed word; and as such I have always held them to be.”¹⁸ Other LDS readers are not likely to agree with other parts of this work, for its approach is often extremely literal, relying heavily and primarily on long quotations from the scriptures and augmenting them with selected materials from certain writings of the day. Those who might have hoped that this work would reveal a new side of Elder Roberts that championed organic evolution will be let down to find that he continued to reject, to the end of his life, all scientific or naturalistic varieties of evolution (239). Those who wished to see Roberts as a friend of abortion because he claims that the spirit does not enter the body until birth should note not only his limited scriptural authority for this proposition, as mentioned in the committee’s comments (246–47), but also Roberts’s abhorrence toward abortion expressed twice in his chapter on marriage and family (548, 553).

Those readers who will likely be most excited by this publication are scholars or students particularly interested in the intellectual history of the Church. For them, this work is a gold mine. Detecting the real issues that Roberts is addressing (his problems are not always our problems, and his problems are not always readily apparent), sorting out the internal coherence and extensive interrelatedness of his arguments, hearing the cadence of his rhetoric (often this work must be

read aloud to be understood—it is oratory on paper), noticing the limits of his logic (his frequent assertion of things that are “undoubtedly true,” and his fluid shifts from logic into emotion), and discovering many other fascinating exercises in analysis and appreciation will challenge even the most astute reader of this work.

Many readers will especially identify with Roberts’s impassioned description of the concept of joy:

The “joy” contemplated herein is to arise out of a man’s knowledge of evil, of sin; through knowing misery, sorrow, pain, and suffering; through seeing good and evil locked in awful conflict; through a consciousness of having chosen in that conflict the better part, the good (which will include the true and the beautiful); and not only in having chosen it, but in having wedded it by eternal compact; . . . from experiencing all the emotions of which mind is susceptible; from testing all the qualities and strength of the intellect. A “joy” that will come to man from a contemplation of the universe, and a consciousness that he is an heir to all that is, a joint heir with Jesus Christ and God the Father; from knowing that he is an essential part of all that is. It is a “joy” that will be born of the consciousness of existence itself, that will revel in existence, in thoughts of realization of existence’s limitless possibilities. (266)

This being his definition of *joy*, Roberts must have derived deep enjoyment from his writing of *TWL*. It is a sincere expression of deep-felt spiritual and intellectual love and appreciation for the panorama provided by the gospel of Jesus Christ on the full spectrum of purposeful existence. He would hope that all readers would find similar joy by contemplating and experiencing all that he sets forth in *TWL*.

Roberts’s Use of Sources

TWL gives prominence both to science and revelation, but for Roberts the latter takes priority both logically and spiritually. Examining Roberts’s scholarly sources, most of which are of course severely dated, yields a number of insights into his education, methodologies, and opinions. All references cited by Roberts anywhere in this volume have been gathered into the bibliography at the end of this edition (743–52). They comprise an interesting and eclectic library.

In preparing this volume for publication, all sources and quotes have been located and checked as far as practicable. Many of the books and articles listed on the bibliography are held in the B. H. Roberts Memorial Library, a rare-book collection in the LDS Church Archives.

We appreciate the valuable, expert assistance of the staff of the Historical Department in identifying these materials. The remaining sources were usually to be found in local university libraries or through interlibrary loan, but sometimes Roberts left insufficient data for all of his sources to be found.

Because Roberts cites a significant number of scholarly works in *TWL*, some readers may assume that Roberts is trying to harmonize or reconcile science and religion in this work. Readers will need to form their own opinions about the mind of B. H. Roberts on the relationship between revelation and science. On most occasions, however, it seems that Roberts is interested in scientific ideas only to the extent that they corroborate revealed truths. Roberts was uncomfortable even with the word “reconciliation.” In chapter 31, for example, in editing the work, Roberts crossed out the word “reconciliation” and inserted “adjustment” in discussing relations “between man’s discoveries and the records of scripture” (317).

Roberts read his sources selectively. Where he found support for concepts in the then-prevailing views of science, astronomy, history, theology, philosophy, psychology, or other disciplines, he readily latched on to helpful passages. Comments Roberts left in the margins of his books register strong reactions, sometimes favorable but other times hostile, toward claims made by the authors. These marginal notes show that he resoundingly rejected assertions in these sources whenever they conflicted with his views of the gospel and its revealed scriptures.

At the beginning of each chapter, Roberts recommended selected scriptures and other works as general background readings. He called all of these introductions a “scripture lesson reading.” Many of the references, however, direct the reader to nonscriptural sources. Most of the suggested references merely repeat the sources cited in the chapter’s footnotes, but occasionally, especially in the early chapters, additional items are recommended. In the bibliography below, all such works are identified with the codes R1, R2, etc., indicating the chapters for which each source is recommended as background reading.

Roberts’s comments in *TWL* about his sources yield some interesting insights into the nature and intended purpose of this work. Roberts hoped that *TWL* would encourage readers to become better educated by examining for themselves the latest scientific evidences and scholarly theories. But in recommending certain works, Roberts cautioned readers to consult these references with discernment and to study them critically: “with discrimination; not accepting either all the premises laid down, or the conclusions reached” (37).

He disclaimed accepting these references “as conclusive authorities (except as to citations to the scriptures)” (69).

One must wonder, however, to what extent Roberts actually expected his readers to consult these sources. In many cases, the sources would have been very hard for an average reader to find, and in some chapters the proposed reading assignments are unreasonably broad. For example, for chapter 3, Roberts suggests that the reading of “any general work on psychology” (29) would be good preparation for the study of that chapter. Evidently Roberts gave the general audience a great deal of credit, both in terms of diligence in seeking out these materials and in the ability to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of arguments. In many of the early chapters, one senses that a rather specialized, religiously neutral audience was intended; in many of the later chapters, however, Roberts seems to be addressing a very general, but primarily LDS audience. As he moves farther into the work, he gives fewer and fewer references, and in some chapters none at all besides general scripture assignments.

Roberts’s Use of Scriptures

By far, the most important sources Roberts used are the four LDS standard works. *TWL* explicitly accepts the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price as having “equal authority, all of them dependable sources of knowledge” (276). Although other sources “can be consulted sometimes with profit,” they do not sustain Roberts’s conclusions which, he says, are “so largely influenced by the ‘new knowledge’ brought to light by the Prophet of the New Dispensation, Joseph Smith” (351).

A glance at the scripture index below (753–64) shows that nearly twelve hundred scriptures are cited, and some of them are quoted extensively. They come from the four standard works in approximately the following percentages:

Old Testament	21.0%
New Testament	48.0%
Book of Mormon	9.4%
Doctrine & Covenants	12.2%
Pearl of Great Price	9.4%

Roberts draws most heavily upon Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, the Gospels of John and Matthew, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the letters of John, 2 Nephi, Doctrine and Covenants sections 88 and 93, and the books of Abraham and Moses.

Roberts usually quoted the scriptures accurately, but he sometimes modernized the King James language and blended his quotes into the flow of his own rhetoric. His scriptural interpretations were sometimes tendentious and self-serving, but usually his readings were very literal and tight. The notes and essays below by William Hamblin (652–53), David Seely (654–62), Andrew Skinner (663–70), Richard Roberts (671–76), and Michael Rhodes (677–79) explain specific aspects of Roberts’s use and view of the scriptures, especially in regard to the history of religions, revelation, apostasy, the Old Testament, the Atonement, the New Testament, and the New Dispensation of the gospel.

In general, Roberts did not accept or practice the higher criticism of the Bible current in his day. He makes no use of higher critical methods in *TWL*. One might be tempted to think that if Roberts had only known more about higher criticism he would have somehow embraced the theory; but ample evidence proves that Roberts knew and essentially rejected higher criticism of the Old and New Testaments, especially when it was enlisted in an attempt to discredit the Book of Mormon.

In 1911 Roberts published an article in the *Improvement Era* entitled “Higher Criticism and the Book of Mormon.”¹⁹ His views, as manifested in *TWL*, do not differ from the position he took in 1911. In that article, while acknowledging that higher criticism had some good to offer, Roberts began by affirming the reality of prophecy as “history reversed,” realizing that practitioners of critical studies would already be “smiling at such a statement.”²⁰ He willingly renewed his claim that “the Book of Mormon must submit to every test, literary criticism with the rest. Indeed, it must submit to every analysis and examination. It must submit to historical tests, to the tests of archaeological research and also to the higher criticism.”²¹ Roberts exhorted believers to “carry themselves in a spirit of patience and of courage,” and testified that through stress and struggle in studying the Book of Mormon he had arrived at “an absolute conviction of its truth.”²²

Roberts addressed and rejected the arguments of higher criticism. First, he objected that “heavy weights are hung upon very slender threads! The methods, then, of higher criticism we recognize as proper; but we must disagree as to the correctness of many of the conclusions arrived at by that method.”²³ Second, he argued that the Book of Mormon should be used as evidence for dating Isaiah, not vice versa. Third, he pointed out that “the science, so called, of chronology is quite uncertain in its conclusions, and I think I shall be able to satisfy you upon that point; and that this supposed disagreement between higher criticism and the Book of Mormon, as to chronology, is not a point of sufficient moment on which to attempt to overthrow the integrity or

truth of an ancient volume of scripture.”²⁴ Roberts examined alleged chronological discrepancies between the findings of higher critics and the Book of Mormon dating for the reign of Zedekiah and for the birth of Jesus but found the problems to be inconsequential. Fourth, he addressed the problem of Deutero-Isaiah: “Now, here is a real difficulty,” he begins.²⁵ After quoting Driver’s basic conclusions, Roberts told his audience that if they would “read the arguments at length, I promise you that the effect upon your mind of the detailed consideration of the arguments will be to dissipate this strength, it will not appear as strong as it does in these brief and general statements.”²⁶

Why were the critics’ arguments weak? Basically, Roberts argued, because the theory assumes the impossibility of miracles: “Higher critics, as a rule, insist that the miraculous does not happen, that wherever the miraculous appears, there you must halt, and dismiss the miraculous parts of narratives, since they suggest fraud on the one hand and credulity upon the other.”²⁷

After retorting that no candidate to replace Isaiah as the author of Deutero-Isaiah had been proposed by the critics, Roberts rejected the claim of the higher critics “that there is a sharp transition as to matter and style between the 39th chapter and the 40th chapter [of Isaiah]. I modestly beg leave to differ from that conclusion,” and he gave illustrations that show that the second is “in good sequence to the first.”²⁸ In addition, Roberts credited as historical certain statements by Josephus and Jesus affirming Isaiah’s authorship of the latter chapters of the book of Isaiah, and Roberts extolled the vision and literary genius of that great prophet.

Roberts then related a story:

In conversation with one of our young men who recently returned from an eastern college, where he had come in contact with higher criticism, he remarked to me, “Yes, higher criticism shoots to pieces the Book of Mormon.” “Pardon me, my brother,” I answered, “you have misstated the matter; you mean that the Book of Mormon shoots holes into higher criticism!” And that is true. The Book of Mormon establishes the integrity and unity of authorship for the whole book of Isaiah.²⁹

After discussing the adverse effects of higher criticism on faith in Jesus Christ as preached in the New Testament, Roberts closed by predicting that advocates of the Book of Mormon would probably be the most tenacious proponents of

the integrity of the whole book of Isaiah as it now stands in the Bible, the product of the prophet of that name, the Messianic prophet *par excellence*, . . . and [they will contend] not only for

that, but for all the great historical facts concerning Messiah, and concerning the gospel of salvation through faith in and acceptance of the atonement of the Christ and obedience to His laws, since those facts were revealed to the ancient prophets upon these American continents.³⁰

Such was Roberts's view of the assumptions or applications of the prevailing theories of biblical criticism in 1911. These assertions continued to typify Roberts's faithful and vigorous approach to scripture when he wrote *TWL* and until the end of his life.

In *TWL*, Roberts goes out of his way to identify the Book of Mormon as an ancient record written by prophets who lived long ago. He repeatedly reaffirms its divine origin and antiquity, but occasionally he misses opportunities to use Book of Mormon passages that would strongly reinforce his thought. For example, Roberts makes no use of 2 Nephi 31-33, containing some of the most explicit statements in all of scripture about the plan of salvation; and he makes only isolated references to Alma 42, the most extensive scriptural passage on God's mercy and justice—even though these are salient themes in *TWL*.

Indeed, not knowing what we as editors would encounter in the manuscripts of *TWL*, I was surprised to find that *TWL* pointedly and repeatedly asserts the antiquity of the Book of Mormon. While such affirmative statements may seem unremarkable, it is precisely their routine orthodoxy that makes them so notable. Coming from one of the great intellects of the Church, whose views about the Book of Mormon supposedly became more intellectually sophisticated in his last years, these unequivocal statements will disappoint anyone who has imagined Roberts as a closet doubter or late-in-life skeptic.

TWL especially reveals how Roberts felt about the Book of Mormon after he wrote his "Book of Mormon Study" in 1922. That work identified several Book of Mormon problems and called urgently for further study.³¹ Some have seen "Book of Mormon Study" as evidence that Roberts had changed his views on the historicity of the Book of Mormon,³² but readers can now determine that Roberts did not waver in his belief because of that study.

In *TWL*, Roberts describes the miraculous coming forth of the Book of Mormon in strong, straightforward, traditional terms. For example, he says:

Three years after this first revelation an angel of God named Moroni was sent to the prophet to reveal the existence of an ancient volume of scripture known as the Book of Mormon, a book which gives an account of the hand-dealings of God with the people whom he brought to the continents of America from what we now call the "Old World." (469)

In addition Roberts affirms that “Joseph Smith was commanded to translate, and was given the power and means by which he could translate the unknown language of these ancient American peoples” (470).

TWL contains several statements that necessarily assume the antiquity and literal truthfulness of this ancient American scripture. For example, Roberts speaks literally of the words that the resurrected Jesus spoke “to the assembled Nephites to whom he appeared on the Western Continent” (482–83; compare 388, 389). Indeed, Roberts believed that “no incident in the gospel history is more emphatically proven than this great truth, the resurrection of the Son of God” (395), and he used as his key witness the appearance of the resurrected Christ to the Nephites (395).

TWL often identifies Book of Mormon prophets by the centuries in which they lived. Lehi, Roberts says, lived “before the birth of Christ, early in the fifth [*sic*] century, B.C.” (401). Roberts identifies a prophecy in the book of Alma as “one written near the close of the second century B.C.” (401). Moreover, Roberts goes out of his way to describe the book’s authors as “ancient.” He calls Lehi “an ancient American Prophet” (75). He cites “revelations of God to the ancient inhabitants of America” (275). He calls the book “the American volume of Scripture,” written by “the old prophets of the ancient American race” (259; see also 21, 152, 263, 275, 427, 445). He also treats many Book of Mormon passages as the unique, authoritative source of revealed knowledge on important topics. He takes joy in drawing attention to doctrines “derived almost wholly from the teachings of the Book of Mormon” (444). He extols it as a masterful work. Of a Book of Mormon reading he exclaims, “how beautifully clear this principle of purity in thought is set forth” (501).

In a handwritten note on his third draft of *TWL*, Roberts penned the following note: “add ‘other sheep I have’—Christ mission to Western continents. St. John. 10 ch.” (179). This note was added as Roberts went through the manuscript one of the last times. There can be little doubt that the man who wrote such words about the Book of Mormon believed it to be what it claims to be. If Roberts had harbored any doubts, he would not have repeatedly written such words in this work, a work which he considered his magnum opus. Surely this final treatise from the prolific career of B. H. Roberts should also be the final word on his belief in the truth of this “ancient volume of scripture known as the Book of Mormon.”

Roberts was similarly emphatic about the truth and value of the teachings of the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. He praises section 93 for its superior comprehension of the definition

of truth and its incomparable disclosures about eternal intelligences. He extols the divine origins of the books of Abraham and Moses, speaking quaintly of the latter as a “Mosaic fragment.”

Use of LDS Sources

Roberts relies very little on LDS sources outside of the scriptures. He quotes a few statements from Joseph Smith, mostly from the King Follett Discourse, and weaves in the words from a few hymns. Beyond very general references to a handful of LDS works—namely, Orson Pratt’s “Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon,” *Works on the Doctrines of the Gospel*, and “Remarkable Visions”; Parley P. Pratt’s *Key to the Science of Theology*; Franklin D. Richards’s *A Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel*; James E. Talmage’s *The Articles of Faith* and *The Great Apostasy*; John Taylor’s *Government of God*; and Osborne Widtsoe’s (John A. Widtsoe’s brother) *The Restoration of the Gospel*—no other LDS authors are mentioned. Most conspicuously absent are James E. Talmage’s *Jesus the Christ* (1915) and Joseph F. Smith’s *Gospel Doctrine* (1919).

TWL stands out in sharp relief in comparison with these other works. Unlike the broad approach taken in *TWL* to a wide range of subjects and to several avenues of revelation, Pratt’s *Key to the Science of Theology* focuses primarily on direct communication between God, angels, spirits, and men. Nevertheless, certain similarities between these two works exist: Pratt’s chapter 16 extols the progress of locomotion as evidence of intercommunication between distant planets, as does *TWL* 12; and Pratt’s final chapter 17 ends his treatise with the “Laws of Marriage and Procreation,” as does *TWL* 55. Unlike the theological approach taken in *TWL* to the divinity and atonement of the Christ, Talmage’s *Jesus the Christ* utilizes primarily a biographical and historical framework to present the doctrines of Christ’s life and mission—although Talmage’s chapter 17 and *TWL* 50–51 approach the Sermon on the Mount similarly, and Talmage’s chapter 41 finds parallels in *TWL* 47 on the visions of the Restoration. *Gospel Doctrine* is a compilation of excerpted sayings and writings; its topics include truth, revelation, God and man, and free agency, but otherwise this collection bears little resemblance to the systematic *TWL*.

By a landslide, the favorite author cited by Roberts was Roberts himself. He refers often to many of his prior publications. Although *TWL* did not see publication during Roberts’s lifetime, many chapters were either drawn extensively from or were used substantially in other books, articles, or talks that Roberts published or delivered

before his death. Thus, much here is not new to scholars who have read widely in the works of Roberts. Students of B. H. Roberts will readily recognize many points of contact between the various chapters of *TWL* and his other doctrinal works. Some chapters follow—point for point, even word for word, and footnote for footnote—Roberts’s treatment of the same topic elsewhere, whether in articles in Church magazines, in lessons outlined in priesthood manuals, or in sections of his books or talks.

Without attempting to exhaust the vast project of cross-referencing and interrelating the words and logic of *TWL* to Roberts’s other doctrinal publications, we have surveyed twenty-four of his main doctrinal titles and produced the table that appears as Appendix II below (735–42). Organized by subjects, it shows numerous points of contact between many sections of Roberts’s doctrinal expositions and substantial portions of *TWL*. These connections show a remarkable persistence and consistency in Roberts’s thought. These links to Roberts’s prior works also show that the contents of *TWL*, for the most part, were not new or surprising; they are tangible evidence of Roberts’s desire that *TWL* present a synoptic synthesis of his entire life’s theological work. Strong connections exist, for example, especially between *TWL* and Roberts’s *The Gospel and Man’s Relationship to Deity* and his five-year *Seventy’s Course in Theology*. Both of these works circulated widely throughout the Church in the early twentieth century and deserve careful examination in connection with *TWL*.

In 1888, Roberts published the first edition of *The Gospel*, which was addressed to the youth of the Church.³³ In *The Gospel*, Roberts described conversion as “an intellectual assent to [the gospel] as a grand system of truth, but also imbued with its spirit.”³⁴ This statement describes well Roberts’s overall view of the gospel in *TWL*, where the gospel is approached as the grandest of all systems in the cosmos, rich with intellectual attraction but also permeated with the spirit of God.

In *The Gospel*, Roberts quoted from the Bible, from the Lectures on Faith, and most explicitly from the testimony of the Book of Mormon. His technique—using long quotes from scripture stitched together by a few lines of general summation—is the same as in *TWL*. Many of the same themes are addressed in *The Gospel*, including opposition,³⁵ the idea of atonement being found in pagan religions,³⁶ the atonement of Christ satisfying the claims of justice,³⁷ the grand view of general salvation coupled with the elements of individual salvation, evidence of truth about God’s existence from tradition,³⁸ evidence of truth from revelation,³⁹ the character of God, his existence and attributes,⁴⁰

astronomy,⁴¹ and the premortal existence.⁴² The main topics of *The Gospel* are faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost—treatments not rehearsed again in *TWL*. Perhaps Roberts viewed these as the first principles of the gospel and his magnum opus as a treatment of the second principles of the gospel, such as loving God, loving one's neighbor, and living the laws of the New Dispensation.

Several sources Roberts used in *TWL* are also used in *The Gospel*,⁴³ which he wrote in Liverpool, England, amid the busy routines of missionary life. Undoubtedly, Roberts viewed *TWL* as a sequel to *The Gospel*, *The Gospel* being “a simple, primary treatise on the subject of its title” written expressly “to the youth of The Church.”⁴⁴ Although Roberts was pleased at the widespread use of *The Gospel* and saw its fifth edition on April 6, 1924, he was still aware “of its limitations as an exposition of the first principles of the gospel, the theme of which is so large that if all things pertaining to it were treated in written thought—everyone [*sic*]—‘I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.’”⁴⁵

In the second edition of *The Gospel*, Roberts included an article he had written for the *Contributor* entitled “Man’s Relationship to Deity.”⁴⁶ The article dealt with evolution, embryonic development, variation in species, natural selection, and other topics in a manner critical of the general theories of evolution. Specifically, Roberts pointed to the absence of intermediate transitional forms in the geological record, to the problem of sterility of hybrid species, and “to the revelations of God.”⁴⁷ He rejected even the so-called “Christian evolutionists”⁴⁸ who attempt to harmonize Christianity with the philosophy of evolution. He also explained that the six creative days were not six periods of twenty-four hours⁴⁹ and elaborated on the two creation accounts given in Genesis 1–2.⁵⁰

Rather than advocating evolution, Roberts argued that the Earth was created from fragments of another planet and that pre-Adamic races “were inhabitants of that world which was destroyed, but the evidence of their existence as well as the evidence of the existence of animals and vegetation was preserved in the re-creation of that planet to form this earth.”⁵¹ Already Roberts had embraced the ideas that Adam, a son of God, was brought to this earth and that this stage of the Creation is described in the second creation account found in Genesis 2, which begins by placing man upon the earth.⁵² Eve was then brought to Adam: “In this nothing is hinted at about man being made from the dust, and woman manufactured from a rib.”⁵³ Roberts continued by asserting that all forms of life were brought to the earth “not by the process of evolution, but by the various species suitable to the condition of the earth’s development being brought from some other and older sphere.”⁵⁴

Roberts then concluded his essay by expounding on the premortal existence of humanity, the spirit relationship between God and man, and the noble intentions of mankind. The main difference between *The Gospel's* assertions and the views in *TWL* is that the latter are more specific in locating the great cataclysm on this earth. Perhaps the earlier exposition was not theologically problematical because it entailed no death on this planet after its formation and before the fall of Adam. The latter position, however, places life and death on this earth prior to the fall of Adam. In that event, 2 Nephi 2:22 should be understood either as referring only, as Roberts argues, to life and death during the dispensation of Adam (319), or, it might also be suggested, as referring only to the mortality of Adam and Eve and their posterity, not to life and death of plants and animals in general.

From 1907 to 1911, Roberts produced *The Seventy's Course in Theology*. Extensive parallels between this work and *TWL* are noted or discussed below, especially in the essays by Madsen, Paulsen, Hamblin, Seely, and Skinner. One major difference between *Seventy's Course* and *TWL* is that the former gives essentially a skeletal outline supplemented with raw source materials, while *TWL* offers a continuous and more explanatory discourse. Thus, in many respects, Roberts's ideas—even some of those that eventually prove to be the most problematic for *TWL*—had long been in print and had widely circulated well before Roberts composed his final doctrinal treatise.

Prior Treatments of *TWL*

Shortly after Roberts's death in 1933, the Roberts family donated his library to the Church and acknowledged that *TWL* belonged to the Church. Until 1994, this massive work has remained unpublished, although portions of its final third draft have circulated without Church authorization.⁵⁵ As part of the long-standing efforts of *BYU Studies* to publish primary sources of interest to Latter-day Saint scholars, the work is now published by permission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but it is not an official publication of the Church.

As long as the full text of *TWL* remained unpublished, it spawned much intrigue and speculation that sensationalized some of its contents, and only a few scholarly publications commented on the actual manuscript. Commentators have mostly fashioned views of Roberts after their own images and likings; usually they have focused, primarily out of personal preferences, only on selected portions of *TWL* or on the rather singular exchange of interpretations that it engendered. While several of these studies have made valuable contributions, none has captured the totality of this expansive work as a whole.

For example, the first article to mention *TWL* was written in 1973 by an LDS scientist, Duane Jeffery; it discusses the Creation, the age of the earth, the fixity of species, the special creation of humans, and evolution.⁵⁶ Because Jeffery desired to promote the coexistence of science and statements made over the years by Presidents of the Church regarding creation issues, he emphasized comments by Church leaders that feature ambiguity or indeterminacy.⁵⁷ He used *TWL* essentially to argue that the Church takes no official doctrinal position on evolution, that “these matters do not directly relate to ‘salvation,’” and that this “gives Mormonism a basis for synthesis that exists in few if any other Western religions.”⁵⁸ Roberts, however, saw *TWL* as an integrated whole having much to do with salvation and all other eternal truths. While Roberts used many scientific sources, he hoped to forge a synthesis that took what is known from revealed scripture and then extended those axiomatic truths by corollaries drawn from “what we know” through logic and experience with the world. This appears to be a more complete synthesis than Jeffery had in mind.

In 1975, Truman Madsen published an article in *BYU Studies* summarizing *TWL*. Interested in the philosophy of religion, Madsen stresses the manuscript’s theological content and praises its expansive genius for “honest academic open-field running.”⁵⁹ Madsen characterized Roberts’s project particularly as an effort to comprehend Christ. But, while the doctrine of the Atonement is prominent in several chapters of *TWL*, Madsen’s orientation overemphasizes the role of Christ in other parts of the document itself. Madsen creates subheadings not used by Roberts, such as “Christ and the Cosmos” and “God, Christ, and Man,” and in many of Roberts’s chapters, one must look hard to find the bedrock of Christ beneath the superstructures of logic and texts that Roberts has constructed. Again, one seeks a more complete understanding of this massive work.

In 1978 an article by Richard Sherlock argued that “the response of Mormons to the challenge of evolutionary thought was as diverse as anything found outside of Mormondom.”⁶⁰ Above all, Sherlock sought to resist finding “unity where the story was otherwise,”⁶¹ and *TWL* allegedly supplied a prime example of confrontation and rift. While Sherlock’s point is valid that historians should not create unity where it did not exist, the opposite point is also important: historians should not exaggerate diversity beyond that which existed. In *TWL* Sherlock saw worlds in collision over “the paleontological record of life and death that supported the evolutionary superstructure of modern biology.”⁶² Furthermore, he saw the matter largely as a contest between the “scriptural literalism” of Joseph Fielding Smith and an elaborate

dispensationalist argument by B. H. Roberts. But now readers will discern the rather obvious unities that prevailed between Roberts and his brethren on most subjects and methods—unities that overrode their grappling with the one or two questions Sherlock emphasizes.

In 1985, Sterling McMurrin commented briefly on *TWL*. Viewing Roberts as a rational intellectual who was usually a writer of “uncommon good sense, determined to distinguish fact from fiction,” McMurrin described the crux of chapter 32 of *TWL* as one of Roberts’s “serious lapses,” calling his view about life forms coming to this planet from other worlds a “piece of fantasy” and an “aberration.”⁶³ While it is true that *TWL* contains some speculative and outdated ideas, it was not an isolated venture but an epitome of Roberts’s intellectual and doctrinal life’s work, including his long-held views on pre-Adamites, as Appendix II below shows (735–42, esp. 741).

In 1994 *BYU Studies* published its first edition of this work, together with a three-volume facsimile edition of its three manuscripts (these original manuscripts are discussed further on page xlv below and in the Foreword to the facsimile edition, pages iii–ix). Although general readers will not likely take great interest in consulting the original typescripts of this treatise, *BYU Studies* found that the best way to present the totality of the textual history of *TWL* was to publish a complete photocopied set of the three original drafts themselves. Historians who enjoy working extensively with primary manuscripts will find certain value in some of the pages of these drafts.

In preparing this second edition, *BYU Studies* has introduced a few new items but has tried to minimize the number of differences between this new and enlarged edition and the first edition. In this second edition, occasional typographical errors have been corrected, chapter numbers have been added to the running heads, and various comments, footnotes, and bibliographic data have been improved. A new appendix has been added (721–34), affording ready access to some additional paragraphs from the facsimile edition of Drafts 1 and 2 of *TWL*, as well as providing a summary of the 56-page memorandum that was written by Elder Joseph Fielding Smith in response to Roberts in January 1931. Finally, most of the introductory essays, which appeared as Roman-numeraled front matter in the first edition, have been moved toward the back of this volume as analytic essays, allowing the Arabic renumbering of these pages. Only in rare instances was it necessary to change any of the page layout or pagination in the body of the text of *TWL* itself.

In the future, now that the entire work can be studied more widely and readers may judge its qualities and contents for themselves, greater emphasis should be placed on the full range of main contents and

themes of this work, including revelation and truth, dispensations and apostasies, God's plan, the Creation, the Fall, the Atonement, and obedience to the commandments of God. Readers should be cautious not to judge Elder Roberts simply on the basis of their personal response to one part of this work. *TWL* is a composite. One should not mistake any single piece for the essence of the whole.

The introductory chapters in this volume strive to set this extensive and complex work into its interesting historical, intellectual, and religious contexts. Their writers have tried to anticipate questions that readers might ask as they study this book and strive to understand it:

What does Roberts mean by "the truth, the way, the life"?⁶⁴

What are his basic methods and assumptions?

What kind of logic or rhetoric does he use?

What of his use of gender discourse?

What does this book tell us about B. H. Roberts?

What are his basic views about God?

What does he believe?

Have his beliefs changed from his previous works?

How does he value revelation?

What are his basic views about science and creation?

How much speculation was he willing to entertain?

How does he use scholarly and popular sources?

How does he appraise other religions or world views?

How do his views compare with those of other LDS writers?

How does he understand the atonement of Jesus Christ?

How literally does he interpret scripture?

What are his favorite scriptures?

Why is this book historically significant?

What does this book teach us today?

What does Roberts value most, personally and for society?

Why was this book not published in 1930?

These and many other questions should be asked as readers explore with Roberts the contours and boundaries of many of the profound imponderables of God's eternal truths and marvelous creations.

While much more could be said by way of introduction, we hope that the following essays open the curtain and spotlight the key subjects that are presented by Roberts on the stage of this expansive *magnum opus*.

NOTES

¹For example, Roberts's views on physical science were not always up to date, even for the 1920s. Also, he accepted the Piltdown Man as genuine. As the case of Mark Hofmann has shown again in the 1980s, clever forgeries have misled other scholars, too.

²Davis Bitton is Professor of History at the University of Utah, and Richard Roberts (a grandson of B. H. Roberts) is Professor of History at Weber State University. All others are professors at Brigham Young University.

³Roberts began writing *TWL* in 1927 in New York, after he completed five years as president of the Eastern States Mission. Footnotes in *TWL* prove that he was still adding sources dated as late as November 1930, and the second draft of chapter 31 was modified and used as his fifty-page presentation to the Quorum of the Twelve in January 1931. Correspondence shows that he was still working on that chapter in 1932.

⁴CES Religious Educators' Symposium (August 1993).

⁵For example, Ps. 86:11; 119:30; Prov. 6:23; 10:17; 12:28; 15:24; Jer. 21:8; Matt. 7:14; 2 Ne. 10:23; Ether 4:12.

⁶The committee's comments come from an undated document entitled "Doctrinal points questioned by the Committee which read the Manuscript of Elder B. H. Roberts, entitled—The Truth, The Way, The Life." A copy of this memorandum was given to Roberts. In addition, George Albert Smith submitted a report to the Quorum of the Twelve on October 10, 1929, paraphrasing the objections and stating them more tactfully. Also, a one-page "List of Points on Doctrine in Question by the Committee in Relation to B. H. Robert's Ms." was prepared and transmitted to the First Presidency on May 15, 1930. The comments from these documents are found below, pages 22, 43–44, 51, 52, 158, 246–47, 261, 263, 267, 278, 292, 297, 325, 326, 340, 343, 353, 355, 356, 364, 378, 383, 384, 406, 409, 410, 418, 457, 472, 502.

⁷Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 279–81.

⁸In his January 14, 1931, report, Joseph Fielding Smith rightly showed, with regret, that Orson Hyde (whom Roberts follows) had been wrong about this point on several grounds, including the meaning of the underlying Hebrew, which means *fill*, not *refill*. See page 294 below.

⁹James E. Talmage, "Earth and Man," *Millennial Star* 93 (December 31, 1931): 849, 850.

¹⁰Talmage, "Earth and Man," 858, 852. See also 859: "As to how were formed the bodies of the first human beings to take tabernacles, the revealed word gives no details while science has practically nothing to offer by way of explanation"; and 863, "Science has nothing to say" on such matters as man being the child of God and of this earth becoming celestialized; "it can neither refute nor prove."

¹¹The *Deseret News* article indicated that "this address may be obtained in pamphlet form from the office of the LDS Church." The First Presidency reviewed the speech on November 16 and 17, 1931, making slight changes and authorizing its publication; see James E. Talmage's journal and Heber J. Grant's diary. In addition to its further publication in *Millennial Star* mentioned above, the speech was also reprinted in *Instructor* 100 (December 1965): 474–77 and 101 (January 1966): 9–11, 15.

¹²First Presidency Minutes, April 5, 1931. See also “Evolution and the Origin of Man,” packet approved for use at Brigham Young University by BYU Board of Trustees, June 1992.

¹³For example, Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), contains entries on Abraham, Adam, agency, anti-polygamy legislation, apostasy, archeology, astronomy, atonement of Jesus Christ, authority, beatitudes, Bible, birth control, blacks, Book of Abraham, Book of Mormon, Cain, commandments, Creation, creeds, dispensation of the fullness of times, dispensations of the gospel, Doctrine and Covenants, earth, Enoch, eternal progression, ethics, Eve, evil, evolution, exaltation, Fall of Adam, foreknowledge of God, Garden of Eden, God, intelligence, intelligences, Israel, Jesus Christ, justice and mercy, knowledge, law, marriage, matter, Melchizedek, metaphysics, miracles, omnipotent God, opposition, original sin, origin of man, orthodoxy, Peter, philosophy, plan of salvation, premarital sex, premortal life, priesthood, prophecy, purpose of earth life, reason and revelation, restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, resurrection, sacrament prayers, salvation of the dead, Sermon on the Mount, spirit, spiritual death, spirit world, Word of Wisdom, and world religions, all of which are also discussed in *TWL*.

¹⁴Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Image, 1975), 2:380.

¹⁵J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (New York: Macmillan, 1932).

¹⁶Bury, *Idea of Progress*, 5.

¹⁷Bury, *Idea of Progress*, 348.

¹⁸Roberts to George Albert Smith, April 28, 1930.

¹⁹A discourse delivered in the tabernacle, Logan, Utah, Sunday evening, April 2, 1911, published in *Improvement Era* 14 (June 1911): 665–77; (July 1911): 774–86.

²⁰Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 666.

²¹Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 667.

²²Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 667.

²³Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 668.

²⁴Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 671.

²⁵Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 675.

²⁶Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 677.

²⁷Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 774.

²⁸Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 777–78.

²⁹Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 781.

³⁰Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 785.

³¹B. H. Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Brigham D. Madsen and Sterling McMurrin (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985); for further discussion, see John W. Welch, “Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?” (Provo: F.A.R.M.S., 1985), and “B. H. Roberts: Seeker after Truth,” *Ensign* 16 (March 1986): 56–62. See also pages 687–91 below.

³²See Brigham D. Madsen, “B. H. Roberts’s Studies of the Book of Mormon,” *Dialogue* 26 (Fall 1993): 77–86.

³³B. H. Roberts, *The Gospel* (Salt Lake City: Contributor, 1888), iii.

³⁴Roberts, *Gospel*, iv.

³⁵Roberts, *Gospel*, 10.

³⁶Roberts, *Gospel*, 11.

³⁷Roberts, *Gospel*, 19.

³⁸Roberts, *Gospel*, 89.

³⁹Roberts, *Gospel*, 95.

⁴⁰Roberts, *Gospel*, 107.

⁴¹Roberts, *Gospel*, 211.

⁴²Roberts, *Gospel*, 239.

⁴³For example, Roberts quotes Josephus on the history of the Old Testament, Paley on evidences of Christianity, Lightfoot's unidentified article in the *Quarterly Review*, Crabb's *Mythology*, Mosheim, and other works that provide a constant intellectual background for the thinking of Roberts. Looking back on *The Gospel*, Roberts would have considered it a basic and introductory work.

⁴⁴Roberts, *The Gospel*, 3d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1924), vi.

⁴⁵Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), vi.

⁴⁶Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), iv, 251-94.

⁴⁷Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 266.

⁴⁸Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 267.

⁴⁹Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 271.

⁵⁰Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 274; compare *TWL* ch. 30.

⁵¹Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 283.

⁵²Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 280; compare *TWL* ch. 32.

⁵³Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 279.

⁵⁴Roberts, *Gospel* (1924), 280.

⁵⁵For example, Brian H. Stuy, *Excerpts from The Truth, The Way, The Life* (n.p., 1985). See also Stan Larson, ed., *The Truth, The Way, The Life: The Masterwork of B. H. Roberts* (San Francisco: Smith Research Associates, 1994), containing a full version of Draft 3.

⁵⁶Duane E. Jeffery, "Seers, Savants, and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface," *Dialogue* 8 (Autumn-Winter 1973): 41-75, especially pages 63-65 and accompanying footnotes.

⁵⁷For example, Jeffery characterizes some statements by Church Presidents as "private views," and he draws attention to statements to the effect that "the Church itself has no philosophy about the *modus operandi* employed by the Lord in His creation of the world." Jeffery, "Seers, Savants, and Evolution," 62.

⁵⁸Jeffery, "Seers, Savants, and Evolution," 68.

⁵⁹Truman G. Madsen, "The Meaning of Christ—The Truth, The Way, The Life: An Analysis of B. H. Roberts' Unpublished Masterwork," *BYU Studies* 15 (Spring 1975): 261.

⁶⁰Richard Sherlock, "A Turbulent Spectrum: Mormon Reactions to the Darwinist Legacy," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 33-59, quote on 58; see also Richard Sherlock and Jeffrey E. Keller, "The B. H. Roberts/Joseph Fielding Smith/James E. Talmage Affair," in *The Search for Harmony: Essays on Science and Mormonism*, ed. Gene A. Sessions and Craig J. Oberg (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 93-115. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, also speaks of "immediate controversy" (286) and "ill will" (288) created by *TWL*, but he rightly sees the Church as allowing "the matter to rest" (288) and places this development in the broader context of a thirty-year examination of "questions of scientific naturalism, Darwinism, the relationship between science and religion" and other issues (273).

⁶¹Sherlock, "A Turbulent Spectrum," 58.

⁶²Sherlock, "A Turbulent Spectrum," 34.

⁶³Sterling McMurrin, "Brigham H. Roberts: A Biographical Essay," in *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, xxviii, and xxxi n. 15.

⁶⁴On September 17, 1928, in a letter to President Rudger Clawson, *TWL* collection, note 31, page 718 below, Roberts summarized the headlines of *TWL* as it stood at that time:

About one-half of the book is taken up with the first division of the subject: THE TRUTH, and occupies 29 Chapters of the 53. This part of the work deals with great fundamentals of the existence of things, what we know about the universe, the solar system, our own earth, with a treatise on creation, with man's advent to the earth, the preparation for man's life upon the earth, with the institution of the gospel in the council of God, the possibility and probability and the absolute assurance, at the last, of revelation and what revelation has brought forth as the Gospel.

The second part: THE WAY, is the development of the everlasting Gospel, in which a brief resume of the different dispensations of it are treated, and in this part the atonement of Jesus Christ is worked out under the scriptures and philosophy, as far as philosophy can be made to apply to it. Six chapters are devoted to that one theme alone. Then comes a chapter on the departure from THE WAY and another chapter closing this middle section on the Restoration of THE WAY.

The third part: THE LIFE, is a development of about six chapters of the perfect life of the Christ as the ideal of the Gospel.

Editorial Procedures

Three drafts of this work are owned by the LDS Church. By our count, Draft 1 totals 987 pages. These pages were then retyped with a carbon copy by Roberts's secretary. Further additions, changes, and deletions were made on those two drafts. Draft 2 is incomplete and numbers 643 pages; and Draft 3 contains 846 pages. The present edition is based on Draft 3 unless otherwise indicated.¹

Draft 1 is typical of most rough drafts. Many of the pages are handwritten, and others are a pastiche of cuttings and pastings of various pages—some typed, some carbon copies of other typed pages, and some newspaper and magazine clippings. The raw materials in many chapters of *The Truth, The Way, The Life* obviously underwent extensive reworking, reorganization, and rewriting. Roberts wrote on whatever materials he had readily at hand. One insert explaining his views on divorce was drafted on the backs of four small sheets of blue Hotel Utah stationery.

Draft 3 began as a clean typed copy of Draft 1. All of the pages are original front sheets, with the text typed in black. Red typewriter ribbon was used in typing all chapter titles, subheadings, footnote numbers, asterisks, and most foreign words (such as *passim*). In addition, scriptures are occasionally typed in red for emphasis, notably the quotations from Doctrine and Covenants 93 at the end of chapter 1 and from Moses 1:39 at the beginning of chapter 27. Some corrections have been typed onto this draft, and other final editorial notations, all of which are in Roberts's handwriting, are made in black pencil, with the occasional use of a red pencil. Draft 2 contains some earlier material, but most of its pages are the purple carbon copies of parts II and III that were produced at the time Draft 3 was typed.

For the most part, Roberts left the third draft of the manuscript substantially finished. Readers, however, will notice many characteristics of this work that indicate that it was still an unfinished product. Chapter 23, for example, begins with a handwritten note by Roberts that reads "incomplete." He undoubtedly recognized that it was still full of typographical and spelling mistakes that the printer and proofreader

would need to correct. Furthermore, he continued to add material to some of the chapters in 1930 and 1931 and probably as late as 1932. He also noted that some additional footnotes were called for, but these were never given. These finishing touches, however, are relatively minor. Roberts considered this work ready to go to press, and he obtained an aggressive commitment from the Deseret News Press on October 20, 1928, that this tome could be printed and bound within thirty days of a favorable publication decision.

In typesetting the text, we have followed the few instructions left by Roberts on the manuscript in this regard. For example, in proofreading he left notes and marks indicating where paragraphs should begin or where sections of the text should be relocated. We have followed these directions, usually without reproducing Roberts's handwritten notations of this nature.

Draft 3 of this work, even though it was proofread and corrected by Roberts and his secretaries, abounds in common errors of all kinds. For this edition of *TWL*, Gary Hatch, professor of English at Brigham Young University and a great-grandson of Roberts, has assisted in formulating and implementing the editorial policies regarding the textual presentation of *TWL*.²

Correcting general errors. Roberts originally dictated the core of this material in 1927 to his secretary or stenographer, which accounts for many of the typographical errors found in the typescripts. For example, many quotations are accurate in most respects except for punctuation, capitalization, and other such elements that would not automatically be preserved through dictation. In editing these quotations, we have located the actual sources cited by Roberts and have made the few minor changes necessary to conform the punctuation and spelling to agree with the secular works cited and with the modern editions of the scriptures. Any material differences between the original sources and the quotations in the Roberts manuscripts have been noted in editorial footnotes or through typographical symbols. Insignificant differences that Roberts would surely have wanted the printer and proofreader to catch have been corrected in this edition without any special notation. To illustrate a few of the corrections made by Roberts or us: the "event of the Europeans" should have been transcribed as "advent of the Europeans" (ch. 47); "adherence" should have been "adherents" (ch. 48); "past" should have been "passed" (ch. 46); "our revelation social" should have been "our revelation local" (ch. 23); and "Bathynia" should have been "Bithynia" (ch. 23). On several occasions, as Roberts proofread the manuscript, he corrected scripture errors in the typescript where he saw them. In

chapter 46, he fixed “thou be a Jew” to “though being a Jew.” We trust that if any other such errors had been called to his attention, Roberts would have wanted them noted and corrected.

Sometimes Roberts made careless mistakes or overlooked the mistakes of his typists. One would expect, for example, that Roberts knew that the “Westminster Confession” is not the “Westminister Confession,” as he usually (but not always) calls it. One would also have expected him to have spelled the name of Oliver Cowdery consistently, but he sometimes failed to correct the spelling “Cowdry” on these drafts. Likewise, one would assume that this Book of Mormon scholar knew that Amulek, not Alma, is the speaker in Alma 34, and that Jacob, not Nephi, is the author of 2 Nephi 9. Perhaps these oversights tell us something about the way the Book of Mormon was being read in the 1920s, or perhaps they are common and insignificant errors.

More than occasionally, Roberts was incomplete, careless, or inaccurate in giving scripture references. We have supplied the correct scriptural citation without noting Roberts’s errors or omissions. For example, he once gives 1 Timothy 3:6, which should have been 1 Timothy 3:16; and Deuteronomy 14:17 should have been Deuteronomy 10:17.

Spelling has usually been corrected. Not infrequently, words are spelled two different ways on the same page, in which case our correcting the spelling was most easily justified. These corrections are made without giving any indication of such, for otherwise the text would become quite cluttered. Examples of the types of misspellings one regularly encounters in the manuscripts include “satelite,” “annointed,” “Durrant,” “inflected” (for “inflicted”), and “Adia” (instead of “Asia”).

Grammar has been modified in some instances, but in making these changes we have tried to conserve the style and meaning of the original text as far as possible, even where the sentence structure is ungainly. These corrections usually involved very minor but frequent problems, such as agreement between subjects and verbs.

Punctuation has been modernized on many occasions, but not where Roberts’s punctuation is ambiguous, in which case the text has been left as he punctuated it. The manuscripts make copious use of dashes and contain many long and awkward sentences. Moreover, the typescript is inconsistent in its use of punctuation conventions: commas and periods are sometimes placed inside of quotes but other times outside; spacing after punctuation marks is erratic; and single and double quotes are used interchangeably. Open-quote marks usually appear in their appropriate places, but ending-quote marks are

frequently lacking altogether. In checking every text quoted by Roberts, whether scriptural or nonscriptural, we have identified their appropriate beginning and ending points. All of these punctuation problems have been corrected in this edition to make the text as understandable, readable, and serviceable as possible.

Capitalization also presented problems. Roberts tended to over-capitalize grossly and inconsistently. Words such as spirit, matter, force, mind, truth, way, life, and many other terms are sometimes capitalized and sometimes not. When no rhyme or reason for the capitalization could be detected, modern rules of capitalization were often followed in this edition, consistent with *The Chicago Manual of Style* or the *Style Guide for Publications of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Typically, wherever Roberts used a term as a synonym for God or Christ or as one of their divine attributes, his capitalization was followed. Otherwise, capitalization was changed to lower case. In particular, Roberts overcapitalized the words *truth*, *way*, and *life*. When these terms are closely associated with an explicit reference to the name of Christ or are being used as a substitute for the divine name, we have capitalized the initial letter of the word, even though on some occasions Roberts capitalized the entire word. We capitalize Church, but only when it refers to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We capitalize the word *Prophet* only when it refers to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and we follow Roberts in capitalizing *New Dispensation*, but generally we do not capitalize other uses of the word *dispensation* or similar terms.

Roman numerals have been replaced by Arabic numerals throughout the manuscript, except in the case of multiple chapters having the same name (for example, Atonement II).

Abbreviations, especially in scripture references, have all been standardized to accord with the current *Style Guide for Publications*. Draft 3 is quite inconsistent, and sometimes inaccurate, in its use of abbreviations, particularly for the books of scriptures.

Footnotes in Draft 3 often contain nothing beyond a scripture reference. In such cases, scripture references have been moved into the text to avoid sending the reader to a note containing only a scripture reference. Also, where necessary, scripture references have been added to texts that lacked proper references. The format of footnotes in the manuscript is incomplete and erratic. We have corrected and completed the information given in these notes, as far as possible. Sometimes Roberts did not leave page numbers in his footnotes, and sometimes he did not even give the titles of the works he was citing. Most of his sources, however, have been found in the B. H. Roberts Memorial

Library, which still contains most of the books he owned. We have used a short and consistent format in the notes, giving the author's name and a short title for each work. Full bibliographic information for each of the works cited by Roberts can be found in the bibliography at the end of the volume.

Numbered footnotes in this edition are the footnotes that Roberts provided in Draft 3 of the manuscript (other than the footnotes that contained only scripture references, which have been eliminated as those references have been moved into the text). Clarifications we have added to these footnotes are enclosed in square brackets.

[Source not found] indicates that we were unable to find the book cited by Roberts.

[Quote not found] signifies that the stated source was found but the quote was not found within that source.

Footnotes marked with letters or other symbols are editorial comments added in this edition for various purposes. Editorial notes marked with letters, for example, explain problems found in quotations, clarify obscure allusions or ideas, or identify other works that deal with similar subject matter. Notes marked with † present comments by President Clawson and the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve that reviewed Roberts's manuscript.

Subheadings presented several editorial challenges. Each chapter contains about a dozen subheadings. These subheadings are not always identical in the three drafts of this work. In addition, Roberts prepared an introductory page for each chapter, but the subheadings given on the drafts of those introductory pages do not always match those in the text. Usually the differences are insubstantial; but since Roberts continued to modify the subheadings in the chapters both before and after he wrote the introductory pages, it was impossible to determine exactly which form of each subheading he intended for use in the published work. This edition includes each subheading in the form that gives the reader the fullest information possible. This result was achieved both by indicating Roberts's changes and by selecting the most complete version of each subheading or amalgamating its various versions in light of the contents in the paragraphs being introduced. The subheadings appear both in the body of the text and in the chapter analysis pages in this edition (3-13 below).

An introductory analysis and reference page, as mentioned above, appears in the manuscripts at the beginning of each chapter. After Roberts had completed most of the text, he went back through each chapter to create a handwritten page listing all of the subheadings as a summary. He also collected the main references cited in the

footnotes of the chapter and supplemented these sources with a few additional recommended references that he thought would serve well as reading assignments for a student preparing to study the chapter. He put the outline analysis in a left-hand column and the references in a right-hand column on a separate page at the beginning of each chapter. The illustrations on pages 18, 36, 50, 68, and 323 are examples of these introductory pages as they appear in the manuscripts and typescripts of *TWL*. All these introductory pages have not been printed in this edition because, at the end of chapter 55, Roberts wrote the following note: "Gather all reference pages and put them together as an appendix." This edition implements Roberts's instruction in the following ways: first, the subheadings in all chapters have been collected into a comprehensive chapter analysis, which appears at the beginning of *TWL* below; second, all works cited by Roberts in his footnotes have been listed in a single bibliography, which appears at the end of this edition; third, reference codes (for example, R1, R10, etc.) have been inserted into the bibliography to indicate the chapters for which Roberts recommended that the marked works should be studied as general background reading; and fourth, any reference work not used by Roberts in a footnote to that chapter appears in a final editorial note at the end of that chapter. Any other significant information found on these overview pages at the beginning of each chapter has been included in introductory or concluding footnotes to each respective chapter.

Despite careful typing, proofreading, source checking, data entry, spell-checking, copy-editing, formatting, and many levels and hours of review and editing, we still are morally certain (to use a favorite expression of Elder Roberts) that errors exist in this publication. We apologize for any inconvenience caused by such errors, but assuredly they are inadvertent and reflect the difficulties of publishing an extensive and typographically problematic typescript of an author who has been dead for sixty years. We can only hope that Roberts would, at length, welcome its publication in this form and at this time. Were he still with us, however, he most certainly would have insisted on updating its sources, expanding its coverage, and probably at this point changing or eliminating some sections altogether.

Below is the set of typographical codes used in this printing. If we had set the type of this edition to reflect, as far as possible, each jot or tittle in these manuscripts exactly the way Roberts left them, it would have been possible to present this work as a mechanical, unedited historical artifact. Our initial inclination was to do just that. Usually, when

editing handwritten documents from early nineteenth-century Church history, *BYU Studies* preserves in its printed version all spelling, grammatical errors, and other such idiosyncrasies of the original document. The more we worked with the Roberts typescripts, however, the more it became obvious that our normal rule did not apply to this publication for several reasons. Mainly, Roberts intended this book to be printed; he even left instructions for typesetters. Roberts undoubtedly counted on editors and typesetters to check and catch simple errors, such as those we have corrected. Moreover, one reason that handwritten documents are typeset, rather than being published as simple photographic reproductions, is to increase readability. In the case of *TWL*, the typing on the drafts is clear and legible.

Readers interested in studying photocopies of the original pages may inquire at *BYU Studies* about its facsimile edition of Drafts 1, 2, and 3. In editing this work, we have scrupulously tried to follow normal publishing procedures, and we have taken great care to be faithful to Roberts's meaning and intent, his language, his style, and his spirit. In no case have we attempted to sanitize or change the intentions of Elder Roberts, as we hope that any comparison between the pages of the facsimile volumes and this typeset edition will bear out.

NOTES

¹A copy of Draft 3 is also found in the special collections at the Marriott Library of the University of Utah. Regarding past or future publications by other scholars of any of these drafts, various responsible viewpoints on the life and work of B. H. Roberts are certainly welcomed. On October 12, 1933, however, shortly after Roberts's death, the Roberts family announced their gift of the Roberts library to the Church and acknowledged that *TWL* belonged to the Church. Based on that document and several other considerations, anyone seeking use of these materials should contact The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which retains the copyright in these documents. They are published here by permission.

²The Roberts family in 1933 requested that they be consulted should any changes be made in the text, if it were ever to be published. The only intentional changes made in this edition are in the nature of technical editing, formatting, and correcting quotations. Editorial decisions have been made in consultation with family members. The entire text is given here, together with the committee's comments, as well as the significant longer version of chapter 31 from Draft 2, all without any substantive modifications.

Typographical Codes

- Bold** Bold characters indicate handwritten changes or notes made by Roberts usually on Draft 3 of the work. These corrections represent proofreading changes or comments left by Roberts, probably during the last time he read this manuscript. All such handwritten changes are bolded except for minor typographical details, such as quotation marks, which are set in regular type.
- Bold italics*** Words in bold italics represent interlinear typing added to Draft 3 or handwritten changes to subheadings.
- Italic* Italic type is used for text and subheadings that were underlined in the original typing of Draft 3.
- ~~Overstrikes~~ Overstrikes signify significant or interesting words that were crossed out on Draft 3, either by typewritten slashes or by handwritten deletions. Unimportant deletions or routine typographical instructions given by Roberts have been implemented silently, without notation. For example, in chapter 4, Roberts crossed out the initial letters of the words “Giant Planet” to indicate that he did not want those words capitalized; accordingly, we have printed them simply as “giant planet.” Likewise, in chapter 19, Roberts changed “background from” to “background of.” Such changes are not indicated in the typesetting.
- [[]] Double square brackets enclose longer sections of text unique to Draft 2 or crossed out by Roberts on Draft 3.
- ⟨?⟩ A bold question mark in angle brackets signifies that Roberts wrote a question mark in the margin.
- () Parentheses inside of quoted material reflect parenthetical comments found in the original quoted source;

outside of quoted material, they reflect parenthetical comments by Roberts (whether marked in the manuscripts by parentheses or square brackets).

⟨ ⟩ Angle brackets are used inside of quoted material to enclose words inserted by Roberts into the quote. Sometimes Roberts set these words off by using typed parentheses or handwritten square brackets, but more often he simply inserted the words as if they were part of the original quote.

[] Square brackets indicate editorial explanations or corrections added by the editors of this volume.

⟨ ⟩ [] These brackets often appear in combination to correct misquotations, especially of scriptures. Angled brackets ⟨ ⟩ enclose Roberts's misquotations or modifications, usually followed immediately by the actual text enclosed in square brackets [].

cf. In Roberts's text, *cf.* means that Roberts paraphrased a particular source. In our footnotes, *cf.* retains its standard meaning of "compare."

THE TRUTH, THE WAY, THE LIFE

An

Elementary Treatise On Theology

BY

ELDER B. H. ROBERTS

Senior President of the First Council of the Seventy

Author of
New Witnesses for God" (3 vols)
Outlines of Ecclesiastical History
Mormon Doctrine of Deity, &c
etc etc In One Volume

and

Three Parts

*the Saints of
Vels Camp, &c
also History of the
Church, Containing I
6 vols.*

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Etc. Etc. Etc.

In One Volume

and

Three Parts

Religion, to be effective, must appeal to the understanding as well as to the emotions of man.

The Basis of Research

Say first of God above and man below,
How can we reason but from what we know?

Pope, *Essay on Man*

And now lastly, as firstly, and chiefly, O Thou, Eternal One! “Whose Presence bright all space doth occupy,” and man’s intelligence inspire! On thee I call and I worship Thee through my humble and elementary work. What in it is worthy or true or excellent or soul-uplifting, Thou didst inspire; its limitations human, are mine! Thine be the honor, and the praise and the glory; mine the humiliation for its defects. Accept Thou my acknowledgement of Thy presence in my work; and this offering my act of worship.

— The Author, Draft 1.

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PART I

The Truth

“I am . . . the truth.”

The Christ to St. Thomas (John 14:6)

“Truth’s a gem that loves the deep.”

Introduction: The Right of Man to Know the Meaning of Life

All men know that they must die. And it is important that we should understand the reasons and causes of our exposure to the vicissitudes of life and of death, and the designs and purposes of God in our coming into the world, our sufferings here, and our departure hence. What is the object of our coming into existence, then dying and falling away, to be here no more? It is but reasonable to suppose that God would reveal something in reference to the matter, and it is a subject we ought to study more than any other. We ought to study it day and night, for the world is ignorant in reference to their true condition and relation. If we have any claim on our Heavenly Father for anything, it is for knowledge on this important subject.

Joseph Smith¹

It is not only a privilege but a duty for the Saints to seek unto the Lord their God for wisdom and understanding, to be in possession of the Spirit that fills the heavens until their eyes are anointed and opened to see the world as it really is . . . to look through the “why’s” and “wherefore’s” of the existence of man, like looking through a piece of glass [that is] perfectly transparent; and understand the design of the ⟨Creator⟩ [Great Maker] of this beautiful creation.

Brigham Young²

This treatise is to be a search for the truth, as it relates to the universe and to man; a consideration of the way as it relates to the attainment of those ends which may be learned as to the purpose of man’s earth-existence; and the contemplation of the life that will result from the knowledge of the truth and the way.

It is to be a new study of an old theme: the whence, the why, and the whither of human existence. It intends to find out whether or not there is any purpose in human life; any scheme of things in the universe; and if ordinary men may cognize them and follow them. Is there a truth,

¹Smith, *History of the Church* 6:50.

²Brigham Young, *Deseret News*, May 8, 1853; *Journal of Discourses* 1:111.

a way, a life, that can be made to appeal to reason as well as to faith? Can it be made to satisfy the understanding as well as the longings of the human heart? Will it lead to something more than a pleasing hope, a fond desire, a mere longing after immortality? Or shall we accept the last statement and what is described as the most characteristic sentences of Professor William James, the American philosopher and psychologist, which he left written upon his desk at his death, namely: "There is no conclusion. What has concluded that we might conclude in regard to it? There are no fortunes to be told, and there is no advice to be given. Farewell."

To find all this out is the task we set before us; and when we contemplate the largeness of the theme, the height and the depth of it, and recall how many world-geniuses have wrecked their thought upon it, we marvel at the audacity that dares to attempt so much!

Yet there is great need that someone should seek to bring forth to the clear understanding of men the Truth, the Way, and the Life, for there is great confusion existing among men on these matters of such high import.

If the author of this proposed treatise were depending upon his own learning, or on any way of wisdom in himself to justify the investigation of these high themes, then he would not only shrink from the task but would abandon it altogether, as being inadequate to such an undertaking. But the author believes himself to be living in what, in the parlance of his faith, is called the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times in which a great volume of truth has been revealed in addition to, but in harmony with, the truth revealed in former dispensations. In fact in this Dispensation of the Fullness of Times all truth of former dispensations and the whole volume of it, is being merged into a unity. The veil of mystery is being rent to reveal the things of God in their completeness, and it is upon the basis of this more fully revealed knowledge that the author ventures to speak, rather than from any learning or intellectual excellence in himself.

The method of approach to the heart of the general theme is through the apparently paradoxical mental process of assuming that:

I know in order that I may believe;
I believe in order that I may know.⁴

⁴This remark paraphrases St. Augustine's *Sermon 43*, where he argues that one must first assent to the beliefs of the Christian faith before one can know the truthfulness of those beliefs, and that reason is then employed to increase faith and knowledge. Augustine found this principle of philosophical and theological enquiry in Isaiah 7:9, where the Greek version reads "Unless you believe you will not understand." See also Augustine, Epistle 120; and "we believed that we might

In other words, the author is seeking a basis for faith in the revealed things of God by examination of the things we know. Nor in this does he recognize any inconsistency in seeking for belief in revealed truth from a basis of knowledge. “Faith is . . . the evidence of things not seen,” says St. Paul (Heb. 11:1); and “evidence” must be the things known that lead to belief, which is “faith” in its simplest form. Speaking of belief in God, Paul asks, “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”—one sent to teach them (Rom. 10:14). “So then faith cometh by hearing” (Rom. 10:17)—by hearing the evidence on which faith in its simplest form necessarily rests, from which evidence faith struggles into existence and develops into robust life that shall enable it at last to attain to the sublime power of accepting and enduring as seeing that which is invisible. But one must find some basis of knowledge, some ground of evidence from which he may believe; from which ground of faith he may arise to the higher knowledge of things as they are.

One other working principle will frequently recur in the treatise—“how can we reason but from what we know?” Accepting the implication of the question as true, knowledge again becomes imperative, and hence our opening division of the treatise, what is truth, and how much do we know of it? And what foundation does it lay for that faith which leads to the realization of the deeper and higher truths of life, and its purposes, and of God?

The answer to these questions we trust will be found in the text of the discussion which follows.*

know: for if we wished first to know and then to believe, we should not be able either to know or to believe,” *Joannis Evangelium Tractatus*, 27, 9. The meaning of Roberts’s apparent reworking of the Augustinian maxim is not entirely clear. Does he mean that one must know first in order to believe? Might he be thinking of the censured Abelard who inverted the Augustinian maxim to “I cannot believe until I first know”? Roberts does not discuss the text sufficiently to make a final determination; but in that Augustine believed the intellect is properly used only in the service of Christianity, Roberts would basically agree with him. We are grateful to James Siebach for the information in this note.

*At the end of this introduction, Roberts added this note: “It has been suggested that this work could be used to advantage as a textbook on theology, and to make it available for such use each chapter has been constructed in a manner and given such relation to the developing theme that it may be so utilized. Also a lesson analysis has been made for each chapter with collected references so that the textbook idea may be easily put into effect. These lesson analyses with accompanying references are printed as addenda at the end of the volume.” Because each lesson analysis was only a list of the subheadings in each chapter, these analyses have been combined into the consolidated chapter analysis or table of contents for *TWL* that appears on pages 3–13 above. The references are all listed in the bibliography at the end of this book and are also all cited in the footnotes in each chapter.

Analysis
 Chapters for Sessions
 Chapter I
Dissertation on Truth

Scripture Lesson Reading*

Analysis

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Answer of Pilate: "I am... The Truth and the Life"

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Doubt of the Moderns: Definitions of Truth

III Empirical Definition - Joseph Smith:

(A) Relative Truth

(B) Absolute Truth

(C) "The sum of Existence" complete Truth.

IV The World's Best Hope: Progress in the Knowledge of Truth.

V. Workers in the Field of Truth.

VI. Ode To Truth

1st John's Gospel 18: 32-38; 9d: 14: 6

Bible Commentary: Garrison, Francis and Brown; also Dean McLaw's One Volume Commentary, St John 18. Spence's First Principles p 141; Cosmic Philosophy Vol. I. pp. 102-3
 L. D. S. Hymn Book, Sec 93. Book of Mormon, Jacob 4: 13,

L. D. S. Hymn Book p 71

~~selection of these~~
 * The ~~paraphrase~~ ~~lessons~~ ~~readings~~ should be assigned to class members; in making selection special ~~should be used~~ to suit the needs to the class and subject. For the present lesson and as a sample selection St John 18: 33-38 is proposed. The subdivisions of the lesson analysis may be used as lesson assignments.

1

Dissertation on Truth

Taking up the terms of our title in the order in which I have placed them we come to the first member, the truth. Logical order of procedure requires that we say something of truth at the very beginning of our treatise.

“What is truth?” inquired Pontius Pilate of Jesus of Nazareth when the latter had just told him that it was his mission in life to bear witness unto the truth (John 18:37-38). *Jesus was silent. On a previous occasion he had said, “I am . . . the Truth and the Way”* (cf. John 14:6).

“Thou stirrest the question of questions,” says a standard commentary on the Bible, when dealing with this passage, “which the thoughtful of every age have asked, but never man yet answered.”¹

Another writer of note, also a modern—1875—commenting upon the question Pilate asked the Christ, remarks: “Often and vainly has that demand been made—often and vainly has it been made since. No one has yet (i.e., to the time of his writing, 1875) given a satisfactory answer.” Then by way of historical illustration of this assertion, our author goes on to say:

When, at the dawn of science in Greece, the ancient religion was disappearing like a mist at sunrise, the pious and thoughtful men of that country were thrown into a condition of intellectual despair. Anaxagoras plaintively exclaims, “Nothing can be known, nothing can be learned, nothing can be certain, (science) [sense] is limited, intellect is weak, life is short.” Xenophanes tells us that it is impossible for us to be certain even when we utter the truth. Parmenides declares

At the bottom of the contents page for this chapter, Roberts gave the following instructions: “The selection of these scripture lessons should be assigned to class members in advance; in making selection special reference should be made to suitability to the lesson’s subject. For the present lesson and as a sample selection St. John 18:33-38 is proposed. The subdivisions of the lesson analysis may be used as lesson assignments.”

¹Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary*, comment on John 18:37-38.

that the very constitution of man prevents him from ascertaining absolute truth. Empedocles affirms that all philosophical and religious systems must be unreliable, because we have no criterion by which to test them. Democritus asserts that even things that are true cannot impart certainty to us; that the final result of human inquiry is the discovery that man is incapable of absolute knowledge; that, even if the truth be in his possession, he cannot be certain of it. Pyrrho bids us reflect on the necessity of suspending our judgment of things, since we have no criterion of truth; so deep a distrust did he impart to his followers, that they were in the habit of saying, "We assert nothing; no, not even that we assert nothing." Epicurus taught his disciples that truth can never be determined by reason. Arcesilaus, denying both intellectual and sensuous knowledge, publicly avowed that he knew nothing, not even his own ignorance! The general conclusion to which Greek philosophy came was this—that, in view of the contradiction of the evidence of the senses, we cannot distinguish the true from the false; and such is the imperfection of reason, that we cannot affirm the correctness of any philosophical deduction.²

This rather settles the matter so far as the antique world is concerned; and the remark of the same writer with reference to time since the Christ, that "no one had, as yet, given a satisfactory answer to Pilate's question, What is truth?," would seem to settle the matter equally as well for the modern world. However, it is only proper that we should consider some of the attempted modern definitions of truth. The one which appears to be most simple, and yet most comprehensive, is that to be found in *Webster's Dictionary* for 1927, and especially under the numeral "4" [1c] of this noted work, viz: "Truth is . . . conformity to fact or reality; exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be. . . . The character (i.e., characteristic of truth) is its capability of enduring the test of universal experience, and coming unchanged out of every possible form of fair discussion" (Sir J. Hershel).³

Mr. Herbert Spencer, author of the *Synthetic Philosophy*, and one of the first intellects of the English race, gives as a definition of truth the following:

Debarred as we are from everything beyond the relative, truth, raised to its highest form, can be for us nothing more than perfect

²Draper, *Conflict between Religion and Science*, 201–2.

³This definition of truth is not found in Mr. Webster's first edition of his *Dictionary*, 1806; but is found in the two-volumed edition of 1828 published by S. Converse, New York, and in all subsequent editions. [Roberts's definition of truth is found verbatim in Webster's dictionaries for 1828, 1924, and 1927; however, it is altered in the 1901 version to: "Abstractly, conformity to fact or reality; the property in a conception, a judgment or proposition, a belief, an opinion, of being in accord with what is, has been, or must be."]

agreement, throughout the whole range of our experience, between those representations of things which we distinguish as ideal and those ⟨perfections⟩ [presentations] of things which we distinguish as real.⁴

John Fiske, the interpreter of Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy*, defines absolute truth in these terms: "Truth . . . ⟨is⟩ the correspondence between the subjective order of our conceptions and the objective order of the relations among things"; but he insists that for this absolute truth "we can have no criterion. . . . We can have no criterion of Absolute Truth, or of truth that is not correlated with the conditions of our intelligence."⁵ With David Hume and others he accepts the theory that uniformity of experience is a sufficient criterion for contingent truth, but not of universal or absolute truth.⁶

With the Hindoos, "Truth is that which is." This [is] the significance of their word for truth according to Max Müller;⁷ and for simplicity and comprehensiveness, comes more nearly exactness than the more labored definitions of the Western world. And yet, in reality, comes short of being complete since it takes no account of that "which has been" or that "which shall be," the becoming, the continual birth of truth.

Quite unnoticed by the writers of the modern world, however, a book was published in 1830 purporting to be the revelation of an inspired scripture abridged from larger authoritative writings had among the ancient peoples of America, in which one of their inspired teachers is represented as saying:

He that prophesieth, let him prophesy to the understanding of men; for the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls. (Jacob 4:13)

Again, in 1833, but unknown to Mr. John W. Draper, who in 1875 declared that no satisfactory definition of truth had yet been written; and before either Mr. Spencer or Mr. Fiske had written their definitions of truth, there had another voice spoken upon this subject which claimed for itself a divine authority to speak upon this and

⁴Spencer, *First Principles*, 141. In passing it might be asked if the reader can suppose the Christ making an answer to Pilate like Spencer's?

⁵Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* 4:102-3. [John Fiske (1842-1901) was an American historian and philosopher who promoted and popularized the theory of evolution in the United States.]

⁶Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* 4:71, cf. 105.

⁷Müller, *India*, Lect. 2, p. 64.

kindred questions, and this is what it said of truth: “Truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24).⁸

If this is spoken with a divine sanction, under inspiration of God, then it ought to be the completest definition of truth extant among men.[†] I hold it to be so. It deals with truth under several aspects: relative truth; absolute truth; and truth in the “becoming” or unfolding; and truth in the sum.

It may be objected to this definition of truth, that it is defective in that it appears to make truth dependent upon knowledge. “Truth is *knowledge* of things as they are.” The answer to this objection would be that at this point the definition deals with relative truth only. “Truth can only be relative to us,” says S. Barring Gould, “because we are relative creatures, with only a relative perception and judgment. We appreciate that which is true to ourselves—not that which is universally true.” In other words, to each individual, knowledge of things as they are and as they were, and as they are to become, will be to him the truth and the fullness thereof, though not necessarily all the truth that is. This will be each man’s truth, or relative truth.

There is truth, however, beyond relative truth, and independent of any individual’s knowledge of it. To illustrate: America existed though all Europe was without knowledge of it for ages, until Columbus discovered it in fact. The power of steam always existed, but men did not know it until modern times. So also with the mysterious force

⁸It might be thought that the definition of truth above taken from the Doctrine and Covenants is suspiciously near to the definition given by Noah Webster in the edition of his *Dictionary* of 1828, and in subsequent editions, and therefore in common use throughout the United States five years before the date of the revelation of May 6, 1833, from which the definition of truth in the text is taken. Webster’s definition of truth is: “*Exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be.*” While Joseph Smith’s definition is: “*Truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come.*” The uniqueness of Joseph Smith’s definition, however, consists in regarding truth as the *knowledge* of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come (i.e., as they shall be). All which is worked out in the discussion of the text and lifts, as I trust will be seen, the definition of the revelation far beyond the definition of the *Dictionary*.

Our Prophet also taught that “Intelligence is the light of Truth”; or the power by which truth is cognized and absorbed, and which he holds forth as Eternal, uncreated and uncreatable, therefor Eternal as truth itself—a parallel existence with Truth: Intelligence—Truth! The Existence—Truth; and the Light of Truth which discerns it—Intelligence.

[†]“List of Points on Doctrine in Question by the Committee [of the Quorum of the Twelve],” written before May 15, 1930, noted: “The superiority of the Prophet’s definition questioned.”

called electricity—it always existed, but not until recent years did men know it as a force that could be utilized. And so as to many other forces and truths in God’s universe that are now existing and have always existed, but man as yet has no knowledge of them. This means merely that the storehouse of truth is not yet exhausted by man’s discoveries. There are more truths in heaven and earth than are yet cognized by man, or dreamed of in human philosophies.^a It may be, however, that running parallel with those existences and their relations, as yet unknown by man—there may exist intelligences that cognize such existences and such relations. To recur to one item in the illustration above, America existed though all Europe was without knowledge of it until discovered by Columbus; but America had inhabitants, intelligences of her own that knew of the existence of these Western Continents which were their habitat. And so it might be if one could be transported to Mars. There is much we do not know about Mars. Has it an atmosphere and oceans for instance? Has it continents and mountain ranges and rivers? Is it inhabited? If so, are the inhabitants of it highly intellectual? If so, what is the present status of their civilization? All these questions relative to life on Mars may yet be answered affirmatively, but our Earth inhabitants as yet do not humanly know of them; but the intelligent inhabitants on Mars (if there be such) would know of these things, and a thousand more that are unknown to us. And so in like manner as to the most distant planets and planetary systems. Everywhere things exist may be paralleled by existing intelligences that cognize them; and so in the last analysis of the matter, wheresoever there are existences *there may be intelligences* to cognize them, perhaps control them, dominate them, and through them work out a sovereign will.

All this as to relative truth. This definition under consideration, however, also deals with universal or absolute truth. When you say that truth is that which is, that which has been, and that which is to be in future, you circumscribe all there is or can be of truth. You make it “the sum of existence”: You will include the past, present, and future of all existences—their “sum”; and this is truth: The “sum” of existences, past, present, and yet to be.

It may be said that the absolute truth as here set forth is beyond the grasp of the finite mind. That is conceded, but because finite mind can not comprehend the sum of existences, the absolute truth, it does not follow that the definition is at fault, or that it can be displaced by one meaning more or less. Reflection upon the definition here presented

^aA paraphrase of *Hamlet* I.v.166-67: “There are more things in heaven and earth, / Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

will develop the fact that it is a self-evident proposition, it may not be proven by any other thing; but the statement itself is its own proof. The proof is in the fact.

One other reflection on this definition. Note the words: "Knowledge of things . . . as they are to come." This presents a view of truth seldom if ever made. With it is given the idea of movement. Truth is not a stagnant pool, but a living fountain; not a Dead Sea, without tides or currents. On the contrary it is an ocean, immeasurably great, vast, co-extensive with the universe itself. It is the universe bright-heaving, boundless, endless, and sublime! Moving in majestic currents, uplifted by cosmic tides in ceaseless ebb and flow, variant but orderly; taking on new forms from ever changing combinations, new adjustments, new relations—multiplying itself in ten thousand times ten thousand ways, ever reflecting the Intelligence of the Infinite, and declaring alike in its whispers and its thunders the hived wisdom of the ages!

Truth, then, is that which is; which has been; which shall be; it is the sum of existence; and knowledge of so much of all this as each individual intelligence possesses is his^b truth, his measure of himself and of the universe.

Some years ago the question was submitted to the writer for a special article in the Christmas issue of a leading western publication, "What Is the World's Best Hope"—for a given year?

I confess to an ambition at the time to give an answer that would be worthy not only as the "World's Best Hope" for the specified year, but for all years; all ages and for all time, since the answer was to relate to the whole world. As I thought upon the nature of my answer, the world seemed to rise above the horizon of my consciousness. All the continents and islands; all the seas and oceans—the world's highways between the great divisions of the land; all the nations were before me, all the tribes and the races of men, with all their hopes and fears and varied interests, ranging from barbarism to civilization; all their ambitions, great and small, together with all their plots and counter-plots, race pride and national pride; all their activities in trade and commerce; all their plans for peace and their preparations for war; all the fierce struggle for existence, both among savage men and civilized. Also all their philosophies and all their religions; their relations to time and eternity, their hopes of immortality and eternal life—all this arose before me and was to be considered when making my answer.

^bRoberts underlined this word and put an X in the margin, probably indicating that this gendered expression was to be reconsidered.

In fixing upon the answer that would be the “world’s best hope”—the world thus conceived—it stood as follows:

THE WORLD’S BEST HOPE IS THE WORLD’S CONTINUED PROGRESS IN KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.

That answer was adequate, I shall venture to say as the “world’s best hope” for any given year, or any series of years, or for any age or series of ages.

Necessarily the answer so given demanded a definition of truth, and then the definition of truth was given substantially as in the foregoing pages of this chapter: Truth is that which is, and all that is, or has been, or shall be—Truth, **is** the sum of existence!

Then, as now, this brings us face to face with the infinite; for truth thus conceived is infinite, unlimited, and since progress in the infinite must necessarily be without limits, there is no end to the progress of intelligences in that infinite, the truth. Man, oh, blessed thought! may ever be learning and coming to a knowledge of truth that is infinite. As truth is infinite, one may not look for finality in respect of progress in that which is infinite. Each goal attained in the truth will be but a new starting point; an end that but marks a new beginning; while the ultimate of truth will always be like the horizon one pursues over the ocean—ever receding as one approaches it. One may conceive of the existence of the infinite, but may never hope to encompass it; and hence eternal progress for intelligences which possess innate power to cognize truth.

Workers in the field of truth. But now this continued progress in truth—in knowledge of the truth—what a work it is! And how many are active in it! Some are seeking it by the perusal of the printed tomes of past ages, in the musty manuscripts of old libraries and monasteries. Some of this class are even now pushing back the horizon of recorded knowledge into ages before books were known, and are removing mountains from buried cities to get at the libraries of inscribed clay tablets, the hieroglyphic-covered stone monuments, and engraved plates of bronze and gold. Such is the branch of knowledge men call history and archaeology. They are seekers after truth, after knowledge of things as they have been. Others are reading the story of the earth’s formation in its various strata. They are studying the flora and fauna of bygone ages, seeking to determine the life-forms that once abounded in the earth. Others listen to every tremor of the earth and watch the rise of mountain chains, the slowly sinking shores in other parts, and note the very changing contour of oceans and continents. By their patient observation they seek to learn the forces that have been

operating in past ages, and that have fashioned the earth to its present form and excellence.

Others are in the laboratories to deal with substance and its elements. These elements they group and analyze, pursuing substance beyond the realm of the senses, down to the mystic borderline where matter seems to shade off into energy, and energy drifts back into what is recognized as matter, until the bewildered students of substance are wondering if in the last analysis of things it will not be found that matter and energy are really one—spirit?

Others still make a study of the heavens. They turn their telescopes upon the fixed stars, and measure their wonderful distances from the earth and from each other. They resolve mist and nebulae into congeries of worlds undreamed of by men of former times. Nay, more; by the aid of photography, which man by his skill has converted into the “wonderful eye of science,” he photographs and brings within the realm of his knowledge distant universes, if one may be allowed so to speak. Universes that no human eye has ever seen, even aided by the most powerful telescopes; and thus to some purpose indeed he makes “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament to show his handiwork; where day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” Surely “there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard, and their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

Coming back from the contemplation of the heavens to things within our own world, we find some men pursuing truth in the practical affairs of life, seeking to determine the right relationship of individuals to each other; also the relationship of the individual to society, and society to the individual. Others are seeking to determine the just principles on which the products of man’s industry shall be distributed. Others seek to determine the just laws of trade and commerce, and the right attitude of nations toward each other. Others, still, are seeking truth by utilizing what, in general terms, we call natural forces, and applying them to industrial and commercial activities. To locomotion on land and sea; to the production of light and heat and mechanical power; thus increasing the supply of the world’s necessities, conveniences, comforts, luxuries, and adding to its progress in material ways, until it would seem that millennium conditions dreamed of by saints, sang of by poets, and predicted by prophets, would not only be realized but surpass all the excellence of anticipation, even of inspired anticipation.

Standing in the midst of all the varied seekers after truth, is he who seeks it by faith and prayer; by appeals to God; by the pursuit of it

through holy thinking and righteous living; by faithful vigils of the night and words and deeds of charity through the day; who now and then pauses in the solitude of mountain tops, or of desert plains, or silent cloister, or in the crowded streets; and fancies—nay, hears the whisper of the still small voice which tells him that good angels and God labor with him, confirming his work by giving him assurances that his faith is not vain, and that his spiritually touched mind really sees God and angels as his co-laborers, and not mere phantoms, creations of the subjective mind. These are, par excellence, seekers after truth, since they seek the truth at the very source of it, by communion with, and service of God. These are your prophets—world teachers in the ways and in the things of God, seekers after truth and teachers of it, with whose services the world may not dispense without sustaining great loss.

Such is the great and varied host of seekers after truth, and as we contemplate them from the departing days of passing years, we shout to them with all our voice, and say, “success to you!” The world’s best hope for all time is your continued progress! Seek on, and let each one bring to the service of man that which he shall find of the truth, confident that the world’s progress, the advancement of civilization, man’s best welfare, and God’s greatest glory will be in exact proportion to your success. Legends, venerable for their age, you may destroy; myths, though beautiful, you may discredit; creeds, formulated on misconceptions of truth, may crumble at your touch; half truths, dear to some, you may rend from men’s belief. With all these there may go much to which the world has become attached, and your work at times may seem iconoclastic; but in the end all will be well, nothing will perish but that which is false and evil. Truth alone will ultimately survive and endure; and truth, as one of your own poets has said, “though the heavens depart and the earth’s fountains burst, Truth, the sum of existence, will weather the worst.”

I say again, the “world’s best hope” for all ages to come is the continued progress of man in the knowledge of the truth—man’s progress in “the knowledge of things as they are, and as they have been, and as they are to come.”

All this concerns our present undertaking, the discussion of the Truth, the Way, and the Life; and since our accepted definition of truth is knowledge of that which is, the next logical step in the development of our theme must be, what does man know? And that will be the subject of a few succeeding chapters. However, in closing this opening chapter on truth, I shall do so by quoting an ode to truth, inspired by

the definition of truth given in Joseph Smith's revelation of May 6, 1833, and quoted in the text:

TRUTH

O say, what is truth? 'Tis the fairest gem
That the riches of worlds can produce;
And priceless the value of truth will be when
The proud monarch's costliest diadem
Is counted but dross and refuse.

Yes, say, what is truth? 'Tis the brightest prize
To which mortals or Gods can aspire:
Go search in the depths where it glittering lies,
Or ascend in pursuit to the loftiest skies;
'Tis an aim for the noblest desire.

The scepter may fall from the despot's grasp,
When with winds of stern justice he copes;
But the pillar of truth will endure to the last,
And its firm rooted bulwarks outstand the rude blast,
And the wreck of the fell tyrant's hopes.

Then say, what is truth? 'Tis the last and the first,
For the limits of time it steps o'er:
Though the heavens depart, and the earth's fountains burst,
Truth, *the sum of existence*, will weather the worst,
Eternal, unchanged, evermore.⁹

⁹The author is John Jaques, member of the LDS Church; b. 1827; d. 1902; assistant church historian. *Latter-day Saint Hymns* (1927), no. 191; italics added.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Dummelow, ed., *Commentary on the Holy Bible*; D&C 93. For a discussion of Roberts's logic and epistemology, see pages 597-99. Interestingly, Roberts's unreserved estimation of human ability to know truth was tempered in Draft 1, page 1 of *TWL*, where he had quoted but then deleted Joseph Smith's statement:

Could we read and comprehend all that has been written from the days of Adam, on the relation of man to God and angels in a future state, we should know very little about it. Reading the experience of others, or the revelation given to *them*, can never give *us* a comprehensive view of our condition and true relation to God. Knowledge of these things can only be obtained by experience through the ordinances of God set forth for that purpose. Could you gaze into heaven five minutes, you would know more than you would by reading all that ever was written on the subject. (Smith, *History of the Church* 6:50)

Perhaps Roberts sensed some tension between his undertaking of *TWL* and this statement of the Prophet.

2

Of Knowledge: What Man Knows

Consciousness of self and other selves. First, as to existences: Man knows himself as existing. He is a self-conscious entity. He knows himself as existing by many manifestations. He knows himself as seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling; as feeling—meaning by that only the sense of touch. But most of all in these manifestations through which man attains self-consciousness, he knows himself as thinking: “I think, therefore I am.” This of a long time now has been the most acceptable formula for expressing self-consciousness—assurance of self-existence. One thinks, and one acts: therefore one is.

And not only is one conscious of one’s self, but he is also conscious of other selves, of other men, such as he himself is, in the main; with the same kind of qualities which he himself possesses, including this self-consciousness arrived at through the exercise of the same faculties and learned by the same series of manifestations. And while he notes these resemblances to his fellows, he notes also the differences as to himself and them—in height and form and weight; the differences also in race and speech; likewise the varying mental qualities. He knows himself as inferior in some things to his fellows, superior in others. And so all in all he is as able to differentiate himself from others, as he is also able to identify himself in common sameness with them.

Knowledge of external things. One’s knowledge is not limited to this consciousness of self and other selves—to the likeness and the difference between himself and other selves. He is conscious of the

In addition to several specific titles, Roberts recommended for this chapter “any standard work on psychology.” At the bottom of the contents page for this chapter, Roberts commented: “To the class Instructor: The scripture lesson reading should be assigned a week in advance of the lesson treatment that a selection suitable to the theme of the lesson may be obtained, and the reading practiced. As this chapter is rather difficult the writer suggests Ezekiel 18, as the reading lesson.”

existence of a large external world. He knows of the existence of earth: land, water, and air. He knows the earth is divided into islands and continents, seas and oceans, rivers and bays. He knows of the existence of the town or hamlet or countryside where he was born. In time he knows by visitation the capital of his county, of his state, of his country. He knows, at least by report, of the great centers of world population. He has verified so many things reported to him that he has confidence quite generally in what is reported to him, and seems supported by the consensus of opinion of others who have experienced them. By this act of belief he incorporates in his workable knowledge very many things that he does not know by actual personal contact or experience. Indeed, the larger volume of his knowledge is of this kind—knowledge that seeps into his consciousness by faith in the reports of others.

Man knows many objects by form, texture, and quality. He knows objects as round, or square, or cubical; as hard or soft; as solid or liquid, or gaseous. He knows objects as living or dead; as useful or useless (relatively). He knows objects by position, as horizontal or perpendicular or parallel. He knows them as transient or relatively permanent; and can rise to the conception that the mountains, in the light of eternity, are as transient as the clouds. He knows heights and depths, and is conscious even of the great space depths. He knows something of the sun, moon, and the planets, and something also of the stars. The list drawn out of what man knows grows voluminous; though, of course, in comparison with that which lies beyond his ken, what he knows is insignificant.

Knowledge of mind qualities. Nor is man's knowledge confined to material things. He is conscious of qualities, even of intellectual and moral qualities. He is conscious of thought mysteries. He has a mind capable through the imagination of creating worlds and peopling them with creatures of his mind, that may become realities to his thought. He has power to call up states of existence, and postulate conditions in which his mind creations shall live.

Man knows himself as competent to form normal judgments and realizes self-responsibility for his actions. In the first place, he is capable of forming comparisons between moral states and conditions. He can pass before his mind varied states that enter into common, human experiences. He may observe that those whose conduct is characterized by industry, frugality, honesty, temperance, physical skill in doing things, accompanied by steadiness and regularity of deportment, are prosperous, contented and happy, as

happiness goes in this world. While on the other hand, he may observe that those who are indolent, extravagant, dishonest, intemperate, given to knavery, unskilled in useful employments—these are unprosperous, destitute, discontented, untrusted, unloved, without self-respect or the respect of others.

Conscious of power to form judgments. Reviewing these two states in which he may find mortals, man is conscious of being able to pass judgment upon these two classes of persons; and seeing that the industrious, the skilled in the knowledge of honorable employments, and possessed of the positive virtues noted above live in more desirable states or conditions than those do who are unskilled in useful employments, who are dishonest, intemperate and generally reprobate, he forms his judgment that the former state is more to be desired than the latter. The same holds good in other respects: conformity to laws which time and experience approve as just is better than violation or resistance to such laws. Honorable conduct is superior to chicane; and living in harmony with what has been generalized as virtuous, is better than living under a system generalized as vicious.

Man's free agency. So passing things in review and pronouncing judgment upon them as good or evil, better or worse, man becomes conscious of a very wonderful power that he recognizes as existing within himself: the consciousness of will; the power of self-determination; the power to choose which of two or more courses he will take. He can do as he wills to do. While there may be persuasive influences drawing him to the one side or the other, yet he is conscious of the power within himself to determine what his action shall be. He recognizes the truth avowed by the English poet, "It is in our Wills that we are thus or thus."^a This is not to assert man's power to do impossible things, especially impossible physical things, such as lifting himself over a mountain into an adjoining valley; or creating two mountains without a valley between; or be bodily present in two places at one and the same moment of time; or at any time be himself and somebody else. None of these things have been in mind in the foregoing remarks on the existence and the power in man's will. I have had in mind rather

^aThis is a paraphrase from *Othello* 1.3.319–20: "Virtue? a fig! 'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus." This quotation comes from a speech delivered by Iago, one of Shakespeare's most thorough-going villains, a speech designed to encourage a foolish young man to evil acts. The context of the quotation was apparently not important to Roberts; similarly, many writers and speakers (of earlier generations in particular) cite Shakespeare without regard to context.

the fact of free moral agency, man's power to recognize good and evil by their effects in human life, and his power to choose between them—to choose which he will follow.

I am not unmindful of the fact that there is much that modifies the free action of man's will. There is the influence of public opinion upon one brought face to face with the necessity of acting in some given case: "What will people say if I take the step I really desire to take?" may "give him pause";^b and persuading himself that "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind" may require him to act in a manner different from the promptings of his own desire or judgment. He may find his power to will and to do modified by this consideration. The opinions of an inner circle of his friends may act upon his freedom in the same way. The effect upon his immediate material fortune, or his social advantage or that of his friends, may deter or urge his action one way or the other, and thus modify the action of his will. He will find the influence of his education, home influence, community tradition, national or racial prejudices—all these may rise to modify his judgment and bias his determination. He may be a weakling, lacking the courage to formulate a determination, or the boldness to proclaim it, or the firmness to persevere in it. Such men there be. But after full allowance is made for all these factors that may arise to confuse clear conceptions and to persuade to one side or the other of a given action, after all is said and done, there remains the fact that man does have within him, considering all the factors, the power to form a resolution, of which he looks upon himself as the author, which arises because he wishes it, and which would not arise unless he desired it to arise—in fact bade it arise, and perhaps will order a course contrary to all the influences of environment, or the prejudices of education, or the urging of personal friends. Here the fact of agency is shown. It resides complete in the resolution which man makes after deliberation: it is the resolution which is the proper act of man, which subsists by him alone; a simple fact independent of all the facts which precede or surround it.

So much, in brief, for what we know: our self-consciousness and consciousness of other self; our knowledge of external things; and our knowledge of our mind powers. Our purpose has been to indicate the fact of, and the scope of all this, not to exhaust it by enumeration or by thorough analysis.

^bRoberts refers to Hamlet's famous "To be, or not to be" soliloquy in *Hamlet* III.i.55-87, specifically lines 65-67: "For in that sleep of death what dreams may come, / When we have shuffled off this mortal coil, / Must give us pause."

Free agency more than a choice between alternatives.

When most people talk of believing in moral freedom, they mean by freedom a power which exhausts itself in acts of choice between a series of alternative courses; but, important though such choice, as a function of freedom is, the root idea of freedom lies deeper still. It consists in the idea, not that a man is, as a personality, the first and the sole cause of his choice between alternative courses, but that he is, in a true, even if in a qualified sense, the first cause of what he does, or feels, or is, whether this involves an act of choice, or consists of an unimpeded impulse. Freedom of choice between alternatives is the consequence of this primary faculty. It is the form in which the faculty is most noticeably manifested; but it is not the primary faculty of personal freedom itself. That this faculty of the self-origination of impulse is really what we mean by freedom, and what we mean by personality also, is shown by the only supposition which is open to us, if we reject this. If a man is not in any degree, be this never so limited, the first cause or originator of his own actions or impulses, he must be the mere transmitter or quotient of forces external to his conscious self, like a man pushed against another by the pressure of a crowd behind him. In other words, he would have no true self—no true personality at all.¹

Free agency in practical life—literature—history. In his work on the *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, W. H. Mallock devotes a chapter to “Mental Civilization and the Belief in Human Freedom,” the tenor of which assumes that in the practical affairs of life, in literature and in history, we proceed upon the assumption that a man is a free agent and can determine, within certain limits at least, both his physical and moral conduct; and argues that without this power, the life of man would be meaningless. In the matter of love he decides with Shakespeare’s Iago that “It is in ourselves that we are thus and thus. Our ⟨bodies⟩ [organisms] are the gardens to the which our wills are gardeners.”² That this is true he holds to be “attested not only by the private experiences of most civilized men, but also by all the great poetry in which the passion of love is dealt with.” Such poetry is, in Shakespeare’s words, a mirror held up to nature;^c and it is only recognized as

¹Mallock, *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, 75–76.

²Mallock, *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, 78.

^cIn *Hamlet* 3.2.21–24, Hamlet refers not to poetry, but to drama, “whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as ‘twere the mirror up to nature: to show virtue her feature, scorn her image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.”

great because it reflects faithfully.³ In the matter of heroism in the face of physical danger, he holds that the same story repeats itself.

A man who, for some great end, undergoes prolonged peril, and deliberately wills to die for the sake of that end, if necessary, is no doubt valued . . . (because such conduct) originates in the man's conscious self, which he has deliberately chosen when he might just as well have chosen its opposite, and which is not imposed on him by conditions, whether within his organism or outside it.⁴

The virtue which arises from forgiveness of sin exists in consequence of recognition of this force we call agency in man. "Forgiveness," says our author,

is an act which, in the absence of a belief in freedom (free agency), not only would lose its meaning, but could not take place at all. To forgive an injury implies that, bad as the offense may have been, the man who committed it was better than his own act, and was for this reason not constrained to commit it; and while it is only the assumption of a better potential self in him that makes him a subject to whom moral blame is applicable, it is only for the sake of this self that forgiveness can abstain from blaming. The believer in freedom says to the offending party, "I forgive you for the offense of not having done your best." The determinist (one who believes that man has not the power of free will) says, "I neither forgive nor blame you; for although you have done your worst, your worst was your best also."⁵

Of the great characters of literature, Mr. Mallock also says:

They interest us as born to freedom, and not naturally slaves, and they pass before us like kings in a Roman triumph. Once let us suppose these characters to be mere puppets of heredity and circumstance, and they and the works that deal with them lose all intelligible content, and we find ourselves confused and wearied with the fury of an idiot's tale.⁶

Historical characters are placed in the same category. All praise or blame only has meaning as we regard these historical characters as free moral agents:

All this praising and blaming is based on the assumption that the person praised or blamed is the originator of his own actions, and not a mere transmitter of forces. Man's significance for men in the whole category of human experiences resides primarily in what he makes of

³Mallock, *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, 78.

⁴Mallock, *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, 79-80.

⁵Mallock, *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, 80.

⁶Mallock, *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, 81.

himself, not in what he has been made by an organism derived from his parents, and the various external stimuli to which it has automatically responded.⁷

⁷Mallock, *Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, 82.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: “Any standard work on psychology”; Guizot, *History of Civilization*, vol. 2, lect. 5; James, *Psychology*, esp. chs. 12 and 26, “not with the view of accepting all Mr. James’s premises or his conclusions (especially in his chapter on ‘Will’), but to become familiar with the subject, and its treatment”; Roberts, *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 2:23–27.

CHAPTER III

OF KNOWLEDGE: DEFINITIONS: TIME, SPACE, MATTER, FORCE, MIND

Scripture Lesson Reading *

Analysis

Building Stones of Knowledge:

- I. Duration-time; that in which things and events come to pass.
- II. Space; expanse; local and unlimited; that which holds things.
- III. Matter; eternity of; the stuff things are made of.
- IV. Force; an active element in things.
- V. Mind; intelligent, purposeful force--the master power of the universe.

References

Herbert Spencer's "First Principles"--chapter III.

John Stuart Mill's "Three Essays on Religion," especially the division of the essay on "Utility of Religion" (latter part): Also essay on "Theism", especially division on "Argument for a First Cause."

"The Outline of Science" by J. Arthur Thomson (4 Vols. 1922) Vol. I pp. 9-62.

"The Science History of the Universe" (10 Vols. 1909) Vol. 3 Physics, chapter I Analysis of Matter, ch. II Properties of Matter.*

John Fisk's "Cosmic Philosophy Vol. I chs. I to IV, and ch. VI. Also "Studies in Religion section on "Mystery of Evil."

* All the works given in the column of "References" should be read with discrimination; not accepting either all the premises laid down, or the conclusions reached. They are given merely as sources through which the student may pursue his thought-investigations, not for unquestioning acceptance.

3

Of Knowledge: Definitions: Time, Space, Matter, Force, Mind

So far in treating of our knowledge it has been of earth-bound knowledge that we have spoken, limited to things we know of earth and earth life; and even within these limits it has narrowed to the indication merely of a very few things. Our proposed objective in this book, however, will require a broader view of man's knowledge. We must consider in outline at least what he knows of the solar system, of the things that exist beyond the earth and earth life.

Building stones of knowledge. To make this survey will require that we deal in a limited way with some definitions as to time, and space, and matter, and force, as necessary elements to our survey in outline of man's knowledge of the universe. Of course, I am proposing no deep, metaphysical inquiry into the nature of these building stones of knowledge, time, space, matter, and force. I shall not attempt any discussion of the "reality" of them at all; I shall only deal with such definitions and treatment of them as will make clear what may be presented as the general sum of man's partial knowledge of the solar and sidereal systems that make up the universe in which he lives.

Duration—Time. First then as to a workable definition of time. Time is said to be that part of duration in which events happen and in which events are distinguished with reference to concurrence of before and after; beginning and end; relation with reference to concurrence or succession. Also it is that within which change is effected and the express relation of change and continuity.

On the contents page for this chapter, Roberts remarked: "All the works given in the column of 'References' should be read with discrimination; not accepting either all the premises laid down, or the conclusions reached. They are given merely as sources through which the student may pursue his thought-investigations, not for unquestioning acceptance."

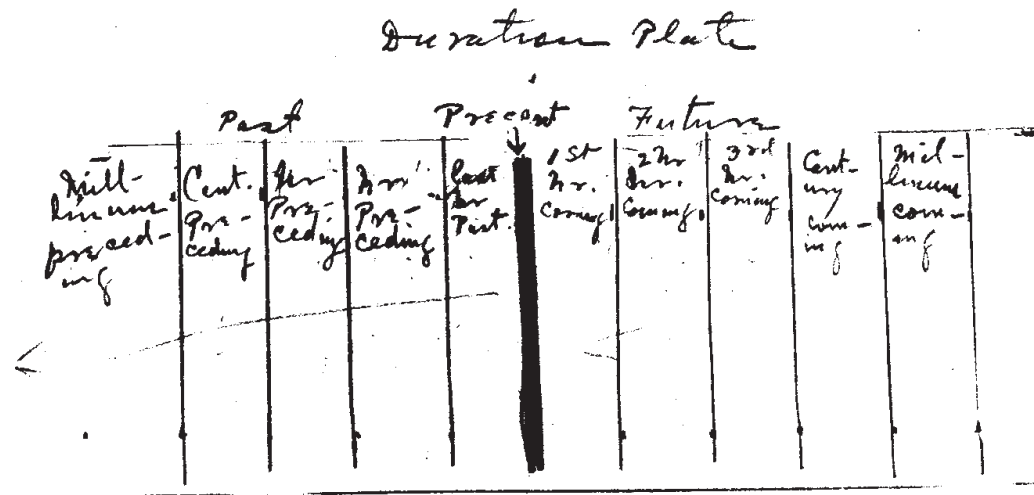
What is considered as absolute time—“time in itself”—is conceived as flowing at a constant rate, unaffected by the speed or slowness of the motion of material things. This flowing aspect of time—as indeed as to all its aspects—will be more clearly realized when it is considered with reference to its divisions of present, past and future; for time is conceived as so divided. The present really consists of but one moment, the “instant” that enters into past time ere one can name it *as forming the present*; even as it stands as the present moment, another moment from the future side of the present crowds it into past time, and this proceeds in constant succession. It is only by arbitrary arrangement that one may construct a present longer than this fleeting moment, and that is by stipulating your present as the present hour, or day, or month, or year, or century. Then the present holds as you have arbitrarily named it.

Time has another division that should be mentioned. It may be conceived as limited or unlimited. This division is usually expressed as time and eternity. “Time” in this use means a limited period of duration; and eternity means time without limitation—endless duration. To still more firmly grasp in consciousness this illusive thing called “time,” let us consider it both in this limited and unlimited phase: limited time is that part of duration which stands between two events, such as the time of the birth of the Christ, and the birth of George Washington; or the founding of Rome and the beginning of the New World Republic—the United States of America.

In considering limitless time—time without beginning or end—let us take this present moment or hour, or year, or century. First use the hour for our unit of measurement. Let us draw a perpendicular line, and let it stand for the present hour, then on the right side of this perpendicular line representing the present hour draw other lines, several of them, and let them represent hour-periods of future time. Then on the left of the line standing for the present hour, draw several other perpendicular lines to represent the past, and now: what was before this present hour? another hour; and what before that? another hour; and what before that? still another hour; and yet another, and another—on to infinity. Turn now to the other side of the present hour. What preceded this present hour into the past? The hour next beyond it in the past. And what preceded the second hour that went into the past? The third hour beyond it that went into the past, and the fourth hour, and the fifth that went beyond it into the past. And so on without limit. Starting in either direction from the present, into the past, or into hours yet to come from the future, you could never reach either beginning or end of them, they would stretch out to infinity. Time is without limits,

it extends to eternity. This will readily appear if instead of using the hour as the unit we use the same spaces marked off, calling them centuries or a million years, or periods that stand for ~~millions~~ or billions of years—you would get the same results. What preceded the present period of a million years? That period of a million years which is now gone to make up part of the limitless past. And what stands waiting to come in when the present period of a million years shall have passed? Just such another period stands waiting to take the place of the present such period. It is impossible to postulate to consciousness the contrary, viz. that duration, future, or past has limitations. This brings us to what in philosophy is held to be “a necessary truth.” “Necessary truths,” says Whewell,^a quoted with approval in *Webster’s International Dictionary*, under the definition of truth,

are those in which we not only learn that the proposition is true, but see that it must be true; in which the ⟨negative⟩ [negation] of the truth is not only false, but impossible; in which we cannot, even by an effort of imagination, or in a supposition, conceive the reverse of that which is asserted.¹



Duration plate showing the past, the present instant, and the future. Roberts breaks the past (“preceding” time) and future (“coming” time) into hours, centuries, and millenia.

^aWhewell, William W. (1794–1866) was known for his writings about diverse intellectual issues of the Victorian Period (physics, math, law, political economy, church architecture); he concentrated on the philosophy of science and attempted an extensive history of all “inductive sciences.”

¹*Webster’s New International Dictionary*, s.v. “truth.”

When the mind reaches that state of consciousness it rests as having arrived at a point beyond which it cannot go—it has reached a necessary truth.^b

Time, then, is that in which things happen, a ~~boundless ocean~~ **broad stream** of duration in which endless changes go on. It has no beginning! It can have no end; it will always be; it is eternity—**infinite after its kind**.

Space. Space is said to be that which is characterized by dimensions in boundless expanse and of indefinite divisibility; and also the boundless expanse itself. Space has to do with dimensions, position, and direction; continuous extension in all directions in which objects may exist and change their position. It is that in which matter or substances may be said to exist. Like its parallel existence, duration, it is without beginning or end—limitless. As in the case of duration, so with space, it can be demonstrated to be boundless. In this effort of illustration, we will not use the “moment,” but a “point” mathematically defined (and in that sense we here use it). A point is that which is conceived to have position merely, but no parts or dimensions. It is really the negative of extension. It is a position to which an imaginary line may lead, or a position from which imaginary lines may radiate in all directions.

We will suppose a point before us as a starting place from which extension shall begin through a series of enlarging circles, and our measuring unit shall be a thousand miles separating the lines. Having started from the line which circles our point, we come to the line next to it, and have past over a thousand miles of ~~space~~ **extension** to the next line; and what is beyond this second line? another thousand miles of space to the next line; and what beyond that third line? still another thousand miles of extension; and beyond that? still another thousand miles. Still other stretches of space of like distance, and so on to infinity, without being able to postulate a line or point beyond which there would not be further extension. We could never reach a point or a line beyond which there would be no “beyond.” And the mind is again forced to the conclusion of the existence of another necessary truth. The opposite **of this** limitless expanse can not be conceived. We may not postulate a point or line of which there is not a “beyond.”

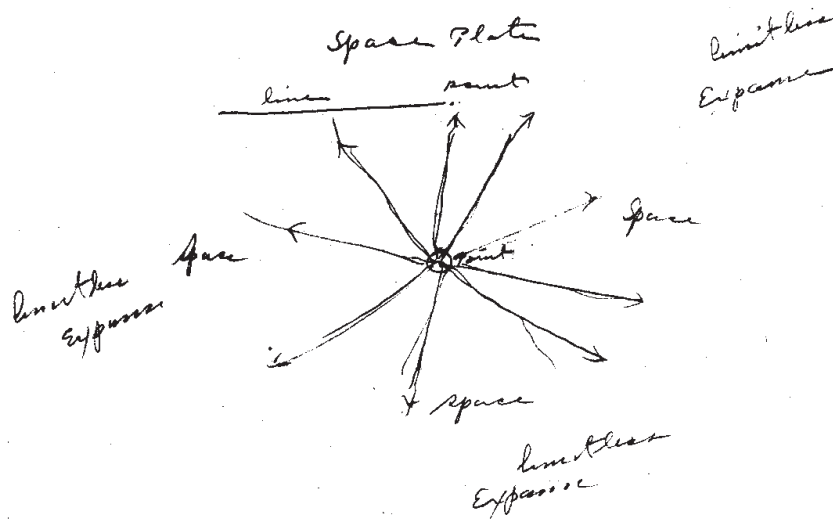
And now this by way of illustration: astronomers tell us that between our earth and the sun there are about 93,000,000 miles of space. What is beyond the sun in a straight line from us? space. 93,000,000 miles of it?

^bRoberts noted in the margin to the side of this paragraph a question mark and the word “footnote,” indicating the necessity of a footnote citation although none was inserted.

Yes, and if 93,000,000 miles be multiplied by 93,000,000 of miles the space in a direct line from us beyond the sun would not begin to be measured! At this point a mile seems so paltry a unit of measurement. Let us take a ray of light from the sun as our unit of measurement. Scientists tell us that in one tick of the pendulum of a clock a ray of light would pass eight times around the circumference of the earth, 186,000 miles! From Alpha Centauri, the brightest star in the constellation of Centaur, and the nearest to the earth, it would take a ray of light about three and a half years to reach us. It has also been estimated that it would take light over 16 years to reach us from Sirius, about 18 years to reach us from Vega, and over forty years to reach us from the Polar Star.²

So much space then lies between us and the Polar Star. What space lies in a direct line from us beyond the Polar Star? as much more space as that between our Earth and the Polar Star. And if the distance between us and some other star of the Universe were so distant as to require a billion years for a ray of light to reach us from it, the space in a direct line beyond would be just as great as between our earth and the supposed distant star—and so on, and on without limit!

Space then is boundless. It is without a center; it is without circumference! The contrary is inconceivable. We again arrive at a necessary truth. And space is infinite after its kind.^c



Space plate. Roberts shows how space extends limitlessly in all directions from any point.

²Gillett and Rolfe, *First Book in Astronomy*, 364–65.

^cFor current astronomy, see Carole Stotte, ed., *Images of the Universe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); National Research Council, *The Decade of Discovery in Astronomy and Astrophysics* (Washington, D.C.: Nation Academy Press, 1991).

Matter: Matter is usually defined as that of which any physical object is composed; material, “the stuff that things are made of.” In physics it is said to be that which occupies space, that which is conceived to constitute the body of the outward or physical universe; and, with energy, to form the basis of objective phenomena. The ultimate nature of matter is considered to be unknown, and the physicist can only describe certain of its properties and speculate as to its structure. The occupancy of space implies extension and impenetrability. The study of bodies under the action of forces has led to the conception of mass as a universal attribute of matter.

The general forms in which matter exists are solids, liquids, and gases. The chief thing that concerns us in the reference that we shall make to matter is its eternity and its limitless extension; its indestructibility and the necessary corollary of that quality, its uncreatability. Experiments have demonstrated the fact that the form of matter can be changed, but it can never be annihilated, equally certain is it that it can not be created in the sense that from nothing matter can be produced. On the point of the nature of “matter in itself” being unknown, Professor R. K. Duncan says,

What matter is, in itself and by itself, is quite hopeless of answer and concerns only metaphysicians. The *Ding an sich* is forever outside the province of science. If all men stopped to quarrel over the inner inwardness of things, progress, of course, would cease. Science is naïve; she takes things as they come, and rests content with some such practical definition as will serve to differentiate matter from all other forms of ⟨unknown matter⟩ [non-matter]. This may be done, strictly ⟨professionally⟩ [provisionally] in this place, by defining matter as that which occupies space and possesses weight. Using these two properties it is readily possible to sift out matter from all the heterogeneous phenomena that present themselves to the senses, and that, in this place, is what we want. Thus, wood, water, copper, oil and air are forms of matter for they evidently possess weight and fill space. But light, heat, electricity and magnetism we cannot consider to fill so many quarts or weigh so many pounds. They are, therefore, forms of non-matter ⟨light, heat, electricity, are properties of matter⟩. In like manner, things such as grace, mercy, justice, and truth, while they are existing entities as much as matter, are unquestionably non-matter.³

³Duncan, *New Knowledge*, 2. [In addition to the corrections made in the text above, a number of errors in spelling and punctuation have also been corrected.]

Grace, mercy, justice, and truth, are qualities or attributes of mind, or spirit, which may be matter, but of a finer quality than that which is cognized by the senses.⁴

As to what is called the “conservation of mass,” meaning by that the maintenance of the sum total of matter, the author of *The New Knowledge* says:

This law, known as the law of the conservation of mass, states that no particle of matter, however small, may be created or destroyed. All the king’s horses and all the king’s men cannot destroy a pin’s head. We may smash that pin’s head, dissolve it in acid, burn it in the electric furnace, employ, in a word, every annihilating agency, and yet that pin’s head persists in being. Again, it is as uncreatable as it is indestructible. In other words, we cannot create something out of nothing. The material must be furnished for every existent article. The sum of matter in the universe is x pounds,—and, while it may be carried through a myriad forms, when all is said and done, it is just— x pounds.⁵

⟨Chemistry⟩ has . . . disposed of the idea of the destruction and creation of matter. It accepts without hesitation the doctrine of the imperishability of substance; for, though the aspect of a thing may change through decomposition and recombinations, in which its constituent parts are concerned, every atom continues to exist, and may be recovered by suitable processes, though the entire thing may have seemingly disappeared.⁶

“The annihilation of Matter,” says Herbert Spencer,^d “is unthinkable for the same reason that the creation of Matter is ⟨unreasonable⟩ [unthinkable].”⁷

This indestructibility of matter and its uncreatability—not an atom of it capable of being created from nothing; and each atom impossible of annihilation, together with its limitless extension through space and equally throughout duration, brings to us the generalization of scientific thought best expressed in Haeckel’s^e Law of Substance,[†] viz.:

⁴See fr Jos Sm.

⁵Duncan, *New Knowledge*, 3.

⁶Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe* 2:375.

^dHerbert Spencer (1820–1903) was an English philosopher who zealously supported evolution. He worked toward a unification of all sciences, arguing that science, which researches the unknown, supersedes religion, which organizes and rationalizes it.

⁷Spencer, *First Principles*, 182.

^eErnst Heinrich Haeckel (1834–1919) was a German zoologist and philosopher, greatly influenced by the principles of Darwinism, who instituted the theory of organic evolution. He was also an adamant believer in monism, which substitutes scientific evidence for religious doctrine, denying the existence of God.

[†]“List of Points on Doctrine in Question by the Committee [of the Quorum of

The law of substance.

1. "Through all eternity the infinite universe has been, and is, subject to the law of substance."
2. "The *extent* of the universe is infinite and unbounded; it is empty in no part, but everywhere filled with substance."
3. "The *duration* of the world (i.e. universe) is equally infinite and unbounded; it has no beginning and no end: it is eternity."
4. "Substance is everywhere and always in uninterrupted movement and transformation: nowhere is there perfect repose and rigidity; yet the infinite quantity of matter and of eternally changing force remains constant."⁸

Force: Persistence of force ~~or energy~~. To this statement in respect of the uncreatability and indestructibility of matter there must be added its necessary corollary, the conservation of, or the persistence in undiminished entirety the sum of force or energy throughout the universe. Force, as it concerns physics, is recognized as an active element in things; ~~that which acts, in contra distinction to that which is acted upon;~~ that which is in all natural phenomena, and is continually passing from one portion of matter to another.

Force is manifested in various forms, as mechanical, electrical, thermal, chemical, ~~energies~~ and changes under suitable conditions from ~~any~~ one form into another. As matter may not be created nor destroyed, so with force. The conservation of force rests upon the fundamental proposition that the quantity of force in the universe is invariable, but though its quantity can never be increased or diminished, the forms under which it expresses itself may be transmuted into each other. And while this idea may not "be as universally accepted as the indestructibility of matter, yet so numerous and so cogent are the arguments adduced in its behalf that it stands in an imposing way as altogether true." "It was in India," says John W. Draper, author of the *Intellectual Development of Europe*, and of the *Conflict between Religion and Science*,

it was in India that men first recognized the fact that force is indestructible and eternal. This implies ideas more or less distinct of that which we now term its "correlation and conservation." Considerations

the Twelve],” noted: “The wisdom in referring to Haeckel’s theory, which is disputed by many scientists, is questioned.”

⁸Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, 242; italics in original. [Roberts left a notation in Haeckel at this point: “making & unmaking of worlds.”]

connected with the stability of the universe give strength to this view, since it is clear that, were there either an increase or a diminution, the order of the world must cease. The definite and invariable amount of energy in the universe must therefore be accepted as a scientific fact. The changes we witness are in its distribution,⁹

not in its creation and annihilation. As stated in the law of substance given above, “the infinite quantity of matter and of eternally changing force remains constant.”

Twentieth-century advancement in physics. Since writing the above which pertains chiefly to the indestructibility of matter and the conservation of force, it has occurred to me that some of our more recent writers and students may take exception to the matter as here set forth—regarding the writers quoted as far behind the recent knowledge of those who have taken the field since such writers as I have referred to above passed on, say some quarter of a century ago. Some of our present day professors hold that the principle of the indestructibility of matter has proven to be “definitely invalid”; and it is now sometimes held that a definite portion of matter “has entirely disappeared as a distinct and separate entity . . . of any system, . . . *radiant energy taking its place.*”¹⁰ That is, matter changes into radiant energy, and vice-versa, the change of a small amount of matter giving enormous quantities of energy.¹¹

In other words the new knowledge is largely sustained by Einstein^f and Dr. Millikan,^g the latter in his book on *Evolution in Science and Religion*, the “Terry Lectures”—Lecture I, “The Evolution of Twentieth Century Physics.” The sum of the matter amounts to this: the atom is found to be not the ultimate unit of material elements, indestructible and impenetrable as ~~it has~~ hitherto held to have been; but on the contrary is a complex thing, made up of a number of electrons, containing particles of positive and negative electricity capable of manifesting immense energy. It is held that atoms once regarded as the ultimate factors of matter may now be broken up and changed into something else—viz., into *radiant* energy. Thus it is held that the

⁹Draper, *Conflict between Religion and Science*, 126-27.

¹⁰Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 15-16; italics in original.

¹¹Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 16.

^fAlbert Einstein (1879-1955) fashioned the theory of relativity and earned numerous awards for his famous work in photoelectric effect, statistical physics, and quantum theory.

^gRobert Andrews Millikan (1868-1953) earned the 1923 Nobel Prize in physics for developing a device to measure the charge of an electron.

indestructibility of matter is proven to be “definitely invalid.” But not so fast! Let it be noted that the definite amount of matter has not been annihilated, but merely changed to something else, namely into “energy”—“radiant energy”; a small amount of matter giving off enormous quantities of energy. Be it so. And note again that our twentieth century physicists (and we speak respectfully of them, of course) say that, “beginning in 1901 the mass of an electron was shown by direct experiment to grow measurably larger and larger as its speed is pushed closer and closer to the speed of light (186,000 miles per second).”¹² And elsewhere in the lecture, Dr. Millikan says that in accordance with Dr. Einstein’s equation on the matter, “is it not more than probable that the process is also going on somewhere in the opposite sense and that radiant energy is condensing back into mass, that new worlds are thus continually forming as old ones are disappearing?”¹³ Certainly; and that is the very truth one ought to say. But why say, as Dr. Millikan does say, that “matter may be annihilated,” only to follow it immediately with “radiant energy appearing in its place”?¹⁴ The whole truth is that matter has been changed to radiant energy, and radiant energy, by motion approaching the speed of light, has been brought back to mass; that is, to matter. Matter has not been dissolved into “nothing”—into “non-existence”; and “nothing” by motion has not been brought into “something.” There has been no break in the continuity; something has existed all the while, and the old truth on the conservation of matter and force has not in reality been changed, but emphasized. For what have we here but the cube of ice placed on the stove where for a moment it sputters in water and steam and gases, then disappears to be seen no more? But even household chemistry teaches one that the steam and gases that have disappeared might have been condensed to steam again, the steam condensed to water, the water frozen into ice, and the original cube of ice restored. It seems no more than this has been done to the atom of Dr. Millikan’s treatise. Matter has not been absolutely destroyed, nor has it been recreated absolutely from nothing. The continuity of existence has not been broken at any point. All that has happened is that a forward step has been taken towards that truth announced by that inspired Prophet of the New Dispensation when he said: “All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes; We cannot see it; but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter.” This in May 1843 (D&C 131:7-8).

¹²Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 15-16.

¹³Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 17.

¹⁴Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 16.

Or further *the reader may be* enlightened by the loftier passage from the writings of Moses, as found in a passage from a fragment of his ancient writings also brought to light by Joseph Smith in June 1830, and published in the Pearl of Great Price, where he says:

Behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man; but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them. . . . And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof [even] so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words. (Moses 1:35, 38)

This somewhat antedates Dr. Millikan's remark (1928) that Lord Kelvin (an astronomer of the 19th century—antiquated according to Dr. Millikan) *would be shocked* “if he should hear the modern astronomers talking about the stars radiating away their mass through the mere act of giving off light and heat! And yet this is now orthodox astronomy.”¹⁵ And again:

if they do so in accordance with the Einstein equation then is it not more than probable that the process is also going on somewhere in the opposite sense and that radiant energy is condensing back into mass, that new worlds are thus continually forming as old ones are disappearing?¹⁶

“These,” he adds, “are merely the current speculations of modern physics, based, however, upon the now fairly definite discovery that conservation of matter in its nineteenth century sense is invalid.”¹⁷

The Prophet's remarks through the book of Moses—we repeat—somewhat ante-date Dr. Millikan's and Dr. Einstein's notion concerning the making and unmaking of worlds, but we can scarcely see that here has been any serious *or real* disturbance of the “old” 19th century doctrine of the conservation of mass and of energy or force. We shall let that doctrine stand, therefore, as we have placed it in the text of preceding paragraphs. “The elements are eternal”—when you get to them.

Mind: Intelligent force. Mind is to be here spoken of only in its relations to matter and force. Its proper and fuller treatment in the general scheme of things will be found in chapter 9 of this division of our

¹⁵Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 17.

¹⁶Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 17.

¹⁷Millikan, *Evolution in Science and Religion*, 17-18.

general theme (part I). But mind deserves mention here in connection with force and matter, ~~and~~ because of its relationship to them as a factor in causation, and in the sustaining, and the directing of creation; the one thing which may provide the purposeful element in the universe, and constitute the eternal cause, if not of the universe, at least of the cosmos, the orderly status and procession of things.

We sometimes speak of “blind force.” This is when we regard it in its mechanical, electrical, thermal, or chemical manifestations; in gravitation as attracting and repelling power produced by masses of matter and relative distances. But there is a force operating in the universe that is not blind, and that is not mechanical, or chemical merely; and this force, or energy, is mind. It is intelligent, and manifests purpose, and gives evidence of possessing powers of causation, of origination. All these manifestations are seen in man, in mind as manifested in man. He can regard himself as the nearest approach to a *vera causa*—true cause—than is immediately met with elsewhere in human experience. Man has learned that he can originate many things. He can take a great variety of materials scattered about, gather them together, and from them build a house according to a plan which his mind originated, and he becomes the cause of the house. By his mind the purpose and plan was conceived, and his hands by assembling and using the material, according to plan, caused the house. His mind also from the large field of its knowledge and experience, can build sciences, found governments, formulate systems of philosophy—create many things; they proceed from his mind, hence product of mind operating as an intelligent force. Often this mind in man makes use of other kinds of force: mechanical forces, electrical forces, thermal forces, chemical forces, and uses matter, things we call material, at will. Man has learned to regard the succession of phenomenon as effects, and can largely attribute to each some cause. When he comes to that cause, however, he finds it to be the effect of an antecedent cause, and so on, back and back seemingly to infinity. But the mind cannot rest in an endless chain of cause-effects, he feels that somewhere there must either be a first cause, or an eternal one,¹⁸ in any event a real one. And when it is found will it not be of the nature of that power which in man wells up as mind, which its true power of origination, but of course transcending the human mind in majesty, and power, and glory; a universal mind, proceeding from all

¹⁸First or eternal cause is discussed in chapters [7-9], all to the point of “eternal cause” being the truth of the matter.

harmonized, divine intelligences; the very “spirit of God,” everywhere present and present with power—the eternal cause and sustaining power of the cosmos, whose glory is intelligence, the master power of the universe?

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*, vol. 1, chs. 1-4 and 6, and *Studies in Religion* section on “Mystery of Evil”; Kaempffort, *The Science-History of the Universe*, vol. 3, chs. 1 and 2; Mill, *Three Essays on Religion*, esp. “Utility of Religion” (latter part), also “Theism,” esp. “Argument for a First Cause”; Thomson, *Outline of Science*, 1:9-62. For further discussion, see pages 601-4 and 636-38 below.

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CHAPTER IV
OF KNOWLEDGE: THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Scripture Reading Lesson

Analysis

The Solar System:

- I. The Sun: Self-luminous centre of the system;
- II. Mercury: The planet moving nearest the sun;
- III. Venus: The second planet from the sun;
- IV. Earth: Third planet from the sun;
- V. Mars: The fourth planet from the sun; and much like the Earth.
- VI. Jupiter: The giant planet of the system;
- VII. Saturn: The planet beautiful of the system;
- VIII. Uranus: The seventh planet from the sun;
- IX. Neptune: The eighth planet from the sun; distance from it, 2,791,000,000 miles!

References

Any standard work on Astronomy.

"Newcomb's Astronomy" (school edition) comprehensive and within reasonable compass with fine illustrations.

"Astronomy" by Gillet & Rolf, designed for academies and high schools; a more primary work than Newcomb's, but with superior colored illustrations of high value.

"A New Astronomy" by David P. Todd, issued from Amherst College; especially valuable for its experimental demonstrations of astronomical subject.

"The Outline of Science" by J. Arthur Thomson (1922) Vol. I The Romance of the Heavens.

"Splendor of the Heavens;" a popular authoritative astronomy (2 Vols.) 1905, profusely and splendidly illustrated work.

4

Of Knowledge: The Solar System

With these definitions determined as far as **it** is necessary to our purpose, we may now proceed with the investigation of man's knowledge of the universe, beginning with his knowledge of the solar system, that is the sun and the group of worlds held in balance by its and their mutually attracting and repelling forces.

The Sun. The sun is the most conspicuous object to the knowledge of man external to the earth, and with it he forms an early acquaintanceship—it becomes a childhood consciousness. Its brightness, together with its welcome glow of warmth, make it a conspicuous object of knowledge. The regularity of its “rising” reaching high noon, and slowly declining to its “setting”; all this not only makes the sun a conspicuous and wonderful object of knowledge, but constantly renews it for us, until one may say truly that it is the most conspicuous object of knowledge external to the earth. Its wonderfulness grows upon us the more we become acquainted with it. From our present knowledge, developed through long years of observation by men, the sun is regarded as an immense spherical mass of substance aflame, with a diameter approximately of 888,000 miles; while the earth which we regard as so large has a diameter approximately of only 8,000 miles! The circumference of the sun would be its diameter $\langle ? \rangle$ multiplied by three—that is 2,664,000 miles; while the earth, to us so large, is but 24,000 miles in circumference! So large is the sun that its mass is said to be equal to 750 times the mass of all the planets and their satellites (moons) of the solar system. How large such a mass is will better appear after what is to be said of these planets is set down.[†]

[†]“List of Points on Doctrine in Question by the Committee [of the Quorum of the Twelve],” written before May 15, 1930, noted: “Size of the sun—figures do not agree with other figures.”

The sun, as already stated, is the center of a group of planets or worlds held by attracting and repelling forces in regular movement about the sun in orbits determined by the operation of these forces. These planets so far as we now know are eight in number; but moving between the orbits of two of them are what are called the asteroids, apparently a swarm of fragments of a world or worlds broken into bits. Little is known of the nature of them, but they move in a fixed course between the orbits of two of the planets, Mars and Jupiter.

Mercury. The first of the planets of the solar system, first in nearness to the sun, is Mercury. Its mean distance from the sun in moving around its orbit is 36,000,000 miles; its diameter is 3,030 miles; its sidereal period, the time required to move in its orbit around the sun, is 87.96 days. The axial revolution of Mercury—the revolutions upon its axis which determines the length of its days, is uncertain. Mercury has no satellites.

Venus. The second planet of the solar system is Venus. Its mean distance from the sun in moving around its orbit is 67,000,000 miles; its mean diameter is 7,700 miles; its sidereal period is 224 days; the axial revolution is uncertain; it has no satellites.

Earth. The third planet of the system is the Earth. Its mean distance from the sun is 93,000,000 miles; its mean diameter is approximately 8,000 miles; its sidereal period is 365 days; its axial revolution is practically 24 hours; it has one satellite.

Mars. The fourth planet is Mars. Its mean distance ~~of miles~~ from the sun is 141,000,000 miles; its mean diameter is 4,230 miles; its sidereal period approximately 687 days; its axial revolution is 24 hours, plus; it has two satellites.[†]

Jupiter. The fifth planet is Jupiter. Its mean distance from the sun is 463,000,000 miles; its mean diameter approximately 87,000 miles; its sidereal period 4,332 days, plus; its axial revolution approximately 9 1/2 hours; it has five satellites.

Jupiter is known as the “giant planet” of the system, and here we have an opportunity for comparison with the Earth, which will give us opportunity to form some notion of the great masses of the separate planets, and the greatness of the planetary system. Our Earth for example is but 93,000,000 miles from the sun, and that we think of as an enormous distance; but how insignificant it is in the comparison with the distance of Jupiter from the sun which is 463,000,000 miles! Our Earth which we think of as so large has a diameter of only 8,000

[†]“List of Points on Doctrine in Question,” also noted: “The number of sidereal days of Mars should be checked; also of Jupiter and Saturn.”

miles; while Jupiter's diameter is 87,000 miles! Our Earth requires only 365 days, plus, to make the complete circuit around the sun, but it requires Jupiter about 4,432 days to circle the sun! This comparison will suggest to the reader-student the making of other comparisons with the remaining planets of the system, and with the same amazing result of a constantly growing consciousness of the immensity of these respective planets, the distances that separate them from each other, and their immense distances from the sun.

Saturn. The sixth planet of the solar system is Saturn. Its distance from the sun is nearly double the mean distance of Jupiter from the sun, being 886,000,000 miles; its mean diameter, though less than Jupiter's, is still 71,000 miles; its sidereal period is 10,756 days, plus; its axial revolution 10 hours, plus. Saturn has eight satellites, which distinguishes it, in addition to the well known and beautiful bands of seeming light which circle the planet, giving it the distinction of "the most beautiful world of the planetary system," while its eight moons circling it in regular order, make it appear almost as a miniature solar system by itself.

Uranus. The seventh planet of the system is Uranus. Its mean distance is more than double the distance of Saturn from the sun, being 1,781,000,000 miles; its mean diameter is 31,900 miles; its sidereal period 30,686 days, plus; its axial revolution is uncertain; it has four satellites.

Neptune. The eighth planet is Neptune. Its mean distance from the sun is 2,791,000,000 miles; its diameter is 34,800 miles; its sidereal period is 60,181 days, plus; its axial revolution is uncertain; so far as discovered, it has but one satellite.

In order that the above information may be more clearly visualized, I place it in tabulated form at the close of this chapter.

The solar system to be a basis for future comparison. All these particulars respecting the solar system are set down here, not with the idea that something new or special is being given out about the solar system, for the writer very well knows that all this is but the commonest knowledge of the grade and the high schools; but this common knowledge is here set out for the purpose of bringing home to the readers and the students of this book the consciousness of the immensity of that scale on which the solar system is drawn, that it may become a sort of measuring wand by which, through comparisons, we may form some judgments of the still greater immensities to be considered when dealing with the sidereal or star system of the universe. All this consideration of the greatness and the extent of the solar system,

and the still greater vastness of the sidereal system, is in order that the reader student may appreciate somewhat the greatness of the theme upon which we are entering, the search for the heart of all this, the master secret of all; its soul! God!*

Solar System^a

Names of the Planets	Mean Distance from the Sun in Mill. of Miles	Mean diameter in Miles	Sidereal Periods in days around orbits	Axial Revolution in hours	No. of Satellites
1. Mercury	36.0	3,030	87.96	uncertain	0
2. Venus	67.2	7,700	224.70	uncertain	0
3. Earth	92.9	7,918	365.25	23.56	1
4. Mars	141.5	4,230	686.95	24.37	2
Asteroids					
5. Jupiter	463.0	86,500	4332.580	9.55	5
6. Saturn	886.0	71,000	10,759.22	10.14	8
7. Uranus	1,781.0	31,900	30,686.82	uncertain	4
8. Neptune	2,791.0	34,800	60,181.11	uncertain	1

The Sun: Mean diameter in miles, 888,000. The mass of the Sun is 750 times that of all the planets and moons of the solar system added together.

*Roberts attached to the end of this chapter an article, "The Latest News from Pluto," *Literary Digest* (September 6, 1930): 18.

^aRoberts kept a draft of this chart in the front of his copy of the Bible. Much of his data is, of course, now obsolete.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: "Any standard work on astronomy"; Gillett and Rolfe, *First Book in Astronomy*; Newcomb, *Popular Astronomy*; Thomson, *Outline of Science*, vol. 1; Todd, *New Astronomy*, esp. for experimental demonstrations of astronomical subjects; Phillips and Steavenson, eds. *Splendour of the Heavens*.

5

Of Knowledge: Sidereal System

The stars. The sidereal system, meaning by that the star system, sometimes called the stellar universe, comprises all the stars and the nebulae outside our own solar system. This stellar universe includes not only the stars which are visible to the naked eye (about 5,000 only are so visible), but hundreds of thousands or millions besides, which are so distant that their existence is known only as they are revealed by the most powerful telescopes, and the most sensitive photographic plates.

Difference between planets and stars. As an evidence that these stars are not similar in constitution to the planets of our solar system, which shine only by the reflected light from the sun, astronomers point to the remoteness of these stars of the stellar universe. Neptune, they say (the planet of our system most distant from our sun, be it remembered), is too faint for the naked eye to see its light. Yet it is only 2,791,000,000 miles—nearly three billions of miles—from the sun; but the nearest fixed star from our earth (Alpha Centauri, meaning the star of the first magnitude of the constellation of the Centaur) is nine hundred times more distant! Hence the conclusion, that if Neptune on the frontier of our system may not be seen by the naked eye, while Alpha Centauri, nine hundred times farther away may be so seen, then the difference as to these two objects of our night sky must arise from some difference in their constitution. “The very brightness of the lucid stars” leads observers to suspect that these stars of the sidereal system, must be self-luminous like our own sun; and when their light is analyzed with the spectroscope the theory that they are suns is actually demonstrated.¹ This leads to the formula that “The sun is a star. The stars are suns.” Our sun looks big as compared with the other suns or stars of the stellar universe only because of its

¹Todd, *New Astronomy*, 421–22.

comparative nearness to us. The universe is a stupendous collection of millions of stars or suns.²

The number of the “fixed stars.” No one, of course, knows how many of these fixed stars exist in the sidereal system. Astronomers have variously estimated them from thirty, fifty, to one hundred millions but the later estimates by authorities go far beyond these figures, even into the billions. “Man,” says John W. Draper, author of the *Intellectual Development of Europe*,

man, when he looks upon the countless multitude of stars—when he reflects that all he sees is only a little portion of those which exist, yet that each is (or may be) a light and life-giving sun to multitudes of opaque, and therefore, invisible worlds—when he considers the enormous size of these various bodies and their immeasurable distance from one another, may form an estimate of the scale on which the world (universe) is constructed.³

Again Professor Samuel Kinns, Ph.D. Fellow of the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences, says,

These distant suns are, many of them, much larger than our sun. Sirius, the beautiful Dog-star (in the constellation Canis Major) is (so far as can be judged by its amount of light) nearly 3,000 times larger, and therefore its system of dependent worlds must be so much more important than those which form our Solar System. Its planets may far exceed ours in size, and revolve at far greater distances; for such a sun would throw its beams of light and heat very much beyond a distance equal to that of our Neptune.⁴

“Our” galaxy, distance within: Professor Newcomb, in all this branch of science always a standard authority, says of these fixed stars:

Turning our attention from this system to the thousands of fixed stars which stud the heavens, the first thing to be considered is their enormous distance asunder, compared with the dimensions of the solar system, though the latter are themselves inconceivably great. To give an idea of the relative distances, suppose a voyager through the celestial spaces could travel from the sun to the outermost planet of our system in twenty-four hours. So enormous would be his velocity, that it would carry him across the Atlantic Ocean, from New York to Liverpool, in less than a tenth of a second of the clock. Starting from the sun with this velocity, he would cross the orbits of the inner

²Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:12.

³Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe* 2:279.

⁴Kinns, *Harmony of the Bible with Science*, 238. [In the Roberts typescript, this text was not quoted precisely; the discrepancies were insignificant and have been corrected.]

planets in rapid succession, and the outer ones more slowly, until, at the end of a single day, he would reach the confines of our system, crossing the orbit of Neptune. But, though he passed eight planets the first day, he would pass none the next, for he would have to journey eighteen or twenty years, without diminution of speed, before he would reach the nearest star, and would then have to continue his journey as far again before he could reach another. All the planets of our system would have vanished in the distance, in the course of the first three days, and the sun would be but an insignificant star in the firmament. The conclusion is, that our sun is one of an enormous number of self-luminous bodies scattered at such distances that years would be required to traverse the space between them, even when the voyager went at the rate we have supposed.⁵

Multiplicity of galaxies—universes. A still more recent statement of these wonderful things concerning the extent of the universe, the number of the fixed stars and the distance apart of these innumerable suns, is made by Professor Frank R. Moulton^a of the University of Chicago, in an address before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, on the evening of December 31, 1926. He said of our stellar galaxy, which he called the largest organism “whose evolution has ever been considered”:

Our galaxy consists of at least one billion suns, each one like our own, averaging a million times the volume of the earth. These suns occupy a disk-like or watch-shaped region in space whose thickness is the distance light travels in about 30,000 years, and light travels 186,000 miles per second! The longer diameter of the galaxy is about 200,000 light years.

The stars of this galaxy move around among one another something like bees in a swarm. This does not mean that they dart quickly from one side to another, for although our sun is moving at the rate of four hundred million miles a year, the distance between the stars are so vast that its relations to other suns have not changed appreciatively in historic time.⁶

Of course, these distances are beyond human comprehension or realization; but we can know, and do know, on the report of those competent to speak with authority, that these immense numbers, representing the distances which separate the stars from each other, are facts, and being facts, they almost overwhelm one by their immensity.

⁵Newcomb, *Popular Astronomy*, 104.

^aForest Ray (Frank) Moulton (1872-1952) was an astronomer at the University of Chicago and research associate at the Carnegie Institute. He authored many books and articles on celestial mechanics, differential equations, and astronomy.

⁶Moulton [source not found].

Universe of “magnificent distances.” Professor Moulton, continuing his lecture, showed a photograph which was taken with light that had been on its way a million years, then continued his remarks:

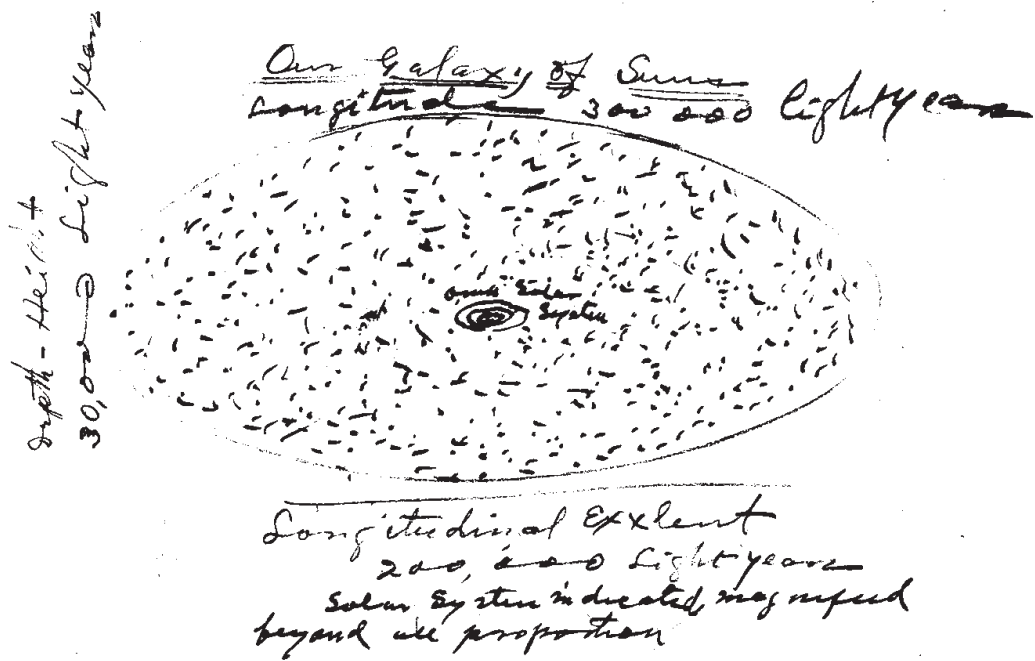
Until recently many astronomers thought there was only vacant space beyond our galaxy, but now it is known that there are exterior galaxies similar to our own in size and shape and the number of suns. Only about a year ago Dr. Edwin P. Hubble^b at Wilson Observatory determined the distance of an exterior galaxy which had heretofore been called the Andromeda Nebula, and found it to be a million light years. About half of the thousand million stars (suns) in our own galaxy are in size and constitution and temperature essentially similar to our own sun. It is not improbable—it is in fact probable—that a majority of them have planets circulating about them, as our earth revolves about the sun. It may be that a fraction of them, perhaps in all hundreds of millions, are in a condition comparable to that of the earth, and that they support life!⁷

One might continue to multiply authoritative statements concerning the vastness of the universe and the wonderfulness of it, but my only purpose in calling attention to all this is merely to impress the mind of the reader with the greatness of these existing stellar universes, to make it the basis of reasoning to be followed later on. What is here set down, being of unquestioned authority, may be sufficient to my purpose, to be developed in future chapters.

^bEdwin P. Hubble (1889-1953) was a lawyer who became an astronomer. Famous for his work in extragalactic astronomy, he provided the first observational evidence for the expansion of the universe. The Wilson Observatory is in the mountains above Pasadena, California.

⁷Moulton [source not found].

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Proctor, *Other Worlds Than Ours*; Serviss, *Astronomy with the Naked Eye*; Abr. 3 “and cuts with Joseph Smith’s partial translation.”



“Our Galaxy of Suns.” Here Roberts provides the dimensions of our galaxy as 300,000 x 200,000 x 30,000 light years. Our solar system is shown in the center. Roberts notes: “Solar system indicated magnified beyond all proportion.”

6

Creation: The Reign of Law

What is creation? The next question that logically rises to meet our inquiry is: how came all these galaxy-universes, solar systems and planets and their satellites into existence? By chance? By creative decree of harmonized Intelligences—God? Or by self-evolution from forces within the chaotic elements—automatic creation? The universe coming into existence by chance may be dismissed at once, not only as altogether unlikely but positively unbelievable, the one fact of order in the universe rendering it so; and with that observation that division of the inquiry may be closed ere it is opened.

Committed as we already are in these pages to the existence of limitless space, and eternal duration; to the eternal existence of matter and energy, and mind or spirit, it follows that “creation” can only consist of certain events or changes in, and within, these eternal existences. That creation is not a bringing forth of something from nothing, but a transmutation of one form of substance into another form. As for example, water is caused, or “created” by a union of hydrogen and oxygen—both gaseous substances—in certain definite proportions. These gases are changed in their nature by being united in the proportion of two volumes of hydrogen to one volume of oxygen; and changed from gases to liquid. But the water is not created or caused from nothing, but from these two preexisting gases; and whatever should effect the bringing together of these two gases in this proportion, would be the “cause” or “creator” of water; the gases themselves, however, being “con-causes” since the water could not exist but for them, hence they enter into the causation of the water.

Creation, therefore, with those who accept the eternal existence—and therefore the co-eternal existence—of matter, force, and mind, can only regard “creation” as events or changes wrought in an eternal universe. “Creation” thus conceived, while it would never mean “create” in the sense of bringing into existence force or matter or mind (spirit), yet it might be conceived of as bringing into new relations

matter and force; and bring into existence new combinations, which would really bring into being new things or new conditions. Even “mind” or “spirit” might be brought into such relationships with matter as to be an indwelling force in varied life forms, influencing the trend of things in the universe tremendously, bringing about awe-inspiring results, changing the whole aspect of a universe, giving it a development worthy [of] the highest order of intelligence, and imparting to it a definite object of achievement.

It is not in this chapter, however, that we have designed to discuss at length the nature of the universe, and the subject of creation: that theme is reserved for a later chapter. Here we merely bring the subject to the reader’s attention to preserve the natural sequence of thought development, hence so much of passing surface comment on the existence of the wonderful universe and how it may have been wrought to be, as it now is.

The reign of law. A subject more pertinent at this stage of our unfolding theme is the control or governance of the universe—this immensity—this eternal thing! Thoughtful minds are ready to say and do say that the impressive thing about the universe is not really its immensity or its eternity, but the fact of order within it, a thing which seems to be of its essence, or a quality of it. Professor Frank C. Moulton, of the University of Chicago, whose lecture before the American Association for the Promotion of Science (Dec. 31, 1925) we have already quoted on the extent and greatness of the universe, has this to say also on the “orderliness” of the universe:

The impressive thing to the astronomers is not the magnitude of the ⟨our⟩ galaxy, nor the long periods of time during which stars exist, nor the tremendous forces of nature; but the most impressive thing ⟨to him,⟩ is that all this vast universe which we have been able to explore is found to be orderly. The orderliness of the universe is the foundation on which science is built. It is the thing that enables us to understand the present, to look back over the past, and to penetrate the remote future. This discovery more than compensates us for the relatively unimportant position that man occupies physically.¹

Order: The evidence of a reign of law. “The orderly movement of the heavens,” says John W. Draper,

could not fail in all ages to make a deep impression on thoughtful observers—the rising and setting of the sun; the increasing or diminishing light of the day; the waxing and waning of the moon; the

¹Moulton [source not found].

return of the seasons in their proper courses; the measured march of the wandering planets in the sky—what are all these, and a thousand such, but manifestations of an orderly and unchanging procession of events? The faith of early observers in this interpretation may perhaps have been shaken by the occurrence of such a phenomenon as an eclipse, a sudden and mysterious breach of the ordinary course of natural events; but it would be resumed in tenfold strength as soon as the discovery was made that eclipses themselves recur, and may be predicted.

Astronomical predictions of all kinds depend upon the admission of this fact—that there never has been and never will be any intervention in the operation of natural laws. The scientific philosopher affirms that the condition of the world at any given moment is the direct result of its condition in the preceding moment, and the direct cause of its condition in the subsequent moment.²

Authorities on the reign of law. In the remainder of the chapter above quoted, Draper traces the struggle between the idea of government by special providence and government by “unvarying law,” until the latter triumphs in modern thought and science.

To the same purpose Andrew D. White, once professor of history at Cornell University, and president of the university for twenty-five years, published his great work, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology*. The title of a few of the chapters will show the drift of the thought: “From Creation to Evolution,” “From ‘Signs and Wonders’ to Law in Heaven,” “From Genesis to Geology,” “From Magic to Chemistry and Physics,” “From Miracles to Medicine,” and so following.

John Fiske of Harvard, in his *Studies in Religion*, says:

We have so far spelled out the history of creation as to see that all has been done in strict accordance with law. . . . So beautiful is all this orderly coherence, so satisfying to some of our intellectual needs, that many minds are inclined to doubt if anything more can be said of the universe than that it is a Reign of Law, an endless aggregate of coexistences and sequences.³

This last suggestion of Fiske’s, however, is a thought against which the reader should brace his mind, for the universe, however completely under a reign of law, is something more than law, and the “reign” of it, even if there is added Fiske’s qualifying words of “an endless aggregate of coexistences and sequences.” For a reign of law observed in the universe suggests something more of which the reign of law is but ~~the effect~~ ***a part and not the whole***; namely, Mind,

²Draper, *Conflict between Religion and Science*, 229–30.

³Fiske, *Studies in Religion*, 337–38.

Intelligence. The reign of law should rather be conceived as the means through which Intelligence is working to the achievement of some high purpose.

Reign of law in the spiritual world. Henry Drummond, in 1893, published his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* with a view, as the title suggests, of bringing the phenomena of the spirit-world into harmony with the modern scientific conceptions that obtain respecting the natural world. His self-imposed task was to “demonstrate the naturalness of the supernatural”; that the natural and the spiritual world are one. Drummond’s conception was a noble one, and resulted in the production of a very notable and convincing book, though meeting in some quarters with the impatience that attaches to works of its class, viz., the class that attempts to work out harmony between science and religion, or between the natural and the spiritual world.⁴

The idea of law itself implies the possibility of disorder, which must result from infraction of law, that is, a departure from or violation of law. But “that which is governed by law,” it may be reasonably supposed, will be preserved by law, “and perfected and sanctified by the same” (D&C 88:34).

The intrusion of “miracles.” In all this about the reign of law the question may arise as to the intrusion of “miracles” into the scheme of things. If the universe is governed by law, does the universal reign of law permit of “miracles,” or acts of special providence, which are usually of a nature that they apparently interfere with existing law? For a miracle is regarded as something that happens in violation of law, or by the supervening of it. A miracle is defined as “an event or effect

⁴Thus Andrew D. White, in his *Warfare of Science with Theology*, speaking of the phases of theological attack upon science, represents the third and the last—as “an attempt” at compromise—“compromise by means of far-fetched reconciliations of textual statements with ascertained fact,” 1:218. That Drummond himself was aware that these “attempts at compromise” of the “conflict” between science and religion, or the “natural and spiritual world,” is evident from his preface, where he says:

No class of works is received with more suspicion I had almost said derision, than those which deal with Science and Religion. Science is tired of reconciliations between two things which never should have been contrasted; religion is offended by the patronage of an ally which it professes not to need; and the critics have rightly discovered that, in most cases where Science is either pitted against Religion or fused with it, there is some fatal misconception to begin with as to the scope and province of either. (Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spirit World*, v.)

contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a diversion from the known laws of nature.” Renan, the great French writer, defines a miracle to be not simply the inexplicable, it is a formal derogation from recognized laws in the name of a particular desire. “It is not therefore in the name of this or that philosophy,” he continues, “but in the name of constant experience that we banish miracles from history. We do not say the miracle is impossible. We say there has been hitherto no miracle performed.”⁵

Miracle merged under law. This resolving of miracles into events or effects contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a deviation from the known laws of nature, is a wrong viewpoint. What is especially faulty in this definition of miracles is that they are held to be outside of or contrary to the laws of nature. Let us examine this. Two hundred years ago the only motive powers known to ocean navigators were wind and the ocean currents. Suppose at that time the old mariners had seen one of our modern ocean steamers running against both ocean currents and the wind and, withal, making better speed in spite of both wind and tide than the old-time sailing vessel could with both wind and tide in its favor. What would have been the effect of such a sight on the mind of the old-time sailor? “It’s a miracle!” he would have exclaimed; that is, it would have been to him “an effect contrary to the constitution and course of things,” “a derogation from recognized law.” But would such a thing, to us who know something of the force of steam, be contrary to the laws of nature? No, it is simply the employment of a force in nature of which the old-time mariner was ignorant; while it would have been a “miracle” to him, to us it is merely the application of a comparatively new discovered force of nature, and it is now so common that we cease to look upon it with wonder.

So with many things that people now in ignorance call “miracles”: the healing of the sick, restoring the blind to sight, making the lame to walk, through the exercise of faith; and the resurrection of the dead—all these instead of being in derogation from ~~organized~~ **recognized** law, may yet turn out to be simply the application of laws of which we are as yet in ignorance. As urged by George Rawlinson, “miraculous interpositions on fitting occasions may be as much a regular, fixed, and established rule of . . . government as the working ordinarily by what are called natural laws.”⁶ In other words, what men in their ignorance call miracles, are doubtless the results of application of higher laws or

⁵Renan, *Life of Jesus*. Wilbour, trans., 44.

⁶Rawlinson [quote not found].

forces of nature not yet learned by men, and miracles are to be viewed not as happenings contrary “to the established constitution and course of things,” under a universal reign of law, but as part of the not yet understood application of law to things and conditions that seem to produce effects that are in derogation of the ordinary course of the natural order of things. From this viewpoint the integrity of a universal reign of law is not incompatible with what may be regarded as Mind interposition, or acts of Providence.

Destructive forces as under law. When a reign of law is conceived as governing in the physical world, then the conception must include the destructive, or disintegrating forces as operating under law as well as the constructive or integrating forces, else the reign of law would not be universal. On the subject of destructive forces being operative in the universe Ernst Haeckel has the following vivid passage in his *Riddle of the Universe*:

While new cosmic bodies arise and develop out of rotating masses of nebula in some parts of the universe, in other parts old, extinct, frigid suns come into collision, and are once more reduced by the heat generated to the condition of nebulae. . . . While minute and then larger bodies are being formed by this pyknotic (condensing) process in one part of space, and the intermediate ether^a increases its strain, the opposite process—the destruction of cosmic bodies by collision—is taking place in another quarter.

The immense quantity of heat which is generated in this mechanical process of the collision of swiftly moving bodies represents the new kinetic energy which effects the movement of the resultant nebulae and the construction of new rotating bodies. The eternal drama begins afresh.⁷

It is clear that the building of suns and the building of worlds is a process . . . in which the original matter must undergo transformation. The process may be continuous and may extend through infinite time. The collision of suns (which could result no otherwise than in destruction of their world system) may have produced nebulae and

^aEther was the term used by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century physicists to describe an energy field that keeps the planets in motion and holds them in relative position to each other. Nineteenth-century science used the concept of ether in explaining the transmission of light between moving bodies, though these scientists were unable to measure the relative velocity of the ether. Mary Hesse, “Ether,” in Paul Edwards, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 8 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 3:66-69.

⁷*Riddle of the Universe*, 240-43. [Significantly, the ellipsis in the second line of the third paragraph stands for the words “of evolution,” which Roberts apparently omitted on purpose.]

those nebulae in turn may gradually develop themselves into suns again. It seems reasonably certain that nebulae are the stuff from which the stars are made.⁸

~~*The Spiritual World Under A Reign of Law.*~~ This is not the place for the discussion of the application of this reign of law idea to morals, or to the realm of the things of the spirit, or of mind; that will come later; but we may so far premise as to say that when we reach those realms of discussion we shall find the spiritual and ethical world as universally under the dominion of the reign of law as the physical universe.

Modern revelation to Joseph Smith on the universe and the reign of law. It is my general policy in the thought-development of my theme to hold in reserve the introduction of the teachings of Joseph Smith with reference to the subject matter of these introductory chapters, but just here, what Joseph Smith said in part on this subject of the extent of the universe ***and the reign of law in that universe***, is so pertinent, and precedes in time of utterance the best and highest scientific pronouncements upon these matters, that I can not withhold from quoting a few brief passages from his revelations, noting the date at which they were set forth:

There are many kingdoms (meaning by that worlds and systems of worlds-galaxies-universes, and all that in them is); for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom. (D&C 88:37)

This is a statement which represents the universe as being quite as extensive and as all comprehending as does Haeckel's "Law of Substance" (quoted in full, chapter 3 above), though couched in different phrase from that used by the German scientist, who states it as follows: "The extent of the universe is infinite and unbounded; it is empty in no part, but everywhere filled with substance."⁹

Again the Revelation:

And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions. All beings who abide not in those conditions are not justified. For intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; wisdom receiveth wisdom; truth embraceth truth; virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light. . . . (A law has been given) unto all things, by which they move in their times and seasons; And their courses are fixed, even the courses of the heavens and the earth, which comprehend the earth and all the planets. And they give light

⁸Kaempffort, *Science-History of the Universe* 1:318.

⁹Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, 242.

to each other in their times and in their seasons, in their minutes, in their hours, in their days, in their weeks, in their months, in their years. (D&C 88:38-40, 42-44)

In these terms is the reign of law proclaimed by Joseph Smith and I know of no more emphatic pronouncement upon this subject than the above quotation. The unique thing about it is that it is set forth as a revelation from God, given in December 1832; Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe* was published in 1899!

One further item in the *Prophet's* statement is particularly significant; namely, the passage, "Unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions," implying that even law itself is subject to or limited by law. A bold conception this, especially when it is found in a writing formulated a century ago, before men began to voice such conceptions. This same idea of law itself having limits and bounds, or law itself being subject to law, Henry Drummond, one of the recognized thinkers of the 19th century, also expressed, but following Joseph Smith by more than half a century. He said: "One of the most striking generalizations of recent <times> [science] is that even Laws have their Law."¹⁰ John Fiske also says: "In order to be always sure that we are generalizing correctly, we must make the generalizing process itself a subject of generalization,"¹¹ which is but a recognition of Drummond's idea, that "Laws have their Law," and Joseph Smith's—"to every law there are certain bounds also, and conditions."

¹⁰Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, 37.

¹¹Fiske [source not given].

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* is especially commended; Moses and Abraham.

CHAPTER VII

NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE: ETERNAL OR TRANSIENT? CAUSED OR UNCAUSED?

Scripture Reading Lesson

Analysis

- I. Universe conceived as eternal.
- II. Immensity of universe suggests eternity of it.
- III. The nature of force.
- IV. Causation: "First" or "Eternal Cause"?
- V. First cause and "Design"
- VI. Eternal cause the more rational.
- VII. Elements of cause.
- VIII. Dominance of man in the world:
 - (a) Over the animal kingdom;
 - (b) Over vegetable and all plant life;
 - (c) Over the mineral kingdom;
 - (d) Dominion in social and civil life.
- IX. From what we know: Man as vera causa

References

John Stuart Mill's "Three Essays On Religion", chapter on "Argument For a First Cause" pp.142-154.

See enlightening comment on Mill by John Fiske in "Studies In Religion" pp. 81, 126-7; and 177-180; 235-238. *

Science History of the Universe (Ten Vols.) Vol.X Philosophy, especially chs. 2 and 3. *

* It must be understood always, that the work cited in the column of "References" are by no means accepted by the writer as conclusive authorities (except as to citations to the scriptures); or that he agrees with the conclusions of the authors quoted, or that his text in the chapter agrees with them. His text is an independent treatise, often opposite in its conclusions from the works referred to **though** here and there supported by them. The works cited in the reference column are given to encourage a wide reading on the general theme.

Nature of the Universe— Eternal or Transient? Caused or Uncaused?

The universe conceived as eternal. The next step in the development of our theme will be to consider briefly the nature of this universe we have contemplated. What is it by nature? Eternal or transient? Has it had a beginning in time and must it come to an end? Or is it eternal, without beginning and without end? Authorities may be marshaled on both these views, the eternity of the universe and the universe transient. Some claiming on this head to speak from the result of human investigation, human science, and human philosophy; and others giving interpretation of revelations as the ground of their belief. The fact, however, of an eternal or a transient universe may not be satisfactorily settled by quotations of authorities, and so it is for us to search it out as best we may both by consideration of reasoning from what we know, as also (ultimately) from interpretation of revelation.

The conception of the eternity of the universe may be said to run parallel with certain other eternal things that we have considered; namely, space, duration, and the “conservation of mass,” meaning by the last indestructibility of matter, and its twin truth, the uncreatability of it. Here we have eternal things to deal with, and we have already in a previous chapter traced them to the point where the conception of

At the bottom of the contents page for this chapter, Roberts stated:

It must be understood always, that the works cited in the column of “References” are by no means accepted by the writer as conclusive authorities (except as to citations to the scriptures); or that he agrees with the conclusions of the authors quoted, or that his text in the chapter agrees with them. His text is an independent treatise, often opposite in its conclusions from the works referred to though here and there supported by them. The works cited in the reference column are given to encourage a wide reading on the general theme.

their eternity becomes a necessary truth, because the contrary—the bounding of space, the limiting of duration, the destruction and creatability of matter are inconceivable. It may be that the eternity of the universe can be treated in the same manner.

Immensity of the universe suggests eternity of it. From the extent of the universe, already traced in these chapters, the immensity of it—even of the cosmos (**if it is shown that immensity of it is also limitless**)—goes far towards establishing the inconceivability of its beginning in time or ending in time; but the extent of it, we may be sure, as suggested by that which is revealed to us by telescope, supplemented by the eye of science—meaning the photographic eye of science—it is still greater than that to our thought; and thought itself becomes lost, and intelligence a bit confused in trying to grasp the ~~immensity~~ **limitlessness** of it; and the time, and *the* place, and *the* manner of its beginning may not be conceived. Equally true is it that the end of it may not be conceived; but the realization of its eternity may be apprehended when we are reminded that there must be room in infinite space of all matter, organized and unorganized; cosmos and chaos. Room for the endless multiplication of worlds and solar systems of worlds and galaxies, which may be termed local universes—if the paradoxical expression may be pardoned—ad infinitum. Room for the working out of changes that affect the development of all that is, from lower forms of existences to higher forms, and all those endless changes necessary to this development—there is room for all this in boundless space; and time for it in endless duration; and material for it in the existence of exhaustless and enduring matter. An eternal universe, in fact, seems to match these other three eternal things and conditions—space, and time, the matter; and while, as I have said, the existence of an eternal universe is difficult to hold in consciousness, it is not as difficult as it is to form a conception of its having a beginning or of reaching an end. Nay, indeed, beginning and end seem inconceivable and hence impossible; and again we arrive at the establishment of a necessary truth because the opposite is unthinkable. Also the parallel eternities of space, time, and matter seem to require an eternal universe as a necessary concomitant of the whole realm of thought and fact.

The nature of force. Another thing to be considered in our progressive thought is that of Force in the universe, which may be considered the power by which things move which compels, so far as human knowledge knows, the changes that take place in all parts of the known universe. What is this force? Mechanical or intelligent; the effect of

mind upon matter, or is it the blind, mechanical power of “dead matter,” such as the force called gravitation is supposed to be, existing and depending upon masses of matter, and their relative distances from each other for the manifestation of force in attraction or in repulsion?

Causation: “First” or “eternal cause”? With these remarks on the eternity of the universe arises naturally the question of causation or of the “cause” of things, or of events, which are but changes with the universe. The idea of a “first cause” is necessarily eliminated by the conception of the eternity of the universe. “First Cause” implies a time when there was not cause; when there was absolute inaction, or absence of causation; but as the universe is eternal and includes in that eternal existence the existence of force and mind as well as of matter, there can be no “first,” ~~cause~~ but **there may be** “eternal cause”; and that cause eternally present is the cause of events or changes in the eternal universe. The universe itself is uncaused since it has always existed, and is all that is, including all forces of whatsoever, ~~origin,~~ as also all intelligence, or mind—**it is** “the sum of existence!”

Eternal cause the more rational. The operation of an eternal cause constantly present and acting in an eternal universe, is more rational than the conception of a “first cause,” followed by secondary causes. For that “first” presents a mental problem more difficult to account for than an eternal universe in which is operating eternal causation, and that “causation” when regarded as eternal leads up to the conception of the dominance of mind over matter as completely as when the universe and its phenomena are accounted for by the conception of a “first cause,” and all that follows it. For if we could trace all things up to the “first cause,” we would be brought face to face with that which would challenge our question—Whence is this?—this first cause?

~~“First” or “Eternal” Cause:~~ *Of design in the universe.* This “first cause” idea involves us in the whole argument of the designer of the universe, a designer that at once is outside of and transcends the universe; and of which idea the watch illustration of Dean Paley’s *Natural Theology* is usually depended upon to establish; and which briefly is as follows:

A watch is found and learning the complexity of its structure, and finding the adjustments of its parts to be such that it is a measure of passing time, the finder concludes it must have had a designer, it bears so many evidences of that fact. So man beholds the universe; he finds

so many evidences of design in it that he arrives at the conclusion that it, too, must have had a designer, a “cause.” The application of the illustration to the universe will be obvious. To all which some deist makes answer: The watch finder analyzes the watch, notes the adjustment of the parts to the whole, and the end it serves—the measurement of time—and is satisfied that it had a designer, and goes in search of him. He finds that the designer, the “cause” of the watch, to be a man; but the watchmaker, the man, is more wonderful by far than the watch, the thing he created; and the question is—who caused or designed the watchmaker? For if the watch by being so wonderful, and its parts so adjusted as to achieve a certain, useful end, then surely the watch designer, more wonderful than the watch, must be accounted for by causation back of him. And doubtless if the designer of, or the creator of the man could be found, he would yet be more wonderful than the man, and clamor more loudly than the man for an accounting for; and so on *ad infinitum*.¹

This brings home to the consciousness the inadequacy of this argument for a first cause; and also suggests that the mind can not rest in an endless chain of cause-effects; that it can come to rest only in the conception of an “eternal cause” rather than a “first cause.” This “a necessary truth” because the mind can not rationally conceive and hold how it could be otherwise.

Elements of cause. “Cause” is defined as the power or efficient agent producing anything or an event. “In a comprehensive sense,” the “cause” has to do with “all the circumstances (powers, occasions, actions and conditions) necessary for an event, and necessarily followed by it—the entire antecedent of an event.” Causes may be regarded, and are regarded, as efficient, material, formal, and final: efficient cause is the power or agency producing anything or an event, the power to produce completely; material cause is the material out of which, by the efficient causes, anything is made; formal cause is the pattern, place, or form, according to which anything is produced by the operation of efficient causes; final cause is that eternal power within the eternal and uncaused universe, ~~uncreated~~, but existing nevertheless, which is the source of all power producing change, motion and life. “It,” mind or intelligence, is that which acts as eternal cause and produces change and development. The human mind may not rest in an endless chain of causes—effects, as before stated; but it can rest in the thought of the universe being eternal; in having neither beginning nor end, in time, or space, or substance;

¹Paley, *Natural Theology*, 5-8.

because the mind can not conceive the beginning of the universe or the “first cause” of it. But the mind can rest in the conception of an eternal universe as being all that is, the “sum of existence,” including all mind, all intelligence—the light by which truth is discerned—as well as all matter; which is to say, including that which acts—force-mind, as well as the which is acted upon (matter). With mind or intelligence recognized as the eternal power and the eternal cause whence proceeds the ever-changing development within and throughout the universe—this relieves the mind of the perplexities of a “first cause,” and at the same time does no violence to the requirements of the mind for the presence and operation of efficient, material, formal, and final causation in the universe.

So far as human experiences are concerned, it is quite evident from what we know from those experiences, that force, and ultimately mind, dominates matter. In our modern experiences this dominance of mind over matter is being emphasized.

The dominance of man in the world. (a) Over the animal kingdom. It is represented in some ~~alleged~~ revelations that when God had created man he gave him dominion over all the earth, with a commandment to subdue it, and have dominion over all that was upon it (Gen. 1:26-28). And responding to his commandment whether resulting from revelation or from powers inherent in man by nature, he has been carrying out such a decree, and with ever increasing success he is holding and developing his dominion. He has mastered the animal kingdom in air, sea, and earth. Though physically inferior in brute strength to many of earth’s creatures, in all three realms named, he has subdued them to his will; compelled them to receive his mastery; and by the force of mind has created those instrumentalities which make him superior to them even in physical destructive powers, where that becomes necessary to assert his mastery. Many of these creatures he has compelled to be his servants, to carry himself and his belongings with all their speed from place to place; to aid him in his toil of cultivating the earth, and in all his labor. The skins of the animal kingdom yield him clothing, and their flesh, in part, supply his food.

(b) *Over plant life.* In like manner he has taken possession and bent to his using the product of the plant life of the earth. The wild variety of fruits he has improved by cultivation and has created infinite variety to please his taste, and provide the variations in diet essential to his health. The grains and other plant life have received similar treatment: man multiplies and so largely controls their production that in the matter of necessary food products the race may feel fairly secure;

and famines and the possibility of their recurrence are constantly growing less frequent.

From plant life as well as from animal life man takes that which clothes his body. The cotton plant whose bursting bolls whitening in the autumn sun of southern lands, as well as wool from countless thousands of sheep, and the shining thread of the silk worm, combined to give apparel in modern days more glorious than clothed the limbs of a voluptuous Solomon in all his glory.

(c) ***Over the mineral kingdom.*** Man has broken into the coal reserves of the earth's bowels and brought them forth to release the sunshine of past ages stored in them to give him light, to warm his dwellings, and drive his machinery; he has tapped the oil lakes of the earth's interior, and released the stored energy found in oil to drive his trains, his ships, his automobiles, and his aeroplanes. From the silver seams of the mountains and the gold-laden sands of river beds and the ancient quartz-sites, and the gem-laden gravels of great depths—all these he has gathered, and converted into ornaments to beautify his dwellings and his person. Sad to say, also, he has combined chemical substances in such manner as to create explosive forces employed in his destructive wars. He has made conquest over distances by bringing all parts of the world into instant means of communication. He has gradually lessened the inconvenience of distance by rapid means of transportation through express trains, automobiles,—his palatial steam-driven ocean vessels, and now the more rapid means of transportation through the air by Zeppelins and aeroplanes. In a word, in the realm of physical mastery, man has been gaining great victories of late.

(d) ***Dominion in social and civil life.*** Also in the social and the civil spheres as represented by municipal, national, and inter-national life, man has made great gains. In the realm of knowledge, also, he has made advancement—almost miraculously, at least far beyond all progress in former ages. Although, perhaps, less noticeably, man has also made advancement in moral and spiritual things. His social relations are characterized by more kindness than in the past. He is more humane in caring for the unfortunate, than in the past. A truer sense of justice for those occupying the lowly stations in life is improved. There are juster laws operating in human relations than in past times. A wider enjoyment of civil and political rights than heretofore; a wider distribution of material comforts. The race is better housed and fed and clothed than in ~~times past~~ ***ages gone by.*** More have access to the enjoyment of luxuries than ever before, and the trend of all things human is in the direction of the betterment of human lives, both individually and in society at large. There is a note of optimism in human

life that prophesies wider and greater and deeper and more permanent welfare for the children of men, and for the nations, for civilization. Man is evidently fulfilling what is represented in revelation to be the decree of God that man should have dominion over the earth and subdue it.

In man's experiences, intelligence, or mind, is increasingly dominating matter. It leads to the conception that everywhere it must be so. It is so in this world of ours. We know it to be so. And reasoning from what we know, it must be so in other worlds—in all worlds. Has it not always been true? Will it not always be true, that mind, whatever may be conceded to mechanical forces—such as gravitation and chemical reactions—mind will always dominate matter and manipulate eternally existing force in such manner as to achieve its purpose? Great weight will yet attach to the utterance of an ancient American prophet, viz., that phenomena, when traced to their last analysis, rest upon two things; viz., "That which acts, and that which is acted upon" (cf. 2 Ne. 2:13, 14), and that from this fact proceeds all that is; from which action and reaction proceed creations and re-creations within the universe, arising from ever-changing processes, culminating in development in boundless space, and endless time, and indestructible, inexhaustible matter.

From what we know: Man as vera causa. Let us again resort to reasoning from what we know: Undoubtedly man finds in himself a principle of causality in the light of which he interprets the external world. In fact, man finds within himself the nearest approach to a *vera causa*—a true, or real cause. How does this power of causation proceed with and through him? He is in the world with all that environs him—a world of things and forces are about him. He conceives the notion of building a house. If he builds it he will be the efficient cause of its existence; but this power of causation of which he is self-conscious, as resident within himself, he finds to be subject to his will. He may or may not conclude to build the house—it will be just as he chooses. But he concludes to build it, to suit his convenience and to meet his felt needs. He did not have to create out of nothing the things of which he made the house, they already existed; all that he had to do was to effect certain changes in materials about him, assemble them in a certain order, and the house is completed. The builder caused its existence. In all this procedure, the mind of the man that was operating as a power of causation, was operating somewhat as a mind anywhere might act where like conditions obtained—as eternal mind might be found acting or causing. The man was acting as the intelligent factor in causation.

Instead of one man building a house we may think of a large group of men building, or causing to come into existence, a city. To do this, however, the men must be united—that is, their minds must be united as one mind, and when many minds are perfectly united in agreement they can be as effective in that unity as if there was but one mind. They are one mind, though made up of many individual minds. They form a community mind, and may be spoken of as “one.” So the minds or intelligences of the universe may be spoken of, when harmonized as the universal mind, or simple mind, or intelligence. The group of men we have supposed, caused their city as the one man caused his house to come into existence. The group of men, no more than the one man, had to create out of nothing the materials for their city; they as minds united were already existent, and were there. All they had to do was to come to agreement of purpose to effect changes in materials already existing; assemble them in a given manner, by the manipulation of forces already existent, and the city was caused or builded.

In all this procedure the minds of these men united were operating as a power of causation, and operating as minds united anywhere might act, where like conditions obtain; and these conditions obtain in an eternal universe, that comprehends all things, and is the “sum of existence”—all mind or minds; all intelligence or intelligences, with all forces mechanical or chemical existent, as also all matter and conceivable substance in boundless space in endless time, the mass of it constant, so that it can not be created nor annihilated, nothing added to it and not possible to be diminished by so much as a single atom, but subject to infinite change and with force, or energy equally as conserved as matter, and equally impossible for the amount of it to be increased or diminished, but capable of being infinitely transmuted from one thing to another—all this, with eternal mind as eternal power of causation in all its phases present—change and development, what we call creation and progress, may go on as it has eternally been going on without beginning and without end; secure in its eternity, which is to say secure in its existence—and under the guidance of all intelligences—all the intelligence there is—we may be assured that the universe is secure, and progress within it also secure. The universe will not die. It will not sink into chaos. It has been and will be eternal.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Fiske, *Studies in Religion*, 81, 126–27, 177–80, 235–38, for “enlightening comment on Mill”; Kaempffort, *Science-History of the Universe*, vol. 10, chs. 2–3; Mill, *Three Essays on Religion*, 142–54. On the theme of eternalism and related topics, see pages 619–22 below.

8

Intelligence or Mind and Minds

The nature of intelligence. This chapter has especially to do with the mind element of the universe; for we shall hold here that there is a distinction between mind and matter, as there is a difference between that which acts and that which is acted upon; as there is a difference between the thinking essence or substance and that which has or manifests mechanical force merely, and which for the manifestation of that force is dependent upon its mass and its relative distance from other masses—gravitation: ~~or upon combination or separation of substances.~~ as also there is a difference between intelligence viewed as “the light of truth”—the power by which truth is discerned—and substances capable merely of manifesting chemical force dependent upon union in certain combinations and proportions with other substances. Moreover we shall hold that there is a difference in mind stuff as there are differences in matter; distinction between the intelligence of man and the instinct of brutes. As this work is concerned chiefly with man, it is of man’s mind, or man *as* an intelligence, that we shall here speak of him, and of his relationships to other intelligences of this and of other worlds.

The sense in which the term “intelligence” is to be used in this discussion is that of a mind, or an intelligent entity. Milton makes such use of the term as the latter when he represents Adam as saying to the angel Raphael, who has given him a lesson on human limitations:

How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure
Intelligence of Heav’n, angel serene(!)¹

And so Tennyson:

The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state.²

¹Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 8.626–27.

²Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, section 85, 95.

Also the being whom men call God is referred to as the “supreme intelligence.” It is in this sense, then, that I use the term “intelligence”; a being that is intelligent, capable of apprehending facts or ideas; possessed also of power to think, to will, and to act. In other words, the term “intelligence” is descriptive of the thing to which it is applied. Intelligence (mind), or intelligences (minds), thus conceived, are conscious beings. Conscious of self and of the notself; of the “me” and the “not me.” “Intelligence is that which sees itself (as), or is, at once, both subject and object.” It knows itself as thinking, that is, as a subject; thinking of its self, it knows itself as an object of thought—of its own thought. And it knows itself as distinct from a vast universe of things which are not itself; itself the while remaining constant as a distinct individuality amid the great universe of things not self. Fiske calls consciousness “the soul’s fundamental fact,” and “the most fundamental of facts.”³ It may be defined as the power by which intelligence knows its own acts and states. It is an awareness of mind—it is mind in awareness. By reason of awareness—consciousness—an intelligence when dwelling in a body—as we best know it, as man—knows itself as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching; also as searching, and finding; as inquiring, and answering; as active or at rest; as loving or hating; as contented or restless; as advancing or receding; as gaining or losing; and so following, in all the activities in which intelligences, as men, engage.

Mind powers: (a) Power of generalization. By another power or faculty, intelligence (mind) “can perceive, as connected with the things that sense perceives, something that cannot be taken in by sense perception.” That is to say, intelligence can generalize. “Sense can get at the individual, concrete thing only: this triangle, this orange, that triangle, those oranges,” etc. By the consideration of the individual, concrete object, however, the mind can form an idea, a concept, a general notion—“triangle,” “orange”—which does not specify this or that individual object, but “fits to any individual triangle or orange . . . past, present and future, and even the possible oranges that never shall be grown.”⁴ In other words intelligence can rise from consideration of the particular to the general.

Again there are *a priori* principles, which the mind can perceive to be incontrovertible and of universal application, by mere reflection upon the signification of the principles and without going into the

³Fiske, *Studies in Religion*, 244.

⁴Poland, *Truth of Thought*, 41.

applications.⁵ Such for example as that one and one make two, that two and one make three. To continue the illustration above, borrowed from the late Professor William James, for some time professor of psychology in Harvard University:

It is either a principle or a definition that 1 and 1 make 2, that 2 and 1 make 3, . . . that white differs less from gray than it does from black; that when the cause begins to act the effect also commences. Such propositions hold of all possible “ones,” of all conceivable “whites” and “grays” and “causes.” The objects here are mental objects. Their relations are ⟨perceptually⟩ [perpetually] obvious at a glance, and no sense-verification is necessary. Moreover, once true, always true, of those same mental objects. Truth here has an “eternal” character. If you can find a concrete thing anywhere that is “one” or “white” or “gray” or an “effect,” then your principles will everlastingly apply to it. It is but a case of ascertaining the kind, and then applying the law of its kind to the particular object. You are sure to get truth if you can but name the kind rightly, for your mental relations hold good of everything of that kind without exception.⁶

(*b*) *Imagination*. By a mind-power known as imagination, or imaginative memory, intelligences, as known to us through men, can hold before consciousness, in picture, what has been perceived by an outward sense, and this even when the outward sense has been shut off from the outward world of matter. I once saw an orange tree with a number of ripe oranges scattered through its branches, but on other branches of the same tree, and at the same time, were orange blossoms. What the outward senses then perceived, when I was standing before the tree, has been shut off; but at will I can call before the vision of my mind and hold in consciousness the picture of that tree with its mixture of ripe fruit and fruit blossoms. This power of imagination is also constructive. Intelligences (men) can put before themselves in mental picture, combinations which are fashioned from the varied stores of memory.

Sensations, once experienced, modify the nervous organism, so that copies of them arise again in the mind after the original outward stimulus is gone. No mental copy, however, can arise in the mind, of any kind of sensation which has never been directly excited from without. The blind may dream of sights, the deaf of sounds, for years after they have lost their vision or hearing; but the man *born* deaf can never be made to imagine what sound is like, nor can the man *born* blind ever have a mental vision. In Locke’s words, . . . “The mind can frame unto itself no one new simple idea.” The originals of them all

⁵Poland, *Truth of Thought*, 41.

⁶James, *Pragmatism*, 209-10.

must have been given from without. Fantasy, or Imagination, are the names given to the faculty of reproducing copies of originals once ~~left~~ **felt**. The imagination is called “reproductive” when the copies are literal; “productive” when elements from different originals are recombined so as to make new wholes.⁷

Example: Flight of imagination. As I have elsewhere said: I am this moment sitting at my desk, and am enclosed by the four walls of my room, limited as to my personal presence to this spot. But by the mere act of my will, I find I have the power to project myself in thought to any part of the world. Instantly I can be in the crowded streets of the world’s metropolis—London. I walk through its well remembered thoroughfares, I hear the rush and roar of its busy multitudes, the rumble of vehicles, the huckster’s cries, the cabmen’s calls, sharp exclamations and quick retorts in the jostling throngs, the beggar’s piping cry, the sailor’s song, fragments of conversation, broken strains of music, the blare of trumpets, the neighing of horses, ear-piercing whistles, ringing of bells, shouts, responses, rushing trains and all that mingled din and soul-stirring roar that rises in clamor above the great town’s traffic.

At will, I leave all this and stand alone on mountain tops in Syria, India, or overlooking old Nile’s valley, wrapped in the awful grandeur of solemn silence. Here I may bid fallen empires rise and pass in grand procession before my mental vision and ⟨make them⟩ live again in ⟨my thought⟩ their little lives; fight once more their battles; begin again each petty struggle for place, for power, for control of the world’s affairs; revive their customs: live again their loves and hates, and preach once more their religions and their philosophies—all this the mind may do, and that as easily and as quickly as in thought it may leave this room, cross the street to a neighbor’s home, and there take note of the familiar objects within his habitation.⁸

(c) *Power of forming new mental combinations.* “The mind ⟨intelligence⟩ can combine various general principles, or individual facts and principles; and, in the combination and comparison of them, it can perceive other facts and principles.”⁹ In other words, intelligence is capable of reasons; of building up conclusions from the data of its knowledge. It has the power of deliberation and of judgment by which it may determine that this state or condition is better than another state or condition. That this, tending to good, should be encouraged; and that, tending to evil, should be discouraged; or if possible, destroyed; and at least controlled.

⁷James, *Psychology*, 302; italics in original.

⁸Roberts, *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*, 132.

⁹Poland, *Truth of Thought*, 40.

(d) Power of deliberation: The will. Intelligence, as embodied in man, is also conscious of the power, within certain limitations, to will, and to perform what is willed: to rise up, to sit down; to raise an arm, to let it fall; to walk, to run, to stand; to go to Paris, to Berlin, or to Egypt; to write a book, to build a house, to found a hospital; to control largely his actions, physical and moral; he can be sober or drunken; chaste, or a libertine; benevolent or selfish; honest or a rogue. Having deliberated upon this and that and having formed a judgment that one thing is better than another, or that one condition is better than another, he has power to choose between them and can determine to give his aid to this and withhold it from that. So that volition, within certain limitations, at least, seems also to be quality of intelligence. It is, of course, possible to conceive of intelligence and its necessarily attendant, consciousness, existing without volition; but intelligence so conceived is shorn of its glory, since under such conditions it can make no certain use of its powers. Its very thinking, since it must end in thinking, in the case here supposed—would be valueless; its consciousness would be distressing. If active at all, its actions would be without purpose, and as chaotic as its thinking would be; unless it could be thought of as both thinking and acting as directed by an intelligent, purposeful will external to itself; which would still leave the intelligence a mere automaton, without dignity or moral quality, or even intellectual value.

I therefore conclude that while it is possible to conceive of intelligence, with its necessarily attendant consciousness, as without volition, still, so far as we are acquainted with intelligence, as manifested through men, volition—sometimes named soul-freedom, the spirit's freedom, or free agency—is a quality that within certain limitations, attends upon intelligences, and may be an inherent quality of intelligence, a necessary attribute of its essence, as much so as is consciousness itself.

Eternity of intelligences. At this point the question arises as to the nature of intelligence (mind element in the universe) with reference to its *origin or its* eternity. Is it eternal, or had it a beginning; is it a product, or an eternal thing? Already in discussing matter and force it has been shown that these are eternal, capable of infinite changes; in form as to the first, and capable of infinite transitions and transmutations as to the second. If we may say this of force in the realm of mechanical and chemical energy, which seems to be the holding together, the balancing force in the universe, what shall be said when we come to the more wonderful force of mind, which may originate

action and make it purposeful and guide it to the attainment of worthwhile ends? What shall we say of it—this mind force—this force of forces, this intelligence? May we trace its lightening to an origin, or must we assign it a place in the category of eternal things, as in the case of space, time, matter, and mechanical and chemical energy, as a *necessary* concomitant of them in the workings of an eternal universe and as part of it? Shall we not say, are we not compelled to say, by the very nature of the thing itself that mind—intelligence—never was “created or made, neither indeed can be” (D&C 93:29) it is eternal? John Fiske says of force, in an ultimate analysis of it, that

it is the belief that force, as manifested to our consciousness, can neither arise out of nothing nor lapse into nothing—can neither be created nor annihilated. And the negation of this belief is unthinkable; since to think it would be to perform the impossible task of establishing in thought an equation between something and nothing.¹⁰

If this may be said of mechanical and chemical force, can it not with equal truth be said of the more wonderful force which we call mind, and which in the argument for the eternity of mind force would be as strong as for the eternity of other kinds of force?

Mr. Herbert Spencer says of causation:

We are no more able to form a circumscribed idea of Cause, than of Space or Time; and we are consequently obliged to think of the Cause which transcends the limits of our thought as positive though indefinite. Just in the same manner that on conceiving any bounded space, there arises a nascent consciousness of space outside the bounds.¹¹

That is to say, the idea of cause being eternal is forced upon our consciousness in the same manner that the eternity of space and matter is. If this can be said for the eternity of cause, must not as much be said of the eternity of mind so inescapably associated with purposeful causation—the causation that has produced the cosmos at least?

The mysterious vital something. Sir Oliver Lodge when arguing for the reality and eternity of that “mysterious, vital something” which builds up from earth elements an oak, an eagle, or a man, closes his argument with the question: “Is it something which is really nothing, and soon shall it be manifestly nothing?” “Not so,” he answers;

nor is it so with intellect and consciousness and will, nor with memory and love and adoration, nor of the manifold activities which

¹⁰Fiske, *Cosmic Philosophy* 1:218.

¹¹Spencer, *First Principles*, 95.

at present strangely interact with matter and appeal to our bodily senses and terrestrial knowledge; they (meaning human minds) are not nothing, nor shall they ever vanish into nothingness or cease to be. They did not arise with us: they never did spring into being; they are as eternal as the Godhead itself, and in the eternal Being they shall endure for ever.¹²

Summary. We have found, then, in this review of intelligence, or the mind element of the universe:

1. That intelligences are so-called because intelligence is their chief characteristic;
2. That consciousness is a necessary quality of intelligence;
3. That intelligences are both self-conscious and conscious of an external universe not self;
4. That intelligences have the power to generalize—to rise from the contemplation of the particular to the general; from the individual to the universal;
5. That intelligences can perceive the existence of certain *a priori* principles that are incontrovertible—necessary truths, which form a basis of knowledge and of ratiocination—deducing conclusions from premises;
6. That intelligences, as known through men, possess a power of imagination or imaginative memory, by which they hold pictures of sense perceptions before the mind, and may form from them new combinations of thought and consciousness;
7. That intelligences have power to deliberate, to form judgments, and to will;
8. That intelligences have volition, *that have relation with* physical, mental, and moral *conditions*—within certain limitation—a power both to will and to do; in other words they are free, moral agents;
9. That intelligences are eternal—are among the uncreated things—and the indestructible things.

It should be understood that these brief remarks respecting intelligence and intelligences are in no sense a treatise, even brief and

¹²Lodge, *Science and Immortality*, 160. **Add note from King Folett [sic] Sermon.**

cursory, on psychology; they are made merely to indicate some of the chief qualities that are inseparably connected with intelligence and intelligences, so that when the words are used in this writing, some definite idea may be had as to what is meant.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Guizot, *History of Civilization*, vol. 2, lect. 5, pp. 115–25; Smith, “King Follett Discourse”; Roberts, *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, pt. 2, sect. 2, summarizing Guizot; D&C 93. Roberts found no treatise on the will to excel Guizot’s.

9

Nature of the Universe: Monistic or Pluralistic?

The next step in the development of our knowledge of the universe brings us to the question as to whether it is monistic or pluralistic. Monism is described to be the doctrine which refers all phenomena to a single, ultimate, constituent or agent, and is used in contra-distinction to dualism, or pluralism, of which more later.

Systems: (a) Monism.^a The doctrine of monism has been held in three generic forms: first, matter and its phenomena are explained as modifications of mind, resulting in what is known as idealistic monism; second, mind is explained by and “resolved into matter”; this is known as materialistic monism; third, matter, mind, and their phenomena, are held to be manifestations or modifications of some one substance, an “unknown something,” which is capable of an objective and subjective aspect.¹

(b) Dualism.^b Dualism stands for two-foldness, a system which is founded on a double principle or two-fold distinction. A conception of the universe, arising from the existence of the two original elements, ~~and~~ spirit and matter, with action and re-action of these, resulting in the phenomena of the universe.

^aMonism is the belief that there is no difference between mind and matter. Such a view does not recognize a physical and a spiritual realm, but only one domain. Most monists are atheists. See Roland Hall, “Monism and Pluralism,” in Paul Edwards, ed., *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 8 vols. (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1967), 5:363.

¹*Webster’s New International Dictionary*, s.v. “monism.”

^bDualism postulates two different but simultaneous realms of being in the universe. Mind and matter are not the same. This view allows for a physical realm and a differing spiritual realm. Hall, “Monism and Pluralism,” *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 5:364.

With the details of these systems of thought and the hair-splitting refinements as to whether matter shades off into spirit, or spirit rises by imperceptible manifestations into matter-phenomena, and merges into tangibility—we need not concern ~~us~~ **ourselves** overmuch. I realize that our new knowledge is constantly producing what is almost new revelation on the constitution of matter, and that the very dust is shown to have “a complexity and activity heretofore unimagined,” and that such phrases as “dead matter” and “inert matter” are passing out of use so far as possessing any significance is concerned. The new theory of the atom is said to amount almost to a new conception of the universe itself. The atom is no longer the indivisible particle it was once thought to be; it is now said to be known that there is an “atom” within an “atom.” That which scientists thought was elementary and final a generation ago can now be divided and broken up; that instead of the atom being the unit of substance, it is found to be almost a world in itself, with action and reaction within its small compass that is quite amazing.²

All the new knowledge, however, respecting the atom and all that comes of it, including resolving it into electrons, leaves us with the fact that it has within it something which “acts,” and something which is “acted upon”; a seemingly necessary positive and negative substance in action and reaction out of which things proceed an atom; an aggregation of atoms, a world; or a universe of worlds.

We may leave these systems of philosophy that try to account for the starting point of things, with the conviction that we may be assured that the positive which acts, and the negative which is acted upon, are both eternal things; and may they not be the ultimate factors, spirit and matter, acting and re-acting upon each other by which the universe is up-built and sustained?

(c) *Pluralism.*^c Turning from these considerations of monism and dualism, we may conduct our inquiries as to the nature of the universe along other and broader lines. Is this universe monistic or pluralistic? It seems almost useless to ask the question in view of what has already been set forth. We have already before us a number of things, eternal

²See Thomson, *Outline of Science*, 4-5. **Add on [illegible] from man and his universe.**

^cPluralism assumes that, if two irreconcilable realms exist in the universe, then there may be more than two. Bertrand Russell, a pluralist, believed that the universe has no unity, continuity, or orderliness, but is composed of any number of radically different and irreducible systems. Hall, “Monism and Pluralism,” *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 5:364. B. H. Roberts viewed the universe as pluralistic; he pointed to time, space, matter, force, energy, intelligence, and mind in establishing the pluralistic character of the universe. However, he would oppose any pluralistic view that did not also see the universe as unified, orderly, and continuous.

things, that go to the making of the universe; and these many things proclaim the pluralistic character of it—time, space, matter, force, or energy; and causation, and mind, or intelligence. All these eternal by the nature of them, self-existent, without beginning and without end, and so many of them, that if number in things constituted plurality, then here we have plurality—a pluralistic universe.

The theological view. The phase of this matter, however, which concerns us chiefly is with reference to mind and intelligence outside of our own world. The old and generally accepted idea about our world, ~~and~~ supposed to rest upon the authority of revelation, was that the world was created out of nothing by a supreme Intelligence, and within recent times. That the chief characteristic of this Intelligence was one-ness, that he transcended the universe, and acted from the outside of it in its creation; that sun, moon, and stars were created for the earth, the sun to be its light by day, and the moon and stars especially created to break up somewhat the otherwise utter darkness of the night; that the earth alone was the one world in which this Intelligence (God) was concerned; and whatever other beings existed were angels and spirits ministering for God, and to the benefit of the human race.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this view does not fit the universe as we have reviewed it here in the light of the knowledge we now have in respect of the extent and the vastness of the universe, and including as it does, thought of the great likelihood of the thousands of millions of suns being circled by groups of inhabited planets, numberless as the sands upon the seashore.

Intelligence pluralistic. The structure of the universe as we have learned it, and now know it to be, leads inevitably to the conclusion that the universe, as to the intelligence which apparently stands as dominant therein, is pluralistic. That is to say, many intelligences are bound together in at least a workable and perhaps a perfect unity; and this unity of many intelligences bound together in agreement may be and is sufficient to give the sense of one-ness to all that is. John Stuart Mill,^d in his “Essay on Theism,” in speaking of the evident unity in nature which suggests that nature is governed by mind which is one, goes on to say that “no one kind of event can be absolutely pre-ordained or governed by any being but one who holds in his hands the

^dJohn Stuart Mill (1806–73) was an English scholar who wrote a variety of works on religion, philosophy, and economics. His *Essay on Liberty* argues that society should protect its members from governmental and moral pressures.

reigns of all Nature and not of some department only.” Then he gives a splendid alternative to this by saying: “At least if a plurality be supposed, it is necessary to assume so complete a concert of action and unity of will among them that the difference is for more purposes immaterial between such a theory and that of the absolute unity of the Godhead.”³ This alternative presents the ground of the reconciliation between the unity of the universe and the existence of many intelligences which undoubtedly enter into and compose that unity.

Highest spiritual manifestation in union with matter. Again we may resort to our method of finding truth by reasoning from what we know, confining our thought for the moment to our own earth. We know that the ~~best~~ **highest** manifestation of the thing we call Intelligence is found in man; is found therefore in union with material elements; for man, the intelligence, the spirit of him, is in union with matter; the spirit *and* the body, the latter a definite amount of matter united with a spirit, constitute the being we know as man. And in this union both spirit and matter attain the highest and most desirable manifestation in this our mortal life. Man is an intelligence; but he is an intelligent entity, an individual, separate and distinct from every other individual man; and as there are many such separate intelligences, we may say for our world that, as to intelligence (mind), ~~as~~ also as to many other things, it is a pluralistic world. That being true as to our world, may it not be equally true of all the inhabited planets of our own solar system? And of all the solar systems of the universe?

The Many as One. Let us start from another viewpoint. The attainment of the highest wisdom, the mightiest achievements of intelligences on our earth, is not attained by the individual **man acting alone, but rather by action of the individual** in union with his fellows. By choosing the most highly developed intelligences of the community as representatives, and bringing them together in councils of various kinds, parliaments, congresses, cabinets, courts, and other national assemblies—from these, nations and the world finally get expressed the wisest and therefore the best judgments as to what ought to obtain as public policies and provide for the best securities for the freedom of men and the welfare of nations. From the deliberations of such bodies rise the wisest and best systems of governments and laws. Though the personal studies and investigations of individual scientists and philosophers may carry them far in unearthing knowledge of

³Mill, *Three Essays*, 133.

things, and understanding the relation of forces; they may establish science, and as flaming torch-bearers these individuals may lead the way, and blaze the trails over which the crowd may follow. Yet that wisdom expressed in laws for individual, community, national, and even international relationships—all that comes from men taking counsel with his fellow men, and unitedly devising and working out the things that *ordain* and establish the order of society which concerns individual and community welfare, and *provides* the best securities for liberty; and through these *establish* man's greatest happiness, and the highest development of that thing which we think of as world civilization—it is the wisdom massed from united intelligences.

This is what we know from human experiences in the development of human wisdom, as applied to the practical things of life, the welfare of humanity; and it is vouched for by history. And now, reasoning from what we know of conditions respecting all these things as to our own world, we ask the question: May not this be the status of things in other worlds? Only, of course, in the older planets and planetary systems—the greater and the more highly developed worlds, inhabited by superior intelligences—the means employed would be more perfect, and the results correspondingly more satisfactory, in that there would be established in those older worlds higher states of civilization, and there would be undoubtedly individuals of higher intelligence with corresponding increase of power and influence. To attempt to say to what heights of development and glory intelligences may have attained to in these older, and more advanced worlds, of course, would be merely speculation; but it is not inconceivable, that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are these developments *in more advanced worlds* higher than our developments, so are their ways above our ways and their thoughts above our thoughts.^c

What infinite opportunity for development in such a universe as we are here contemplating! When viewed from the standpoint of the existence of these thousands of millions of suns, surrounded by much greater and more glorious planetary systems than our own solar system, and inhabited by intelligences superior to those that we know as the human race—what may not come of such a universe and of our

^cRoberts paraphrases Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Roberts does not allude to this passage from Isaiah merely for stylistic reasons. This passage prepares the reader for Roberts's argument in the next chapter that God rules over advanced societies and higher intelligences on another planet in the universe.

world as part of it? For to intelligences there is no end of progress; however great *its* present attainment there is still a beyond to higher glory, greater majesty, increase of excellence. There are no ultimates to progress for intelligences, there is always becoming, but no end. This constitutes the joy of existence—this possibility of eternal progress!

An optimistic universe. All this makes the universe an optimistic universe, where hope eternally reigns, where achievements but furnish wings for still higher achievements. It makes possible the contemplation of a universe filled with the brotherhood of divine intelligences, presided over by graded councils of power and authority, rising one above another in designated spheres and authority, and yet all operating in harmonious relations, knowing that no power or authority can in reality, or ought to be exercised over intelligences by their fellow intelligences but “by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile.” Reproving with sharpness at times, as may be necessary for correction and understanding of things as they are, but followed by such manifestations of love and good will that even the “reproof” shall be seen to be but love in stern guise; for the government of our contemplated universe is to be and cannot, be other than a moral government, a government that rests upon knowledge, persuasion, and love (see D&C 121:41–43).^f

^fRoberts creatively derives from this scripture principles of universal governance. Quote marks have been added to differentiate between the text of the Doctrine and Covenants and Roberts’s paraphrase.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: James, *Pluralistic Universe*; Smith, “King Follett Discourse”; D&C 29; 76; 84; 88; 93; 121. On monism and pluralism, see pages 639–41 below.

10

Of Knowledge: To the Point of Moral Certainty

Say first, of God above, or Man below,
〈How〉 [What] can we reason, but from what we know?¹

Great questions proposed. The field of our knowledge is now sketched out before us: Knowledge of ourselves; of other selves; in a limited way also knowledge of things of the earth, air and sea; knowledge of the sun and moon; knowledge of the solar system, as to the number of planets at least, something of their size and their distance from the sun and from each other, something we know in outline of the sidereal system, its extent, its immensity, and its orderliness (the most striking thing about it as we ***shall see in the chapter following this***, from the quoted comments of Professor Moulton, is its orderliness). And now we have reached the point where something else must be learned, something else we need to know in order to attain our purpose in this writing, but which can only be known with approximate certainty, and only to be found out by the process of ratiocination, from that which we most definitely know to what we may know only approximately, and yet know, as I think, up to the point of moral certainty.^a Let us put the process of reasoning from what we know to the probability of what is not absolutely known to the test.

¹Pope, *Essay on Man*, epistle 1, sect. 1, lines 17-18.

^aThe *Oxford English Dictionary*, under its definition of “moral,” gives meanings for evidentiary and “moral certainty” as follows:

Used to designate that kind of probable evidence that rests on a knowledge of the general tendencies of human nature, or of the character of particular individuals or classes of men; often in looser use, applied to all evidence which is merely probable and not demonstrative. *Moral certainty*: a practical certainty resulting from moral evidence; a degree of probability so great as to admit of no reasonable doubt; also,

We have ascertained from our quotations from various authorities upon astronomy that it is possible and even probable that the suns which make up our galaxy—our universe—have circling about them groups of opaque worlds, even as our sun has ~~eight~~ **nine** such worlds moving about him in their respective orbits. But is it true that each of these suns of the sidereal system, or even a considerable number of them, has a like group of planets to which it is the center of gravitation, and from which these planets receive light and warmth and vital force, resulting in life such as we know it on our own earth? The answer must necessarily be that this is not definitely known, and hence scientists in astronomy speak with caution, and only say that it may possibly be so. It may even be probable. But science can speak with no positive assurance on this subject, because really scientists do not know.

Are the “fixed stars” centers of solar systems? The distance, as we have seen, lying between our earth and its sun and the nearest fixed star is so great that if there are planets moving about Alpha Centauri, then the borrowed light in which they shine is so dim, and the planets themselves so small, that they are lost to vision by us who are inhabiting the earth, even though we use our mightiest telescopes in our efforts to discover them. We are thus barred by these immense distances, and the but faintly illuminated opaque worlds, that we have no real knowledge as to their existence. But this we do know, namely, that our own sun, in constitution like the other suns of the stellar universe, has a group of opaque planets moving about him in great regularity and order; and reasoning from this knowledge it would seem at least not improbable that a similar condition obtains with reference to other suns so like ~~him~~ **ours** in every other way. Also the thought obtrudes itself into the mind, why should it be thought that our sun—much smaller and therefore less powerful than other and mightier suns—is the only one around which groups of opaque planets revolve? And when we think of the great galaxy making up the stellar universe ~~as being so immense~~, we are naturally led to the reflection, what a waste of energy there must be in the existence of these suns of the

something which is morally certain. . . . The currency of the terms *certitudo* [certainty], *evidentia moralis* [moral evidence] appears to be due to the Cartesian logicians of the 17th c.

The *OED* cites as an example the following definition from Isaac Watts’s *Logic* 2.2§9 (1725): “In Matters of Faith, an exceeding great Probability is called a moral Certainty.” Roberts appears to be using the term in its technical sense as used in logic.

universe if only one out of the hundreds of millions of them is to have an attendant group of worlds!

Is there life on other worlds than our own? There remains also still another, and even we may say, a more important question, which I shall confine for the moment to the planets of our own solar system, viz.: is there life upon these planets, vegetable, and animal, and human? To that question man must answer that he does not know. But this he knows, that his own earth sustains life, vegetable and animal and human; and reasoning from what he knows as to conditions upon his own earth, it would at least seem that similar conditions might obtain upon other planets of his world system; if not, then again the thought, what a waste of energy, for without life upon these worlds how vain is their existence! And we might well ask to what purpose do they exist if they are without life? Or, even if they bring forth life, vegetable and animal life, and not human life, or something akin to it, the same question would be pertinent. Nothing can be clearer than that our own earth would become meaningless if human life were not here. Human life is unquestionably the crowning fact and glory of our earth, and such sentient and intelligent life as humans possess, or some intelligent life forms superior to humans, would *alone* seem to justify the existence of these worlds.

Is life in other worlds climaxed with the equivalent of human life? What good purpose would be served by such worlds—the worlds of all the universe, unless, as in the case of our own earth, the life upon them—if such exists—is not climaxed by sentient and intelligent life, such as we know on our earth, or something equivalent or superior to it? Or some form of life which, through some sort of development, might be capable of becoming equal to or superior to human life?

Are the earth and all things in it made for man? Nothing can be clearer to intelligence than that our earth, however rich it might be in vegetable and animal life, would be without purpose worthwhile with human life absent from it. To become thoroughly aware of the truth of this statement, it is only necessary to suppose the human race, with all it has produced, banished from the earth. Let all things else remain: the earth's place in the solar system and its form; let the islands and the continents be as they are now; also the seas, the majestic mountain ranges, the imperial valleys, the extensive plains; let these be clothed with the richest verdure, with the most fragrant flowers in

profusion, with shrubbery and forests abounding; let all this be bathed in the glory of the sunlight. Let all forms of animal life abound in all the seas and the rivers, and in the air and on the earth, in the mountains and the plains, and in the woods; let the birds fly through the air and fill the silence with their songs; let the seasons follow each other in their regular course, refreshing spring and glowing summer; let the grains and the fruits come to ripeness in autumn; let the forests put forth the glory of their foliage in the spring-tide and in summer, and then in the autumn fall to enrich the soil whence they grew, only to be followed by more foliage the next summer, which shall fall upon the ground in the succeeding autumn, and rot and enrich the soil in which it grew! Let the moon come out and look upon the scene of the earth in its glory night after night, age after age. Let the stars from their immense distances look down upon it night after night, and age after age, and see all these things, save only man on the earth; and with him absent, what would all this earth with its wealth of beauty and glory, with its vegetable and animal life, mean?

What would it matter that enormous coal fields underlie the earth's surface with their vast stored up energy drawn from the sunlight of past ages? There would be no man on the earth to let loose that energy for useful production—man is not here! What would it matter that other parts of the earth's interior hold vast oil reservoirs, another kind of stored up energy? It would be there with no purpose with man absent from the earth. What matter the stores of iron, of granite, and marble, of clay for bricks—man the builder is not in the earth, and with the builder absent all these would be unused and worthless. What avails the store of faultless Venetian marble, with man the sculptor not here to fashion it into all but a living, breathing statuary? What does it matter that there are pigments of endless variety in the earth? Man the artist is not here to blend them on the canvas into a landscape of dreamy beauty, or paint a portrait true to life of the great, and thus perpetuate the memory of noble persons and great deeds?

What boots it if the everlasting hills are seamed with silver, or that the quartz strata, or the river sands, hold the precious gold stores? Man is not here to fashion them into objects of beauty or utility. What matters the existence of precious stones deep-buried in the selected places of the earth, or hidden in the "midnight caves of ocean"—no queens or princesses or other women of grace and beauty are on earth for whom they will be fitting adornments for enhancement of comeliness, there is no beauty—woman absent—that they can fittingly adorn!

Who of all the creatures inhabiting the earth—man absent—would appreciate the earth and the things associated with it? Who would love

dawn or passing evening? Who would contemplate that “inverted bowl we call the sky,” with all its star-glory? Who would love the flowers, or the song of birds? Who would uplift the face to think of God? Man is the only erect and upward-looking being in earth life. Who would desire immortality, or long for higher things than just bare existence, brutish life? Contemplate the earth with man absent from it: how stale, flat, unprofitable, and meaningless it all would be! And as it would be with our earth and the group of planets of which it is but one—so would it be with all these billions of suns with their attendant groups of planets, if tenantless by intelligent beings who would be equal to, if not superior to, human earth inhabitants! If tenantless by such beings, or at least beings capable of rising to such excellence, and to higher stages of development, they might as well sink into the oblivion of non-existence, as to be, and not to be the habitat of intelligent, progressive beings—intelligences!

What is the trend of authority on the inhabitancy of other worlds? So impressive is the likelihood of the inhabitancy of other worlds than our own, however, that, as we have already seen in the excerpts from the lecture of Professor Moulton, quoted in chapters 5 and 6, that he holds that about half of the billion stars of our galaxy, being in size and constitution and temperature essentially similar to our own sun—he holds that “it is not improbable, it is in fact probable, that a majority of them have planets ~~circulating~~ **circling** about them as our earth revolves about the sun.” “It may be,” he continues, “that a fraction of them, perhaps in all hundreds of millions, are in a condition comparable to that of the earth, and that they support life!”

Some years ago the celebrated English astronomer Sir Robert Ball,^b in the *American Press* (September 30, 1894), in dealing with the subject “Possibility of Life on Other Worlds,” and reviewing the subject at that time and the state of the question from a scientific standpoint, said: “No reasonable person will, I think, doubt that the tendency of modern research has been in favor of the supposition that there may be life on some of the other globes.”² Later, however, Sir Robert Ball grew bolder and in a subsequent statement to the above said:

Granting the, to us, impossible hypothesis that the final cause of the universe is “accident,” the fortuitous concourse of self-existent atoms, still the “accident,” which produced thinking beings upon this little

^bSir Robert Stawell Ball (1840–1913) was an Irish astronomer and mathematician whose many books and lectures popularized astronomy, but his greatest work was in mathematics.

²Ball, “Possibility of Life on Other Worlds,” 156.

and inferior world ⟨of ours⟩, must have frequently repeated itself; while if, as we hold, there is a sentient Creator it is difficult to believe, without a revelation to that effect, that he has wasted such glorious creative powers upon mere masses of insensible matter. God can not love gases. The probability, at least, is that there are millions of worlds (for after all what the sensitized paper sees must be an infinitesimal fraction of the whole) occupied by sentient beings.³

Still later, August 27, 1910, the Associated Press announced that in a lecture before the Popular Educational Society, known also as the “Materialistic Association,” Professor T. J. J. See is represented as saying, that in the completion of his researches in *Cosmic Evolution* to which he had devoted ten years, ~~stated as~~ his conviction *was* “that the planets revolving about the fixed stars are inhabited by some kind of intelligent beings.”⁴ He also cited an address delivered at Philadelphia in 1897 by Professor Newcomb,^c in which similar views were held and said that the proof is much more complete now—1910—the time of Professor See’s declaration—than at that time—1897. “Life flourishing on the earth and believed to exist in Mars and Venus,” continued Professor See, “is but a drop in the Pacific Ocean as compared to that flourishing on the thousands of billions of habitable worlds now definitely proved to revolve about the fixed stars with the habitability of these extensive worlds.”⁵

Sustained by such authority, I think we may proceed in future discussions of this great theme—the habitancy of other worlds than our own—upon the assumption that this inhabitancy may be fairly well assured. It should also be observed that this line of reasoning, limited in the foregoing to the planets of the solar system, can be just as consistently applied to the sidereal universe and the attendant group of planets that may be circling their suns, only it is with increasing emphasis that we are forced to the thought of wastefulness by misuse of matter and energy, if the millions of suns have no attendant worlds and the worlds no sentient, intelligent life upon them.

~~*The age of worlds.*~~ ***Are there worlds and world systems older than our own?*** Again we question in order to form the basis of more

³Ball [source not found].

⁴See *Cosmic Evolution* [source not found].

^cSimon Newcomb (1835-1909), an astronomer, standardized the observation methods of the United States Naval Observatory. His planetary theories and computation of astronomical constants are still in official use today or have been replaced only recently.

⁵See *Cosmic Evolution* [source not found].

reasoning. Are any of the suns of the sidereal system and their supposed attendant systems of worlds older than our own sun and its system of worlds? Again we can not speak with positive knowledge, but we do know that things in our own earth are younger and older than other things, and it is not unreasonable to conclude from the knowledge that this fact imparts to us, that some of these greater suns of the universe and their probable group of planets may be many millions of years older than our own.

Again referring to our earth experience, we know that age sometimes affects, and favorably, development; that there is cumulative knowledge and cumulative experience which results in higher excellencies, and reasoning from this truth, in larger and more desirable developments both as to individuals and states of civilizations. **Reasoning** from what we know, may it not be that in some of the older suns of our galaxy and their attendant worlds, there may be superior conditions existing in such worlds because of the longer time element which has led to larger knowledge and to deeper wisdom, resulting in more exalted states of intellectual life and of civilization, than those which are known to us on our earth? And there ~~has~~ **may have** been developed also higher and mightier intelligences than any that have been developed on our ~~own~~ earth. If such higher intelligences do exist in other worlds, ~~and higher states of civilization,~~ may we not enter upon the same line of ~~questioning and~~ reasoning from what we know, apply ~~what~~ **the principle** we have been following ~~in relation~~ to the social and sympathetic and moral qualities as connected with these higher intelligences?

This we know in respect of the inhabitants of our own world, that higher intellectual life and higher states of civilization produced exalted moral feelings, resulting in higher states of righteousness and love of truth and sympathy for fellow men, leading to desire for the uplift of those less highly developed, and thus is produced among our own earth-people a desire to restrain the strong and vicious by laws and group agencies under forms of governments, and to uplift and better the conditions of the lowly and undeveloped peoples. This is manifested in the missionary work that Christian people, especially, undertake in uplifting the undeveloped peoples of our world. Large sums of money and noble lives are devoted to, and sometimes sacrificed in, the reclamation of what are called the heathen tribes and races of our earth's population. Are such qualities as these characteristic of the highly developed intelligences of other worlds? And may they be moved by sympathy arising from the love of kindred inhabitants of other worlds to seek a similar uplifting, perhaps even redemption, of other-world

inhabitants they esteem less fortunate than themselves, less highly developed yet capable of improvement? And may it not be that their highly developed knowledge of the *means of* transition through space have led to interplanetary, ~~inter-world-system communication and~~ visitations that they may ~~be able to~~ carry on large ~~interplanetary, inter-world-system~~ missionary and social service work throughout all this vast universe we have been contemplating?

What of the altruism of other-world inhabitants? Do these higher intelligences of the stellar universe and planetary systems have so developed in themselves the quality of love that makes it possible to think of them as being willing to sacrifice themselves—to empty themselves in sacrifice to bring to pass the welfare of others whom they may esteem *to be* the undeveloped intelligences of the universe? And may they not be capable of giving the last full measure of sacrifice to bring to pass the higher development of the “lowly” when no other means of uplift can be serviceable? Is the great truth operative among these untold millions of intelligences that greater love hath no intelligence for another than this, that he would give his life in the service of kindred intelligences when no other means of helpfulness is possible?^d Is it possible that there exist throughout all these worlds conceived of in this chapter—is it possible that there are races of intelligences kindred to our own, and are they bound together by mutual ties of sympathy and interests, born of love, and begetting a sense of universal brotherhood? And may there be, when the way is found, some psychic means, and perhaps some physical means, of interplanetary and inter-solar system method of communication among all these worlds and world-systems, by which they may impart—in the case of some of these worlds, knowledge of their needs; and in the case of other worlds of higher development, ability to dispatch the helpfulness necessary to achieve the uplift desired?

Again the questions asked with reference to these high things must be answered with the statement that we do not know, with absolute knowledge of human origin—by man’s wisdom—that these worlds are inhabited by such intelligences. But this we ~~do~~ know, viz: that our own earth is peopled with sentient intelligences, who, whatever may be their limitations and shortcomings, are nevertheless capable of attaining unto, and have attained unto, very high things in intellectual, moral, and spiritual life, and deep sympathies born of life, which lead them to

^dRoberts paraphrases John 15:13: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” This passage serves to identify the “higher intelligences” with Jesus Christ.

restrain the vicious by wholesome community laws, and raise the lowly by deeds of kindly helpfulness; and reasoning from that knowledge, it is not difficult to rise to the conception that ~~in~~ other worlds and world systems do sustain multifarious life forms including beings akin to our human race, and that in some cases they may be far advanced beyond our earth inhabitants in physical perfections (perhaps have learned how to become immortal!), in moral virtues, and in spiritual exaltations; and reasoning from what we know, from our own earth and its inhabitants, such existing populations for the universe of worlds seem not outside the realms of likelihood. And if it be not so!—then again that reflection: what a waste of force and matter in the existence of all these worlds and world systems if they are tenantless by intelligences! To what purpose do they exist? To think of such a universe as we have contemplated in these pages as tenantless by sentient intelligences, except for the inhabitancy of our earth, violates all reason, and makes hesitancy in affirming a positive conclusion about it insufferable pedantry.

The voice of revelation on the habitancy of other worlds. Here I cannot refrain from adding the voice of revelation, the “more sure word of prophecy” (2 Pet. 1:19) to these tentative admissions of scientists, their more or less weak “probabilities,” “possibilities,” and their tentative “perhapses” in relation to the habitancy of other worlds and world systems than our own. The Prophet of the New Dispensation brought forth and developed more or less this “sure word of prophecy” upon the subject in the Mosaic fragment—book of Moses, chapter 1. It is written as part of the vision of Moses there described, that “he beheld many lands; and each land was called earth, and there were inhabitants on the face thereof” (Moses 1:29). Then Moses is represented as saying as he talked with his Lord face to face:

Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest them? . . . And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me. . . . And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten. And the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is many. (Moses 1:30–34)

From the last statement it appears that Adam is a generic name, that there are many Adams carrying the significance perhaps of being first placed on the creations of God. “And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine” (Moses 1:37).

The whole **Mosaic** fragment seems to take for granted the habitancy by sentient intelligent beings of the same race with men and divine beings.

The Abrahamic fragment—book of Abraham—seems even more explicit with reference to the habitancy of other worlds. Here the Lord reveals to Abraham, by Urim and Thummim, the great creations of the space depths: “I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones which were near unto it; And the Lord said unto me: These are the governing ones” (Abr. 3:2-3). As he proceeds with the description of these creations, it seems always taken for granted that they were inhabited. Addressing Abraham, the Lord says of these creations:

I dwell in the midst of them all; I now, therefore, have come down unto thee to <deliver> [declare] unto thee the works which my hands have made, wherein my wisdom excelleth them all, for I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning. (Abr. 3:21)

Then follows the description of the preexistent intelligences and spirits which the Lord revealed to Abraham.

In chapter 4 of this fragment comes the account of the creation of the earth, and throughout that chapter the various acts of creation are represented as the accomplishment of “the Gods,” the title always used in the plural. The chapter opens as follows:

Then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth. . . . And the Spirit of the Gods was brooding upon the face of the waters. And they (the Gods) said: Let there be light; and there was light. (Abr. 4:1-3)

And so on throughout all the creative acts. And the same plural is used in the fifth chapter. And what were these creative Intelligences designated as “the Gods,” but the higher intelligences of other and older world systems engaging in the creation of this earth to which our revelations **for the most part** are limited.

In the revelation received by the Prophet in behalf of the Church in December 1832, and called by him, because of its gracious spirit, the Olive Leaf, and wonderful for the enlightening power of it, there he directly teaches, by this revelation from God, the habitancy of other worlds (D&C 88). For instance, in verses 37-39 of the revelation he says:

There are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space,

either a greater or a lesser kingdom. And [un]to every kingdom is given a law. . . . All beings who abide not in those conditions are not justified. (D&C 88:37-39)

The intimation being that this infinity of kingdoms is inhabited by intelligences. In verse 45 our Prophet says:

The earth rolls upon her wings, and the sun giveth his light by day, and the moon giveth her light by night, and the stars also give their light, as they roll upon their wings in their glory, in the midst of the power of God. Unto what shall I liken these kingdoms, that ye may understand? . . . Behold, I will liken these kingdoms unto a man having a field, and he sent forth his servants into the field to dig in the field. And he said unto the first: Go ye and labor in the field, and in the first hour I will come unto you, and ye shall behold the joy of my countenance. And he said unto the second: Go ye also into the field, and in the second hour I will visit you with the joy of my countenance. And also unto the third, saying: I will visit you; And unto the fourth, and so on unto the twelfth. And the lord of the field went unto the first in the first hour, and tarried with him all that hour, and he was made glad with the light of the countenance of his lord. And then he withdrew from the first that he might visit the second also, and the third, and the fourth, and so on unto the twelfth. And thus they all received the light of the countenance of their lord, every man in his hour, and in his time, and in his season; . . . Every man in his own order, until his hour was finished, even according as his lord had commanded him, that his lord might be glorified in him, and he in his lord, that they all might be glorified. Therefore, unto this parable I will liken all these kingdoms, *and the inhabitants thereof*—every kingdom in its hour, and in its time, and in its season, even according to the decree which God hath made. (D&C 88:45-46, 51-58, 60-61; emphasis added by hand)^c

Be it remembered here that these kingdoms and the inhabitants thereof are the kingdoms of the space depths in the universe, all the worlds, and the world systems, and by the word of God they have their inhabitants.

^cRoberts capitalized the word “Lord” in verse 58.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Roberts, *New Witnesses for God*; Moses; Abr. 3-5; D&C 130:4-8. On the themes of chapters 9, 10, and 12, see pages 642-44 below.

11

From What We Know to Faith: The Possibility of Revelation

Review of previous chapters. We have now before us in outline the general ground plan of what we know. First, that which we may say we know definitely, from contact with it in our experiences in one form or another; and second, what we may be said to know only up to the point of moral certainty, obtained by reasoning from what we know to that which may be possible; thence, to that which may be probable; thence, to that which is of moral certainty, for the reason that it must be reality because of its conformity to reason, and because the contrary is inconceivable.

This ~~review~~ has led us to the consideration of things that deal with self-consciousness and other consciousness; to things cognized through the senses, knowledge of things of life and of the earth; and then to knowledge of things external to the earth, things of the solar system; thence to such knowledge of things as we have out in the space depths of the sidereal system; its immensity, the almost inconceivable distances that separate the suns and the probability of their inhabitan-
tancy, by sentient intelligences.

What is the meaning of the universe? And now the question: Is what we know to be true of this vast field we have contemplated entirely satisfactory? What does it all teach us in relation to the important, fundamental things that man ought to know? What is the significance and meaning of constantly changing forms of, and in matter, and yet the conservation of its mass? Is there some mighty purpose under all this great universe we have contemplated, or is it without purpose? Is there in existence some "far off event" to which all the world systems

[Chapters 11-15 are essentially paraphrased summaries of material in Roberts's *Seventy's Course in Theology*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1907-11), which consists primarily of quotations from other works.]

are moving? ***What mean all the activities within this universe?*** Is there some stupendous plan being worked out worthy and commensurate with all this immensity of space and time and substance, and force? What is the mystery of man's life and death—of all life and death? And whither are all things tending? Is man's life through a union of spirit and body by some process or other to be made immortal? Or is the union of body and spirit to be permanently broken by death? If such is to be his end—the spirit and body eternally separated, the body resolved to dust, the spirit to oblivion or at least to an unknown end, then what was the purpose of man coming into existence as spirit and body united? In all that we have contemplated in our review of what man knows, we have found nothing that brings a solution to these inquiries; and yet without this knowledge life is a riddle that man knows not what to make of. To what source shall he turn for this necessary knowledge that will solve these vital, human problems?

Testimony of the works of nature inadequate. The universe itself conveys no information on these matters. "Turn not to that inverted bowl men call the sky,"^a for answer to these questions; for the worlds of the universe are impotent to answer. I know how forceful in testimony the heavens and the glory of them can be in supplementing a certain positive message, did we but possess such a message. The heavens and the glory of them, however, are and can be only auxiliary witnesses to the principle message that shall impart the knowledge we seek. Until that knowledge comes, however, appeal to the creation is vain in hope of finding anything conclusive upon the questions that are here presented. The Psalmist may say, as he beautifully does say:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. (Ps. 19:1-4)

But what do the heavens and the glory of them say upon the questions already submitted to the reader in this chapter?

We are mindful also of what Paul says, "The invisible things of him (i.e., of God) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20). But what do "the things that are made" say of God's "eternal power and Godhead?" What do they say upon the important questions submitted to the reader in this chapter?

^aEdward Fitzgerald, *The Rubáiyat of Omar Kháyyám*, 52. Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyam was widely read around the turn of the century.

If men of such classic mold as David and Paul fail to bring definite answers from the heavens and the glory of them upon the questions herein submitted, then it is vain to hope that men of lesser mold would be successful in a like attempt. Not that such have not tried, however; they have tried, but unfortunately they sought to make definite statement of what the message from the “structure of the universe” conveyed, which only resulted in showing how weak and inadequate the message was conceived to be. In illustration I quote from one of the best attempts in this kind, and the author of which is the best known of deists and credited with possession of the keenest mind, and was of unusual literary ability:

“The wonderful structure of the Universe,” said Thomas Paine,^b

and everything that we behold in the system of the creation prove to us, far better than books can do, the existence of God and at the same time proclaim his attributes. It is by exercise of our reason that we are enabled to contemplate God in his works, and imitate him in his ways. When we see his care and kindness extended over all his creatures it teaches us our duty towards each other, while it calls forth our gratitude to him.

Again he remarks:

The Almighty Lecturer (Deity), by displaying the principles of science in the structure of the universe, has invited man to study and to imitation. It is as if He had said to the inhabitants of this globe, that we call ours, “I have made an earth for man to dwell upon, and I have rendered the starry heavens visible, to teach him science and the arts. He can now provide for his own comfort, and learn from my munificence to all, to be kind to each other.”¹

Yearning for the light. May not what is here set forth as conveying a message from the “structure of the universe” be regarded as far-fetched? And on the important questions submitted in this chapter, what does that message definitely say? Nothing. Lame and impotent must be the verdict respecting these messages supposed to come from “the heavens and the glory of them,” and from the “structure of the universe.” When measured by their value as answers to the questions put forth in this chapter, they fail to satisfy the inquiring mind. And what is more, and necessary to be connected with what we have here said upon this appeal to the universe for knowledge, and its failure to

^bThomas Paine (1737-1809), patriot, political philosopher of the American revolution (*Rights of Man*, 1791) and Enlightenment Deist, whose *Age of Reason* (1794) ridiculed traditional Christianity.

¹“Age of Reason” Paine’s *Theological Works*, 32-33.

give an adequate answer—the mental powers of man, so far as developed, give no ground of hope that he will ever have the ability, more than he has it now, to formulate an answer from “the things that are made,” to the questions we have submitted.

What, then, is left? To what source shall man turn for help to aid him in rending the veil of mystery that surrounds him and the vast universe? Do we really “stand between two barren peaks” crying in vain, “Whence, Why and Whither?”² And is there no voice answering from the silence on either side to instruct the mind and quiet the spirit of restless man in his search for a solution of these mysteries? Has none of the higher intelligences we have supposed to be inhabiting the distant and older worlds found it in his heart to send some friendly message of hope and assurance by enkindling knowledge as to why all is that is, and as it is? A message that would solve the mystery, break the spell of ignorance and clear the vision? Is not that or something akin to that the only hope for solution to all these inquiries? And may it not be true that something like that has happened? May it not be that the traditions of our race, held in varied forms, about a down-bending in some way or other of some higher intelligence imparting knowledge about the world and the purpose of its existence, and something about man’s origin and destiny? And may this not be what that same tradition calls revelation?

Of tradition in general. Surely what we have observed about the universe and the probability of millions of other worlds than our own being inhabited by great intelligences—greater than those of our world—would tend to the conception of the possibility of ~~such a thing.~~ **their sending forth a revelation as we have supposed.** And not only to the possibility of it, but to the probability of it, since they are as likely to possess the altruistic spirit as *well as their* high mental endowments. Shall we not, then, give attention to the tradition of mankind? May there not be substance in it? Shall we be justified in our search after truth if we neglect this possible source of knowledge? Is tradition to be despised because it bears the name “tradition”? Sometimes tradition may carry on its broad stream—unworthy things—mere myths and childish fables, I know; but may we not use discrimination as to other things not fables and rightly divide the word of truth from the error in this as in other things?

Tradition, of course, comes out of the dim past; but we are not compelled to begin with its beginning. It is possible to go up-stream as

²Ingersol’s oration at the grave of his brother.

well as down. Let us in our first view at least consider tradition and the force of it by going up-stream rather than down. Take this notion that comes from tradition about the existence of a deity. How came it to us? This present generation learned it from the last generation. And whence did they get it? From the generation that preceded their own; and they of a previous generation; and so on, back and back, into the time ages of antiquity. The tradition of a deity is so old “that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.” We may not be able to trace it quite to its source, but it is something transmitted from a great antiquity down to the present day.

The Hebrew tradition. The Hebrew race felt especially called upon to keep alive this tradition of God, and of creation, and all that goes with it, which they had received from their ancestors even before they were separated from the main Semitic race in the valley of the Euphrates. This, together with the traditions which grew out of the alleged “oral law”^c through their great prophet Moses, which God is said to have delivered to Moses by word of mouth, this they committed to tradition which in time came to be regarded as well nigh at par with their “scripture” or the “sacred books.”³ One of the ancient Hebrew prophets, in a very ecstasy of enthusiasm for tradition says:

Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from the[ir] children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to ⟨our⟩ [their] children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. (Ps. 78:1-7)

^c“According to rabbinic Judaism, ‘oral tradition’ is the authoritative interpretation of the Written Law [Torah]. Judaism understands the oral tradition to have been given by God to Moses on Sinai and therefore to be equal in authority and holiness to the Written Torah, represented by the Pentateuch.” Alan J. Avery-Peck, “Oral Tradition (Judaism),” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 5:34. The earliest explicit mention of the Oral Torah is in the Mishnah tractate *‘Abot* 1:1-18 from the third century A.D., although indirect evidence indicates the basic idea is much older. See Jacob Neusner, *The Oral Torah* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986).

³See A. H. Sayce, “Monumental Testimony to the Old Testament,” in Wright, *Bible Treasury*, 27-42. Also Cruden, “Tradition” in *Cruden’s Complete Concordance*.

Another prophet said of the knowledge that the Hebrews had received concerning God:

Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons and thy sons' sons. (Deut. 4:9)

The God of tradition. The traditions respecting God in the higher forms of them, represent him usually as the creator and preserver of all things. And this is found among nearly all nations and races of men. Even among some of the undeveloped peoples of the earth traces of tradition in this phase of it, are to be found; as well as in the traditions of the Hebrew race. It is found in all the mythologies of the ancient world, as well among the Greeks and Romans as among the Hebrews. Also in the mythologies—which are but varied forms of tradition—of India, China, Egypt, and the American Indians; all these, in one form or another, carry this phase of the tradition of God as the origin of all things and the directing force of all movement.

Origin Sources of tradition. Following this stream of tradition upward must finally bring us to its source. For however far distant the head of it may be, it must disclose a beginning.

From fear. There are only two sources whence it could start. One would be that the god idea came to man out of his experiences with the elements, destructive and benign, with which he was forced into contact; and out of which contact primitive man created his god idea. Those who regard this as the source of the god idea of the human race, stress man's experiences with the destructive forces of the world rather than with the benign forces. Primitive man heard the thunder and trembled; he saw the flash of lightning, and hid in terror; the earth beneath him shook, and he was sick with dread; fierce tempests uprooted the forest and destroyed his rude dwellings; desolating sickness visited the tribe and swept half of it to death; famine stalked through the land and took its toll. Reasoning from introspection of his own nature, and finding that when he was angry with a rival in the struggle for food—which meant struggle for existence; or in fierce contests for desirable mates, and for other earth-possession, he was moved by bitter hatred, and he sought to destroy those with whom he was angry. Hence when he found himself assailed by destructive forces, he reasoned that whatever, or whoever, invoked these destructive forces against him were angry with him, and hence he sought to appease their wrath. Thus came the conception of angry gods, who

must be propitiated and generally with sacrifices, sometimes human sacrifices, as affording the most precious of offerings.

~~*Influence of From gratitude on the God idea.*~~ There is, however, a kindlier side to this notion of the origin of the god idea arising from man's experiences. Man is capable of the emotion of gratitude as well as of fear. He takes note of what makes for his prosperity, for his health, for his peace and for the plenty which ministers to his comfort, as well as of calamitous events. He is grateful for the sunshine which warms the earth, for the gentle rains which with the sunshine accelerate life, and makes the earth fruitful. He rejoices at the plentifulness of the wild life on which he feeds, for the food supplies in ocean, and river, and forests, and plain. Hence *primitive* man's gratitude to whatever powers there be that produce this abundance on which he feeds; that clothes him, and makes him prosperous. He is aware that all this comes not from himself, but seems to be the result of the beneficence of the powers that stand back of all these manifestations of good-will towards men; and so out of a sense of gratitude man makes acknowledgment through offerings that he believes must be pleasing to the powers that so bless him. Hence came to man conceptions of benign deities who must be worshipped.

Tradition as broken fragments of revelation. It may be conceded that tradition of the god idea comes from both these sources—fear and gratitude; for we still have among the undeveloped tribes of men those who entertain the first idea of God—he is a being to be feared for his wrath which must be appeased. There are large masses of the world's population that have not received the enlightenment that would surely come from revelation; and hence they are still in that less than half enlightened state where men group [grope] about in great uncertainty with reference to knowledge of God. In some cases, however, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that the partial enlightenment such men possess comes from the broken fragments of previously known revelation among their ancestors, or contact with those who have been so enlightened. That tradition which has its source—even though indirectly—from revelation, is of much firmer texture than that which has its commencement in the experiences of the race in contact only with the forces of nature, benign and malignant; and of which their God idea is but the interpretation.

~~*Tradition fragment from revelation.*~~ That part of the stream of tradition which has its source in revelation, according to the Hebrew scriptures represents man in association with God in the early morning of the world, manifested in the most intimate relations by tangible

presence and conversation, man even naming the animal creation as they were presented to him by the creator; “and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.” Then came the fall of man, which separated him from this familiar association with God. But in the wreck that seems to have followed this seeming disaster, one thing was preserved, viz.: man’s knowledge of God. That knowledge which man had of God in Eden, he brought with him into the “outer world” into which he was banished.

According to the Hebrew scripture account of the ante-deluvian Patriarchs, this tradition about God had opportunity to become well grounded. These Patriarchs each lived to attain to a great age, so that they were contemporaneous with each other for several hundreds of years; and not only brought the Eden-acquired knowledge of God into a post-Eden world, but brought it also from the ante-deluvian world to the post-deluvian era.

Written tradition. It may be thought that in the last paragraph dealing with tradition of the Hebrews—really found in their “scriptures”—we have been appealing to revelation, to the Bible, instead of tradition, as men commonly understand tradition, viz.: something handed down from age to age by oral communication without the aid of written memorials. But the Bible may be regarded in more than one aspect. Commonly it is held to be a volume of inspired writings, revelations indeed; but also, without inconsistency, it may be regarded as a body of traditions crystallized into writings, and it may not be contradicted that traditions may be written as well as other things. It is in this sense that I have at this point considered it, viz.: as a record of the Hebrew traditions.

This tradition concerning the existence of God or of Gods, speaking now with reference to tradition in general, without reference to any particular people, or special conceptions of what kind of beings the gods may be—this general tradition is so old that ~~“the memory of man runneth not to the contrary;”~~ and it may not be thrust aside as unworthy to have influence upon the great task upon which we are engaged—viz. our search for the knowledge of God. This human-race tradition of God rises to the character of a universal or truly catholic tradition: it has been practically believed, we may say, “always; everywhere; and by everybody.”^d It is worthy of respectful consideration, and such it is to receive in these pages.

^dRoberts refers to the famous Vincentian Canon of Vincent of Lerins (d. c. 450), *Commonitorium*, 2, defining Roman Catholic doctrine as *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*, “what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all.”

The other remaining source for the knowledge of God is revelation; but that is a theme so large that it will require a chapter by itself for the consideration of it.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Josephus, *Works of Flavius Josephus*, bks. 1-2 and 12 ch. 10; Roberts, *Gospel*, 3d ed., ch. 9; Smith, *Six Lectures on Faith*; Deut. 4, esp. vs. 9 through end; Ps. 78.

Seekers after God: Revelation

The impetus given by tradition to seekers after God. One result growing out of this God idea of the tradition, is of first rate importance, viz: It has been an inspiration to certain great souls to seek after God. Men who have not been contented with the intimations to be derived from the works of nature nor with just the fragmentary and somewhat confused outgivings of the traditions of men; but, inspired by the works of nature and those traditions—they have boldly attempted to ascertain the fact of God for themselves. If there be a Deity, transcendent of or immanent in the universe, they have said, why not find him? Or if the universe itself—nature—be Deity, may not this be found out by searching? Hence came “Seekers after God.” In the book of Job is found the pregnant question: “Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?” (Job 11:7). In this question there is a doubt disclosed, but the significance of that passes when it is observed that the question is asked by Zophar, false friend of Job, and not noted for the depth of his understanding. An affirmative answer is given as the word of the Lord to Israel, and surely by one of the “Seekers after God” more capable to speak upon the subject than Zophar: “Ye shall seek me and find me,” God is represented as saying, through Jeremiah the prophet, “when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13). Here not only the possibility of finding God is declared, but also the prime condition essential to the achievement is given—“when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Is revelation possible? The question of the possibility of revelation may be raised: (i.e.) the ability of the higher intelligences of other worlds to communicate knowledge to man. But this can only be entertained for a moment. We have in previous chapters held forth the very great likelihood of the worlds and world systems that we have contemplated being inhabited by intelligences, and some of them most likely of superior intelligence to the inhabitants of our earth; the probability

of which is far above any reasonable doubt, and notwithstanding the immense distances that separate them from our earth, yet distance may not affect the assurance that inter-world communication of intelligences is possible; for distance has little to do with thought—or things of the spirit.

At this point we are able to apply again our method of reasoning from what we know to that which is possible, yea, even probable up to the point of moral certainty. And this is what we know from human experiences on the subject of marvelous means of communication.

The question of interplanetary communication. It is within the recollection of men yet living when the only means of communication between places distant from each other was by means of letters transmitted at best by the speed of the stage coach or equestrian mail carriers. This was followed by the invention and adoption of the electric telegraph devices, and soon the land became a network of telegraphic lines to establish the facilities of rapid means of communication. Not even the wide spreading ocean was to bar islands and continents from this new method of transmission of messages from land to land. Cables were laid upon the ocean bed linking together the most distant continents, and bringing them well nigh within the possibility of instant communication one with another. This was followed later by the invention of the telephone by which means the human voice was made to be heard, first at short distances ~~from each other~~, then at longer distances, until at the present time through this means of communication it is made possible for the human voice to be heard across the oceans and over the greatest extent of land distances. Nor is this method of communication any longer dependent upon the stretching of wires over the land and under the oceans; but by means of radio inventions the human voice is marvelously broadcasted to all lands and over the seas. All this makes the argument possible from what we know, viz: If man with his limited development in this matter of communicating intelligence from land to land among his fellows, can achieve so much, what may it not be possible for higher intelligences of older and more advanced worlds to have accomplished in the matter of inter-world communication by superior methods created by their intelligences; until distance, however great, renders no obstruction to the communication of higher intelligences with each other, and with the inhabitants of our world. Indeed, may not the development in this kind upon our own earth have been the result of suggestion, and through inspiration supplied by some means of communication from mind to mind by interplanetary communications? At any rate in

the presence of means recently developed in improved methods of communication, so wonderful that to men of two generations ago they would have appeared miraculous, any doubt concerning the possibility of communication between the intelligences of other worlds and world systems with our own, must disappear.

The achieved fact of revelation. Moreover, and again adopting our process of reasoning from what we know, we have found among men, and especially among men of most highly developed intellectual and moral and spiritual nature, a desire for the improvement of less developed and barbarous peoples, an impulse to help the lowly and the unfortunate by giving themselves and their fortunes to the uplifting of their fellow men, and the betterment of conditions of all, and especially to enlighten by education the ignorant. This being true of men of this class, may it not be true, and increasingly true of intelligences of other worlds, and especially of those of the higher intellectual types of older and more developed worlds? If this reasoning from what we know is sound, will not all objections to the possibility of inter-world communication of intelligences have been set aside, and may we not conclude that revelation is not only possible, but very probable; and may it not be true that some of the “seekers after God” of our own world in their search for God, may really have found him, and brought back a message from “the inner fact of things”?

It is quite evident, of course, that all “Seekers after God” have not found him; and even among those who have, it is quite equally evident that ***they have not found him in anything like equal measure; for it must be admitted that there are great differences in the messages*** they have reported to their fellows. In some instances their messages are not very clear, or coherent; and not always in agreement with each other. This, however, not because of any defectiveness in the source of knowledge, but from the unequal ability of those who are entrusted to interpret rightly their contact with the higher sources of intelligence. The fault is with the medium of interpretation rather than with the source or the reality of their inspiration. The great thing in the whole matter is, however, the achieved fact of revelation. Once the contact made, the union established between earth intelligences and the higher intelligences of other worlds, that contact may be trusted to lead to the development of a constantly increasing clearness of the message to be imparted, until earth inhabitants will be instructed by knowledge imparted from higher sources of intelligence than their own minds for their guidance; but undoubtedly in such fashion, and in such progressive degrees, as not to be overwhelmed with knowledge

that might hinder rather than accelerate the true development of powers from within by the intelligences receiving these administrations. For development of intelligences—which may be called education—results not so much from acquiring a mere knowledge of things, as from the development within of the mind powers to seek and find things each for himself.

The function of revelation. The function of higher intelligences, through revelation, would be to encourage and inspire by contact, here and there, the efforts to self-development of those whom they would assist. Men have learned that what we humans call education is not mere “cramming” with knowledge of facts, but the development in those who are taught of the power to think for themselves, and to think straight and right. That power established in the mind, the student will find the facts for himself, absorb them in his own mind, and learn the application of them for himself. Undoubtedly the higher intelligences of other worlds with which our world in some way may be in physical connection, and in moral and spiritual union and sympathy—*they* wishing our development—will minister their helpfulness to us in some such spirit as this; and the fact that they would so proceed doubtless accounts for the limited and rather infrequent dispensations of revelations to our earth. Those revelations are undoubtedly intended to be progressive and ministered in such fashion as to lead to human development from within, and also are administered in such manner as not to interfere with the free agency of man, and not to break into or destroy the purposes of man’s earth life. The present order of things as to revelation and other things, has been devised in the wisdom of higher intelligences to impart to man a self-culture and development that has been planned in the highest wisdom. Planned in the wisdom of those who have more extensive knowledge than we can fathom by our partial vision of things.

Visualization with spoken revelation. There remains to be accounted for some manifestations of an occult power of the mind of man in the matter of communication between intelligences. Telepathy, or the power of one mind to be in such sympathetic affections, feelings or emotions with another as to make thought transference possible between them is now accepted by men of science as a reality.

In addition to being almost instant communication with all parts of the world by wireless telegraphy, the telephone, the daily press is in use of the process by which photographs fairly accurate are sent from great distances by means of picture telegraphic instruments; and already

the television instrument that shall make it possible when using the telephone to also visualize the one with whom the conversation is being had, is an assured accomplishment for the near future. The recently developed ability of man through tele-autography to actually affix signatures to a document from great distances—one such case being reported in the current press as taking place between London and New York in July 1927. With such powers of communication of thought by telepathy; of vision by the use of the instrument of television; and by obtaining signatures even over-seas by tele-autography, the recorded instances in Holy Writ and other true records of man's experience—the recorded instances of receiving revelation from higher intelligences—from God, may not be regarded as so miraculous or so impossible as some would have us believe.

Actual visitation of intelligences from other worlds to our own. Up to this point we have considered only the matter of *mind* communication of knowledge by the higher intelligences of other worlds to the inhabitants of our earth. The question, however, of actual visitation of the higher intelligent personages to our earth is of equal importance. The visitation of angels, the alleged descent to and appearances of God to men, the levitation and ascent of those who have lived upon all the earth into heaven, there to dwell with God—the possibility of all this must be considered. And this actual visitation of divine personages to our earth involves the whole thought of overcoming the immense distances which separate us from other worlds. It involves the question of interplanetary visitation of the inhabitants of the universe. Do there exist means of transportation, and may there be palpable, actual intermingling of mutually intelligent inhabitants of world-systems? If so, knowledge of that fact would do away with much of the mystery attendant upon reported visitation of angels and spirits, and even of what are regarded as more tangible, physical personages.

Interplanetary transportation considered. As in the case of establishing the possibility of likelihood of the interplanetary communication of knowledge by means of revelation, by process akin to thought-transference, let us work out this same problem of interplanetary ~~transportation~~ **visitation** of personages and doubtless also of things.

Reasoning again from what we know our of the experiences of men in this matter of transportation, we know that transportation is a thing in which there has been marked advancement of late years in our world. Within the memory of men now living time can be recalled when the means of traveling from one place to another was either by

horse-drawn vehicles or by equestrian riding. It was not until in the second and third decade of the nineteenth century that the power of steam for wheel-drawn vehicles over rails was adopted, and then was commenced that rapid construction of railways which soon made the continents networks of them, uniting all parts of civilized lands. Overland travel was so established by this means that it gave easy, comfortable, and rapid transit from one place to another and the disadvantage of separation by distance was greatly lessened.

It was in 1807 that Robert Fulton launched the *Clermont* on the Hudson River, the first application of the power of steam to water vessels. Previous to this oceans and seas were traversed only by the power of wind and ocean current propelled boats; but now steam-driven vessels are in the "seven seas" and all their connections, so that rapid and secure means of transportation has been secured, and the oceans, once the dread of all those who went down to the sea in ships, have lost their terror, and are now merely the convenient highways between the continents. The voyage between Europe and America which once was a matter of many weeks and attended with great danger, is now reduced to a matter of less than six days; and in greater comfort and security than attends upon traveling on the land.^a

Also there has come into existence the self-propelled automobile, capable of moving with equal speed of the lightning express trains, rendering travel swift and safe on the ordinary roads of the country without the use of rails, until rapid and safe means of travel in all lands is provided.

Man's achievements in earth transportation. Within the last twenty-five years man has made rapid progress in his conquest of the air in which, both in speed and sustained flight, he surpasses the eagle or the sea gull in their flight. Two methods have been employed in attaining man's conquest of the air. First, the device was by the inflation of huge canvas bags by hydrogen gas which made the balloons lighter than air, and hence capable of rising from the earth to great heights. In these men were wholly at the mercy of the upper air currents to which they rose, as they had no means by which they might steer their course. A notable event in this kind of air aviation took place about 150 years ago, when Jean Pierre Blanchard and John Jeffries (the latter an American) on January 7, 1785, crossed the English Channel from Dover to Callis [Calais] in a balloon. Their achievement however is set down

^aRoberts added a handwritten note: "Question on [illegible] of Doc + Cov Sec 61," evidently regarding traveling upon the waters.

as a piece of sheer luck, as the aeronauts had no control of their craft, they merely drifted across the channel. Development in that line of aviation, however, has gone on until now we have the dirigible lighter-than-air German Zeppelin—largely a world-war development—capable of being fully controlled as to its direction, and of such sustaining power that in October 1924 the ZR-3, a German Zeppelin, now the American airship *Los Angeles*, crossed the Atlantic, flying from Friedrichshafen, Germany, to Lakehurst naval air station in New Jersey, a distance of 5,066 miles, in 81 hours and 17 minutes; and when she landed, still had unused fuel that would have been sufficient to have taken her as far westward as Chicago. On this voyage the air-ship was in constant communication with the world over which she flew by means of radio ~~communication~~ **instruments**. It was a somewhat similar flight that was made across the Atlantic by the R-34, English dirigible air-ship, under command of Major C. H. Scott of the Royal Air Force, starting from East Fortune, Scotland, on July 2, 1919, and landing at Mineola, Long Island, on July 6th, with nearly her last gallon of fuel spent. She made the flight, a distance of 3,130 miles, in 108 hours, 12 minutes but returned to Pulham, England, in 74 hours 56 minutes; showing, it is claimed, that crossing from America to Europe presents fewer difficulties than a journey from Europe to America. It was in a similar air-ship that the Norwegian explorer, Amundsen, accompanied by Ellsworth and Nobile, engineers, flew over the North Pole of our world on May 12, 1926.^b

Flight with heavier-than-air machines. The development of the other branch of air conquest—by use of heavier than air means of transportation—has been even more wonderfully developed than the lighter-than-air mode of transportation. It is only twenty-five years ago that the Wright Brothers, Wilbur and Orville, of America, constructed their glide planes, which with the aid of wind and favorable declivity of a hill from which to start, they could make but a few feet of distance; but that accomplishment convinced them that they could build a heavier-than-air device capable of carrying not only a passenger, but a motor, and thus become automotively independent of wind and air currents, and able to direct an air-plane under whatever difficulties might be presented. This same year, 1902, witnessed the triumph of their conception. They succeeded in constructing an engine, placed it in the air-plane device and the plane on a mono-rail track, and heading straight into the teeth of a favorable wind, the machine with its driver

^bRoberts noted that he intended to add a footnote here.

rose in the air and made 105 feet for the first flight of a heavier-than-air machine for flying. This under guidance of Wilbur Wright, who in the toss of a coin with his brother for first privilege of trying the aeroplane, won. The next day, in the second flight, with Orville Wright now at the throttle, the distance of 120 feet was made. The triumph of such a machine that is heavier than air was seen nine years later in such achievements as carrying Louis Bleriot across the English Channel (July 1909), and in the flight of United States Navy planes starting from Trespasse, New Foundland, and flying across the Atlantic to the Azores, in 15 hours and 13 minutes, covering over 1,250 miles. This on the 11th of May, 1919; and from the Azores to London, by way of Lisbon, covering a total of 2,472 miles in 26 hours and 51 minutes of actual flying time.

Thence rose the ambition among the air men to make a non-stop trans-Atlantic flight. This dream was first realized with Captain John Alcock and Lieutenant Arthur W. Brown, officers in the British Royal Air Force who started from St. Johns, New Foundland, and landed in a bog in Ireland, after a flight of 16 hours, 12 minutes, making a distance of 1,960 miles at an average speed of 120 miles an hour. United States heavier-than-air planes circled the globe in 1924. The starting point was Seattle, Washington, and the journey, covering 26,103 miles, was made in 175 days, crossing the Atlantic in two jumps, from Iceland to Greenland, and from Greenland to Labrador. Also in these air journeys with heavier-than-air machines is to be noted Commander Richard E. Byrd's journey to the North Pole, May 9, 1926, in which he flew to the Pole and back to his place of starting a distance of 1600 miles, in 15 hours and 50 minutes. Charles A. Lindbergh's air voyage over the Atlantic Ocean—of such notable fame—may not be left unnoticed. The triumphant journey was made in a mono-plane from New York to Paris in 33 hours, 30 minutes, starting May 20, 1927, and covering a distance of 3,610 miles in one continuous flight. A few days later Clarence D. Chamberlin, carrying a passenger, Charles A. Levin, performed a similar feat, flying from New York to Eisleben, a distance of 3,905 miles in 43 hours.

In addition to these flights made for setting records of achievement in the mastery of the air, there has been established regular air transportation service in many parts of the civilized world, for the transportation both of mail and passengers, and air travel and transportation of mails is becoming a commonplace method of such transportation service. So secure is this method of traveling that in the two years of German civil aviation just past (1926-27), during which time 55,185 passengers were carried, and 3,073,171 miles flown, there were only two fatalities, or approximately one fatality for each million and a half *miles* of travel. This promises that

air travel in the near future will be as safe as travel by ocean steamer, railway express trains, or by the automobile.^c

The argument based upon man's achievements. The argument built upon this development of man's mastery of distance, inter-continental travel by means of ocean liners, air planes, and Zeppelins is this: that if man in his as yet limited mental development can accomplish so much in mastering earth and ocean and air in the matter of communication and transportation, who shall formulate any dictum as to the impossibility of his attaining to interplanetary communication and transportation? And much less assert the inability, or impossibility of the more highly developed intelligences of other worlds to master distance and carry on both interplanetary communications and transportation, both for themselves and for things; and is it unreasonable to believe that they are even now masters of interplanetary communication and transportation, as man is master over inter-continental communication and transportation on this our earth?

We have before us now in bare outline the probability of there being substance in the traditions of men about God; and the possibility, and even probability of revelation. As to this last, if we but place proper emphasis on the fact already suggested in a previous chapter, that the intelligences of other worlds may reasonably be supposed to possess altruistic sentiments entertained towards intelligences of other worlds, perhaps less advanced in knowledge and experience than themselves, less fortunate than they are—yet capable of advancement to better things—then it would be easy to conceive of their possessing a most earnest desire to communicate that knowledge, and administer that helpfulness which would come of such communication of knowledge from them to the intelligences of undeveloped, or but partially developed worlds.

The unity of testimony for God. The three sources of knowledge of God I have somewhat reviewed in chapter 11, and in this chapter—works of nature, tradition, and revelation—these combined may be a very strong evidence for the existence of God and all that goes with God-in-the-Universe conception. Without here allowing ourselves to be diverted into the too extensive field of thought and investigation as to the truthfulness of revelation, and the supporting power which would come to such a revelation from tradition, and works of nature, let us consider for a moment at least, how these lines of evidence work out into a very fine unity of testimony.

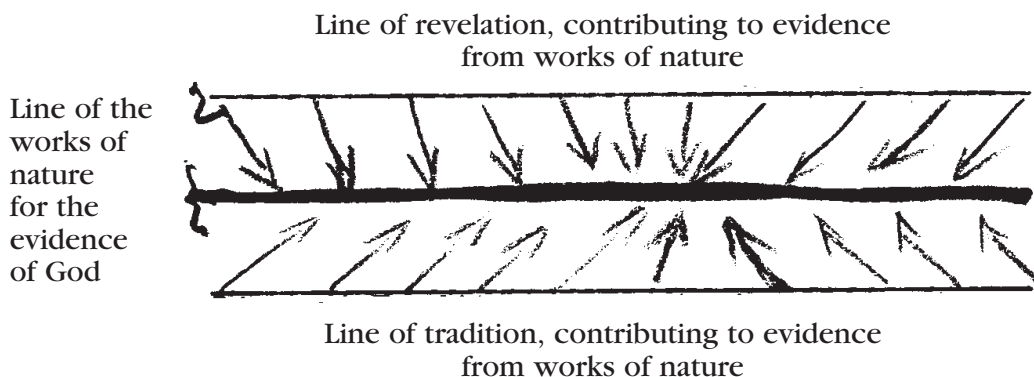
^cRoberts noted that he intended to add a footnote here.

Commencing with the course followed so far in this work, let us consider the first, the works of nature, as constituting our present major line of evidence as to the existence of, and the dominance of, mind in the universe. The presence of self-existing matter in eternal duration and space, with force or energy also present, together with the orderliness of all this universe of suns, planets, and planetary systems, *which* we have found to bear witness to the existence of a reign of law, with mind dominant over matter, matter chaotic, and matter organized into a cosmos—all ~~which~~ this proclaims mind as the eternal cause functioning in the universe, constructing and maintaining the order of things, being the directing power towards whatever ends may be designed as the purpose of the unfolding creation. So far the works of nature throughout the universe, and the orderliness of it, suggest the presence and the operation of a mighty Intelligence, which doubtless is supreme. This, at present, shall be our major line; and now turning to tradition as a contributing line of evidence to this main idea proclaimed by the works of nature, we see that the evidence of tradition supports the testimony of nature, and undoubtedly the somewhat variant and confused testimony of tradition does have a supplementary and strengthening influence upon the testimony of the works of nature to the existence and operation of that mind, of which the works of nature bear evidence; and which all through the ages tradition has been trying to tell us about.

Below this our major line of evidence, for the moment, we may consider the other line of contributing evidence, viz. revelation—what the prophets and seers have reported of their findings in their search for God. Thus is fashioned a “three-fold cord” of evidence, which—we are assured—“is not quickly broken” (Eccl. 4:12).

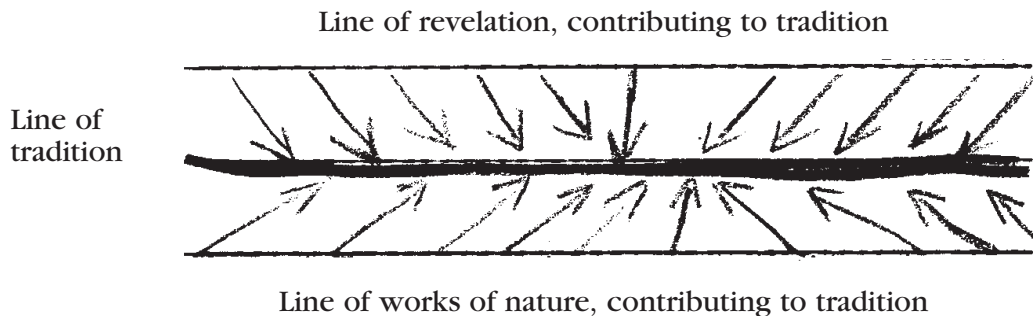
I give below a simple form, the lines represented by this presentation of the above idea:

1. *The works of nature:*



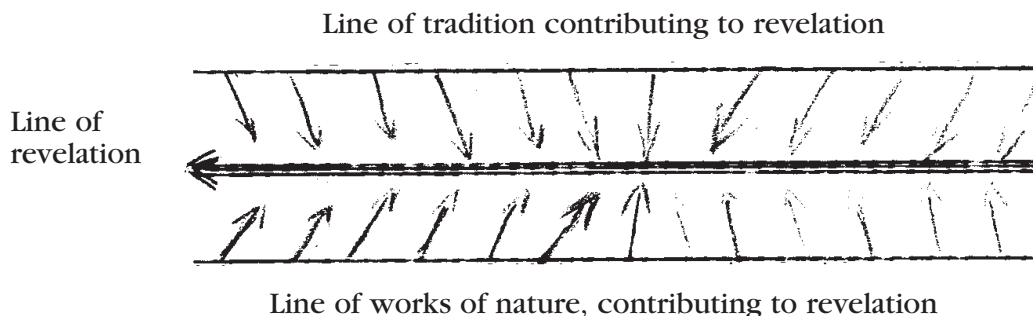
Second, we take tradition as the main line to be considered and major on that for the moment, and then following the same treatment as we did when the works of nature was the major line, we find tradition supported both by the line of revelation and also by the line of the works of nature. ~~I give a simple illustration of the presentation of the above idea:~~

2. *Tradition:*



Then third, and with increasing effect, and presenting the thought also in the true relation in which the different lines of evidence for God's existence ought to stand—and not only for his being, but the kind of being he is—we make Revelation our major line, and draw it strong as being at once the most powerful and definite means through which man may know God. Then tradition becomes a supplementary line of evidence, supporting revelation and on the other side, the works of nature become a contributing and important line of evidence for the being and for the glory of God. ~~Here follows a simple illustration of the third idea:~~

3. *Revelation:*



If the comparison of these lines in any one of the illustrations given makes out a strong case by accumulation of the three evidences for the existence of God, revelation, tradition, and the works of nature, then the conception of them, arising from the placing of emphasis upon

each of the respective lines, in turn—making the others for the time being supplementary—undoubtedly will result in still further increasing the testimony, making sure our inherited knowledge for the existence of God.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Smith, *Six Lectures on Faith*; and “current magazines and news periodicals of recent years.” Roberts commented that he “found little in books to guide [him] in the thoughts presented in this chapter,” except in the *Lectures on Faith*.

A Review of Ancient Religions I

Having established the possibility of revelation and even the likelihood of its being a verity, the next step in our inquiry is to find out what is reported by the “seekers after God” who claim to have made contact with the infinite, and brought back a message from “the inner fact of things.” To make this inquiry we shall find it most convenient, owing to the limits prescribed for this work, to report the respective messages as they have been accepted by great masses of humanity, and what is the net result of such reporting by the “seers” upon the faith of their followers. In thus proceeding we shall be relieved of considering each one of the many teachers of mankind, and at the same time the status of those large groups will in a way interpret to us the effect of such teaching, religious and philosophical, as they have received.

Babylonian-Assyrian religion. Commencing with the most ancient groups, we start with the races inhabiting the valley of the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers.^a These constituted the Babylonian and Assyrian empires and peoples. The religion of these people reflected, of course, their views of the deities reported to them by their prophets—their “inspired” teachers, who ventured to instruct them upon supposedly

[This chapter summarizes the following sections from *Seventy's Course in Theology*: Mesopotamia, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 3:46-52; Egypt, 3:53-59; Phoenicians and Persians, 3:60-64.]

^aIn the past seventy years, our understanding of the ancient Near East has been revolutionized by many important archaeological discoveries. Knowledge of the existence of Sumerians and Akkadians was becoming widespread among scholars only in the early twentieth century with the first publication of grammars of Sumerian and Akkadian and the excavation of Sumerian sites. See Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 3-32, for a general discussion of the history of Sumerology through the early 1960s. For a more recent study and interpretation, with full bibliography, see Harriet Crawford, *Sumer and the Sumerians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Modern historians designate the

divine things, including the existence of, and the nature of, whatever gods they conceived to exist. Their religion in the main consisted of a combination of the Shamanistic beliefs, that is, a belief that each force of nature had its spirit, good or bad.^b It is declared on the part of some historians that the peoples accepting Shamanism generally believed in a supreme being, but that the government of the world was in the hands of a number of secondary gods, both benevolent and malevolent toward man, and that it was absolutely necessary to propitiate them by magic, rites, and spells. This claim, however, is denied by other of equal authority as historians. Myers, for instance, in his *General History* says that

in the earliest period made known to us by the native records, we find the pantheon to embrace many local deities, but at no period do we find a supreme god. The most prominent feature from first to last of the popular religion was the belief in spirits, particularly in wicked spirits and the practice of magic, rites, and incantations to avert the malign influence of these demons.¹

Spiritual elements. A second important feature of the religion was what is known as astrology, or the foretelling of events by the aspect of the stars.^c This side of the religious system was most elaborately and ingeniously developed until the fame of the Chaldean astrology was spread throughout the ancient world. This historian, however, admits that along side of these low beliefs and superstitious

periods and peoples of Mesopotamia as follows: Pre-dynastic, before 3000 B.C.; Sumerian, 3000-2350; Akkadian, 2350-2000; Old Babylonian, 2000-1600; Assyrian, 1000-626; Neo-Babylonian, 626-539; Persian, 539-330; Hellenistic, 330-30 B.C. For general background and references, see Michael Roaf, *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East* (New York: Facts on File, 1990); and Georges Roux, *Ancient Iraq* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1992). On Mesopotamian religions, see Mircea Eliade and others, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 16 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 9:447-69.

^bFollowing turn-of-the-century terminology, Roberts uses shamanism to designate what is today generally and broadly referred to as animism. *Encyclopedia of Religion* 1:296-302. Shamanism is now used by historians of religion to refer to specific religions or forms of religious behavior. "Shamanism," *Encyclopedia of Religion* 13:201-8.

¹Myers, *General History* [source not found]. [For a history of the idea of the High God and current thinking on the matter, see "Supreme Beings," *Encyclopedia of Religion* 14:166-81; and "Deus Otiosus," *Encyclopedia of Religion* 4:314-18.]

^cRoberts is here conflating two ideas which are separate in current thinking. Whereas Mesopotamians, along with all other ancient Near Eastern cultures, used divination extensively, astrology in its classical form originated only in the Hellenistic Age. See "Astrology," *Encyclopedia of Religion* 1:472-73; and "Divination," *Encyclopedia of Religion* 4:375-82.

practices there existed higher and purer elements. This is illustrated by the so-called “Penitential Psalms,” some of them dating from the second millennium B.C., “which breathe a spirit like that which pervades the Penitential Psalms of the Old Testament.”² In confirmation of this statement, Myers quotes one of these psalms, translated by Jastro: “O, my god, who art angry with me, accept my prayer. . . . May my sins be forgiven, my transgressions be wiped out. . . . 〈May〉 flowing waters of the stream wash me clean! Let me be pure, like the sheen of gold.”³

“The cuneiform writings on the tablets,” says James Freeman Clarke, author of *Ten Great Religions*, “show us that the Assyrians also prayed. On an unpublished tablet in the British Museum” is the prayer of an Assyrian king, the date 650 B.C.:

May the look of pity that shines in thine eternal face dispel my griefs.
 May I never feel the anger and wrath of the God.
 May my omissions and my sins be wiped out.
 May I find reconciliation with Him, for I am the servant of his power,
 the adorer of the great gods.
 May thy powerful face come to my help; may it shine like heaven, and
 bless me with happiness and abundance of riches.
 May it bring forth in abundance, like the earth, happiness and every
 sort of good.⁴

Dobbins, in his *World's Worship*, says that Babylonians, having a conception both of a supreme being and unity in that being,

when we penetrate beneath the surface which gross Polytheism has acquired from popular superstition, and revert to its original and higher conceptions, we shall find the whole based on the idea of the unity of the Deity, the last relic of the primitive revelation, disfigured indeed and all but lost in the monstrous ideas of Pantheism; confounding the creature with the Creator; and transforming the Deity into a god-world, whose manifestations are to be found in all the phenomena of nature. Beneath this supreme and sole God, this great all, in whom all things are lost and absorbed, are ranked in an order of emanation corresponding to their importance, a whole race of secondary deities, who are emanations from His very substance, who are mere personifications of His attributes and manifestations. The differences between the various pagan religions, is chiefly marked by the differences between these secondary divine beings.⁵

²Myers, *General History* [source not found].

³Myers, *General History*, 38 [source not found].

⁴Clarke, *Ten Great Religions* 2:234.

⁵Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 126. [In the Roberts manuscript, “god-world” was misquoted as “world-god.”]

Astrological phase. Commenting upon the astrological phase of the Babylonian-Assyrian religion, especially that part of it devoted to astronomy,^d Dobbins saw in the astral and especially in the planetary system a manifestation of the divine being:

They considered the stars as His true external manifestation, and in their religious system made them the visible evidence of the subordinate divine emanations from the substance of the infinite being, whom they identified with the world, his work.⁶

Conceptions of God, names and trinities. On *the* part of those who hold that the Babylonian-Assyrians had the conception of a supreme deity, from whom all other deities were derived, was given the name of Ilu, which signified God, par excellence. Dobbins writes:

Their idea of him was too comprehensive, too vast, to have any determined external form, or consequently to receive in general the adoration of the people, . . . In Chaldea it does not seem that any temple was ever specially dedicated to him; but at Nineveh and generally throughout Assyria, he seems to have received the peculiarly national name of Asshur. . . . The inscriptions designate him as "Master or Chief of the Gods."⁷

There is also traced in the religion of these early people a shadowy triad, or trinity, or a series of such trinities: "Below Ilu, the universal and mysterious source of all, was placed a triad, composed of his three first external and visible manifestations, and occupying the summit of the hierarchy of gods in popular worship."⁸ The names of this triad are Anu, the lord of darkness; Bell, the demi-urgus, the wonder worker, the organizer of the world; and Ao, called also Bin, the "divine son," par excellence, the divine light, the intelligence penetrating truth, and vivifying the universe. These three divine personages were esteemed as equal in power and con-substantial, that is, of the same substance, were not held as of the same degree of emanation, but were regarded as having, on the contrary, issued the one from the other, and were variously represented in semi-human and animal forms.

A second triad is produced with personages no longer vague and indeterminate in character, like those of the first, but with a clearly

^dRoberts is again reflecting theories of comparative religion from around the turn of the century which are no longer widely held. For a history of thought and current views on Astral religion, see "Sky: The Heavens as Hierophany," *Encyclopedia of Religion* 13:343-45.

⁶Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 126-27.

⁷Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 126-27.

⁸Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 128.

⟨divided⟩ [defined] sidereal aspect, each representing a known celestial body, and especially those in which the Chaldaeo-Assyrians saw the most striking ⟨astrological⟩ [external] manifestations of the deity; These were Shamash, the sun; Sin, the moon god; and a new form of Ao or Bin, inferior to the first, and representing him as god of the atmosphere or firmament. Thus did they industriously multiply deities and representations of them.⁹

Belief in a future life. The general belief respecting another life by those accepting these Shamanistic beliefs appears to be that the condition of man in the future existence will be poorer and more rigid than in the present, hence death is regarded with great dread.

One of the most interesting things connected with the Babylonian-Assyrian religion is that more than any other ancient religion it interlocks with the Bible narrative, and apparently had connection with some primitive religion that may have had revelation as its source. Lewis Browne in his *This Believing World* ascribes to the Semites (descendants of Shem of the Bible), whom Browne describes as having, “for reasons that cannot be made out . . . a peculiar genius for religion.” He ascribes to them the origin of the Babylonian-Assyrian religion.

Ethics of the Babylonians. “Ethically the Babylonians were little more than grown up children,” says Browne.

Fear still had hold of them and kept them slaves. Even though they were rich and powerful, even though they were the lords of the green earth and thought themselves the masters of the starry skies, still they remained cravens in their hearts. Beneath all their bluster they were timorous and worried. They were afraid.¹⁰

The Egyptian religion: Origin of the Egyptians.^c Of equal importance to the Babylonian-Assyrian race were the inhabitants of the Nile valley, the Egyptians. It may be said to be the consensus of opinion of those who have dealt with the history of these ancient people that, though living in Africa, they are not an African people; that is, they were not an indigenous race.^f The Egyptian language, it is held, while

⁹Condensed from Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 128-29.

¹⁰Browne, *This Believing World*, 75.

^cFor a general discussion and basic bibliography on Egyptian religion, see *Encyclopedia of Religion* 5:37-69.

^fThe idea that Egyptian civilization was founded by an outside “race,” although common in Roberts’s day, is no longer widely accepted. Nonetheless, some type of cultural influence from Mesopotamia on Egypt is acknowledged. See Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 17-24.

of a peculiar type, has analogies which connect it both with the Semitic and with the Indo-European forms of speech,⁸ more especially with the former. We must regard the Egyptians, therefore, as an Asiatic people, immigrants into the valley of the Nile which they entered from the east.¹¹

The theory that the Egyptians immigrated from the south (Ethiopia) down the Nile is discussed by historians, but generally discredited. Josephus when speaking of one of the ancient Egyptian kings, Sethosis, says, upon the authority of Manetho, that Sethosis was called “Egyptus” and that the country also was called from his name, Egypt.¹²

According to Herodotus, writing in the 5th century B.C., the Egyptians were a very religious people, “religious to excess,” far beyond any other race of men.¹³ [According to Professor Rawlinson,] religion so “permeated the whole being of the people,” and their “writing was so full of sacred symbols and of allusions to the mythology that it was scarcely possible to employ it on any subject which lay outside the religion.” He also says that the subject is “one of great complexity and considerable obscurity.”¹⁴

Esoteric and exoteric forms of the faith: Nature of gods. It appears, however, that the Egyptian religion,^h like most other religions of antiquity, had two phases or aspects:

one, that in which it was presented to the general public or vast mass of the population; the other, that which it bore in the minds of the

⁸Roberts here is apparently confusing the parallels to both Semitic and Afro-Asiatic (Hamitic) languages which can be found in Egyptian. No extensive parallels exist between Indo-European languages and Egyptian.

¹¹Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt*, vol. 1, ch. 2.

¹²See Whiston, *The Works of Josephus*, “Against Apion,” 1, 584. In the book of Abraham, translated by Joseph Smith, the Prophet of the New Dispensation, gives the information that the king reigning over Egypt at the time of Abraham’s sojourn in that land, was a descendent of Ham, son of Noah. Ham had married a wife of a race with whom the sons of Noah were forbidden to intermarry—the descendants of Cain—and thus through Ham and Egyptus, that race was perpetuated after the flood. This Egyptus, however, seems to have been of an enterprising character. It was she who discovered the Nile valley, and brought her descendants there to inhabit it (see Abr. 1). [The fragments of Manetho’s *Aegyptiaca* have been collected, edited, and translated by William G. Waddell, *Manetho* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940). The passage referenced by Roberts is Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 1.15 (§ 102) = Waddell’s fragment 50, pp. 104–5.]

¹³Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt* 1:320. [Herodotus, *History* 2.37.]

¹⁴Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt* 1:322–23.

^hA great deal of progress has been made in understanding Egyptian religion in the last seventy years. Roberts’s discussion of Egyptian religion, based on his early twentieth-century secondary sources, is therefore quite dated and often inaccurate.

intelligent, the learned, the initiated. To the former it was a polytheism of a multitudinous, and in many respects of a gross, character: to the latter it was a system combining strict monotheism with a metaphysical speculative philosophy on the two great subjects of the nature of God and the destiny of man, which sought to exhaust those deep and unfathomable mysteries.¹⁵

It is held by some that even in the Egyptian religion formulated for the masses, it was understood that the “‘idea of a single self-existent deity,’ was involved in the conceptions which it set forth, and is to be found not unfrequently in the hymns and prayers of the Ritual.”¹⁶ In the esoteric religion of the Egyptians, the primary doctrine was

the real essential Unity of the Divine Nature. The sacred texts taught that there was a single Being, “the sole producer of all things both in heaven and earth, Himself not produced of any” — “the only true living God, self-originated” — “who exists from the beginning” — “who has made all things, but has not ~~made~~ Himself been made.” This Being seems never to have been represented by any material, even symbolical, form. It is thought that He had no name, or, if He had, that it must have been unlawful either to pronounce or write it. He was a pure spirit, perfect in every respect—all-wise, almighty, supremely good.

The gods of the popular mythology were understood, in the esoteric religion, to be either personified attributes of the Deity, or parts of the nature which He had created, considered as informed and inspired by Him. Num or Kneph represented the creative mind,

Modern studies on Egyptian religions in English include James P. Allen, *Genesis in Egypt: The Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Accounts* (New Haven: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1988); George Hart, *Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986); Erik Hornung, *Idea into Image* (New York: Timken, 1992); Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982); Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973); Stephen Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* (London: British Museum, 1992); Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1993); Byron E. Shafer, ed., *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); and W. K. Simpson, ed., *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt* (New Haven: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1989). Modern translations of major Egyptian religious texts can be found in: T. G. Allen, *The Book of the Dead: or, Going Forth by Day* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969); R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 3 vols. (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1973–79); R. O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985); and Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973–80). We thank John Gee for some of these references.

¹⁵Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt* 1:323–24.

¹⁶Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt* 1:324.

Phthah the creative hand, or act of creating; Maut represented matter, Ra the sun, Khons the moon, Seb the earth, Khem the generative power in nature, Nut the upper hemisphere of heaven, Athor the lower world or under hemisphere; Thoth personified the Divine wisdom; Ammon, perhaps, the Divine mysteriousness or incomprehensibility; Osiris (according to some) the Divine goodness. It is difficult in many cases to fix on the exact quality, act, or part of nature intended; but the principle admits of no doubt. No educated Egyptian priest certainly, probably no educated layman, conceived of the popular gods as ⟨really⟩ [real] separate and distinct beings. All knew that there was but one God, and understood that when worship was offered ⟨to the several gods⟩, the One God was worshipped under some one of His forms or in some one of His aspects. . . . Ra was not a Sun-Deity with a distinct and separate existence, but the supreme God acting in the sun, making His light to shine on the earth, warming, cheering, and blessing it.¹⁷

According to Burder:

To exhibit in symbol form the Egyptian ideas of their gods was the very essence of the Egyptian religion. This brought about the grossest of superstitious worship. To set forth in symbol the attributes, quality and nature of their gods, the priests chose to use animals; the bull, cow, ram, cat, crocodile, ape, etc. were all emblems of the gods. But let it be remembered, that the Egyptians never worshipped images or idols, they worshipped living representations of the gods, and not liveless images of stone or metal. Their sculptures were never made for worship; they chose animals that corresponded as nearly as possible to the ideas of the *nature of the* gods.¹⁸

Survival of the dead. “Popularly these animals were regarded as gods, and were really worshipped; by the priests they were regarded simply as the representatives of the gods.”¹⁹

The Egyptians believed in the survival of the spirit of man after death, and ultimately that the spirit would rejoin the body it had inhabited in life in a resurrection from the dead.²⁰

¹⁷Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt* 1:324–26.

¹⁸Burder, *History of All Religions*, 507–8.

¹⁹Burder, *History of All Religions*, 507–8.

²⁰After telling the drama of the life and resurrection of Osiris, the author of *This Believing World*, Lewis Browne, says: “Osiris came to life again! He was miraculously resurrected from death and taken up to heaven; and there in heaven, so the myth declared, he lived on eternally!” The Egyptians reason that if it was the fate of God Osiris, then a way could be found to make it the fate of man too. Of course, all one had to do was to be buried properly, if only a man’s soul were committed safely into the hands of Osiris, and his body embalmed and preserved in a tomb, then some day of a surety the two would get together again and the man would walk the earth as of yore—at least, so it came to be believed in Egypt as long as 4000 years ago (Browne, *This Believing World*, 83–85).

Disparagement between principle and practice. One thing respecting the Egyptian religion remains mysteriously dark, viz. the disparagement between the very exalted moral doctrines of the religion and the immorality of those who followed it. Rawlinson states then:

In morals, the Egyptians combined an extraordinary degree of theoretic perfection with an exceedingly lax and imperfect practice. It has been said that the forty-two laws of the Egyptian religion contained in the 125th chapter of the *Book of the Dead* fall short on nothing of the teachings of Christianity, and it is even conjectured that Moses in compiling his code of laws for Israel did but “translate into Hebrew the religious precepts which he found in the sacred books” of the people among whom he had been brought up. Such expressions are no doubt exaggerated, but they convey what must be allowed to be a fact, viz. that there is a very close agreement between the moral law of the Egyptians and the precepts of the Decalogue.

Yet notwithstanding this profound knowledge of high moral truth, the practice of the people was rather below than above the common level.

The Egyptian women were notoriously of loose character, and, whether as we meet with them in history, or as they are depicted in Egyptian romance, appear as immodest and licentious. The men practiced impurity openly, and boasted of it in their writings; they were industrious, cheerful, nay, even gay, under hardships, and not wanting in family affection; but they were cruel, vindictive, treacherous, avaricious, prone to superstition, and profoundly servile.²¹

And yet the high praise for the moral law as given above is borne out by answers that the spirit of man must make before Osiris in the judgement hall, where the decisive sentence is pronounced either admitting the candidate to happiness or excluding him forever. He must show that his knowledge of life is great enough to give him the right to be admitted to share the lot of glorified spirits. Before each of the forty-two judges who question him in turn, he must be able to tell the name of each judge, and what it means. Among other things he is obliged to give an account of his whole life, in which he must be able to say that he has not blasphemed, has not stolen, nor smitten men privily; that he has not treated any person with cruelty, nor started up trouble; that he has not been idle nor intoxicated, and has not practiced any shameful crime. Nor must he, when before the judges, confine himself merely to denying any ill conduct; he must speak of the good he has done in his lifetime; that he has made proper offerings to the gods, given food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothes

²¹Rawlinson, *History of Ancient Egypt* 1:108-9.

to the naked.ⁱ “If in sincerity” he could report affirmatively upon all these heads,

then the soul was straightway gathered into the fold of Osiris. But if it could not, if it was found wanting when weighed in the heavenly balances, then it was cast into hell, to be rent to shreds by the “Devouress.” For only the righteous souls, only the guiltless, were thought to be deserving of life everlasting.²²

All which makes one wonder why the disparagement between the high demand of religious principles and *the* Egyptian low state of righteous living.

Immorality of the Egyptians: An explanation. Some in the explanation of this disparagement between the high morality of the religion of the Egyptians and the low state of morals in their lives, say that it arises from this circumstance, viz. that the religion itself was derived from contact with the true religion of the antediluvian patriarchs of the Bible, but being left in the hands of a people who soon fell away from righteous principles to the practice of gross sensualism, the divergence between moral theory and moral practice soon set in and drifted wider and wider apart until we have the result observed and commented upon by the authorities above quoted. This observation may apply also to nearly all the ancient religions of the world subsequent to the flood.

Religion of the Medes and Persians. The religion of the Medes and Persians is accorded so great an antiquity that it is supposed to have been taught by one of the grandsons of Noah who planted colonies on the plateau of Persia soon after the confusion of languages. In Persia the first idolaters were called Sabians, who adored the rising sun with the profoundest veneration.^j To that ~~planet~~ **luminous sphere** they consecrated a most magnificent chariot to be drawn by horses of the greatest beauty and magnitude on every solemn festival. In consequence

ⁱRoberts is referring to the so-called “Negative Confession,” chapter 125 of the Egyptian Book of the Dead. For translations, see Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* 2:124–32.

²²Browne, *This Believing World*, 86–87.

^jRoberts’s source (Burder, *History of All Religions*, cited in *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 3:62) is inaccurate on the Sabians. The Mesopotamian Sabians (not to be confused with the south Arabian Sabaeans) were in fact medieval survivors of older pagan Mesopotamian astral cults. On Iranian religion, see “Iranian Religions,” *Encyclopedia of Religion* 7:277–80; “Zarathushtra” (Zoroaster), 15:556–58; and “Zoroastrianism,” 15:579–91.

of the veneration they paid to the sun, they worshipped fire and invoked it in all their sacrifices. In their marches they carried it before their kings, and none but the priests were permitted to touch it because they made the people believe that it came down from heaven.

Persian adoration, however, was not confined to the sun. They worshipped the water, and the earth, and the winds as so many deities. Human sacrifices were offered by them; they burnt their children in fiery furnaces appropriated to their idols. Both Medes and Persians at first worshipped two gods: namely, Arimanius, the god of evil; and Oromasdes, the giver of all good.^k By some it was believed that the good god was from eternity, and the evil one created; but they all agreed that they would continue to the end of time and that the good god would overcome the evil one. They considered darkness as the symbol of the evil god, and the light as the image of the good one.

They held Arimanius, the evil god, in such detestation, that they always wrote his name backward. Some ancient writers have given us a very odd account of the origin of this god Arimanius. . . . Oromasdes, say they, considering that he was alone, said to himself, “If I have no one to oppose me, where, then, is all my glory?” This single reflection of his created Arimanius, who, by his everlasting opposition to the divine will, contributed against inclination to the glory of Oromasdes.²³

James Freeman Clarke, commenting upon the religion of the Persians, follows Herodotus in his description of the religion of the Persians and agrees that they had

no temples, no altars, no idol worship of any kind. The Supreme Being is worshipped by one symbol, fire, which is pure and purifies all things. The prayers are for purity, the libation the juice of a plant. Ormazd has created everything good and all his creatures are pure. Listen to the priest chanting the litany thus: “I invoke and celebrate Ahura Mazda, brilliant, greatest, best. All-perfect, all-powerful, all-wise,

^kThe spellings of Arimanius and Oramasdes used by Roberts were current in the early twentieth century and were based on Latin and Greek forms of the names.

Old Persian	Pahlavi	Greek	Latin
Ahura Mazda	Ohrmazd	Oromazes	Oramasdes
Angra Mainyu	Ahriman	Areimanios	Arimanius

Most modern scholars generally use the Pahlavi versions of the names unless dealing specifically with Old Persian texts (see *Encyclopedia of Religion* 1:157-59 on these two beings). Note that on p. 134, Roberts uses Ormazd and Ahriman for these two beings. For further information on Iranian religions, see William W. Malandra, *An Introduction to Ancient Iranian Religion* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1983); and Mary Boyce, *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984).

²³Burder, *History of All Religions*, 521.

all-beautiful, only source of knowledge and happiness; he has created us, he has formed us, he sustains us.” “He belongs to those who think good; to those who think evil he does not belong. He belongs to those who speak good; to those who speak evil he does not belong. He belongs to those who do good, to those who do evil he does not belong.” This is the religion of the great race who founded the Persian empire.

To these worshippers life did not seem to be a gay festival, as to the Greeks, nor a single step on the long pathway of the soul’s transmigration, as to the Egyptians; but a field of battle between mighty powers of good and evil, where Ormazd and Ahriman meet in daily conflict, and where the servant of God is to maintain a perpetual battle against the powers of darkness, by cherishing good thoughts, good words, and good actions.²⁴

Phoenician religion. As near neighbors to the Persians, the Phoenicians and their religion deserve mention. Meyers claims the Phoenicians were of the Semitic race, and that their ancestors lived in the neighborhood of the Persian Gulf. From their seats in that region, they migrated westward like the ancestors of the Hebrews and reached the Mediterranean before the light of history had fallen upon its shores.¹ The Phoenicians had somewhat the same religious notions as the Babylonians and worshipped some of the same gods, Baal for instance.²⁵ Baal was the supreme male divinity of the Phoenician and Canaanitish nations; Ashtoreth was their female divinity. The name Baal means Lord. He was the Sun God. The name is generally used in connection with other names, as Baal-Gad, that is, Baal the fortune bringer; Baal-Berith, or covenant-making Baal; Baal-Zebub, the fly-god.^m The people of Israel worshipped Baal for some time, up to the seership time of Samuel, at whose rebuke they forsook this iniquity for nearly one hundred years. The practice was introduced again at the time of

²⁴Clarke, *Ten Great Religions* 1:11-12. See also Myers, *General History*, 63 [source not found].

¹For general studies of the Phoenicians, see S. Moscati, *The World of the Phoenicians* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1968); D. Harden, *The Phoenicians*, 2d ed. (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1971); G. Herm, *The Phoenicians: The Purple Empire of the Ancient World* (London: Gollancz, 1975); and *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 5:349-57. On Carthage, see Aïcha Ben Abed Ben Khader and David Soren, eds., *Carthage: A Mosaic of Ancient Tunisia* (New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1987). On Phoenician and Carthaginian religion, see *Encyclopedia of Religion* 11:311-18.

²⁵Crabb, *Mythology*, ch. 55.

^mBaal-Zebub was the god of the city of Ekron according to the Old Testament (2 Kings 1:2, 3, 6, 16). The name is otherwise unknown and may represent a variant of the better documented Baal-Zebul (Beelzebul). See *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 1:554, 638-40.

Solomon and continued until the days of the captivity, early in the sixth century B.C.²⁶

Carthaginian religion. Saturn, under the name of Moloch, was the god most honored by the Carthaginians, a colony of Phoenicians.ⁿ This idol was the deity to whom they offered up human sacrifices, and from this proceeds the fable of Saturn having devoured his own children. Princes and great men, under particular calamities, used to offer up their most beloved children to this idol. Private persons imitated the conduct of their princes, and thus in time the practice became general—so general that they carried their infatuation so far that those who had no children of their own purchased those of the poor, that they might not be deprived of the benefit of such a sacrifice! “This horrid custom prevailed long among the Phoenicians, the Tyrians, and the Carthaginians; and from them the Israelites borrowed it, although expressly contrary to the order of God.”²⁷

²⁶See Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 142.

ⁿThe synthesis of the Carthaginian/Canaanite Moloch with the Roman god Saturn occurred only after the Roman conquest of Carthage in 142 B.C. Roberts's source (Burder, *History of All Religions*, cited in *Seventy's Course in Theology* 3:61) confuses these two gods, which although similar in some respects, are nonetheless distinct. On Moloch/Molech, see *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 4:895–98. On Saturn, see Pierre Grimal, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985) and the classical sources he provides.

²⁷Burder, *History of All Religions*, 510–11; and 2 Kings 16; 21.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*.

A Review of Ancient Religions II

Religion of the Greeks and the Romans. The religion of the Greeks and Romans may be treated under one head, since the Romans largely derived their religion from the Greeks, and the Greek religion in turn was greatly influenced by contact with the Egyptians. Many of the Greek philosophers—teachers of religion to their countrymen—traveled into Egypt where they gathered all the notions then current concerning the gods, the transmigration of souls, a future state of existence and other points, which they modeled into a system that was afterwards enriched and adorned by all the charms of embellishments that poetry and art could furnish. Thomas Dew, in his *Digest of Laws, Customs, and Manners and Institutions of Ancient and Modern Nations*, says on this matter of Greek religion being derived in great measure from the Egyptians: “Still a large portion (i.e., of the Greek religion) was of Greek origin, and that, even though taken from Egypt became Grecian in character.”^a

The Greek and Roman deities are distinguished into three classes, namely the superior gods, the inferior gods, and the demigods. The superior gods, otherwise called the *Dei Majorum Gentium*, that is gods

In this chapter, Roberts summarizes materials which are more fully presented in his *Seventy's Course in Theology*: Greek and Roman religion, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 3:69–86; northern European paganism, 3:87–92; and Islam, 3:105–11.

^aThe exact nature of the relation between Greek, Roman, and Egyptian religion is debated among modern scholars. Much of the syncretism between the three religions took place following the Greek conquest of Egypt (332 B.C.) and the Roman conquests of Greece and Egypt. It is thus a secondary development, rather than a primary relationship. For general background on Greek and Roman religion, see “Greek Religion,” *Encyclopedia of Religion* 6:91–118, and “Roman Religion,” *Encyclopedia of Religion* 12:445–71. For a brilliant history of this period, see Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). For general background and bibliography on Greek and Roman civilizations, see John Boardman and others, *The Oxford History of the Classical World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

of the superior house or families, answering to the patricians or the nobility of Rome, were so named because they were believed to be immanently employed in the government of the world. They were also styled the “select gods,” of whom twelve were admitted into the council of justice (the supreme court), and on that account denominated “consentes.” The images of those twelve gods were first in the forum of Rome, six of them being males and six females. These twelve gods were supposed to preside over the twelve months, to each of them was allotted a month.

The inferior gods comprehended what Ovid called the celestial populace, answering to the plebeians among the Romans, who had no place in heaven. These were called the Penates-Lares—rural deities. The third class, or demigods, was composed of such as derived their origin from a god or goddess and a mortal; or such as by their valor and exploits had raised themselves to the rank of immortals. Some mention a fourth class, called novensiles, they were the least of all that were reckoned among the gods. They were the deities by whose help and means, according to Cicero, men are advanced to heaven, and obtain a place among the gods!¹

Ontology of the Greek and Roman religions. By both Greek and Roman account of origins, chaos (void space) was first, then came into being “broad-breasted earth,” the gloomy Tartarus and Love. Chaos produced Erebus and Night, and this last bore to Erebus Day and Ether.

According to the history of the early tribes who settled in Italy, the Etruscans, the following is the account of the creation: God created the universe in six thousand years, and appointed the same period of time to be the extent of its duration. In the first part of the thousand years God created the heavens and the earth; in the second, the visible firmament; in the third, the sea and all the waters that are in the earth; in the fourth, the sun, moon, and stars; in the fifth, every living soul of birds, reptiles and quadrupeds which have their abode either on the land, in the air, or in the water; and in the sixth, man alone.² The close adherence of this order of creation with Genesis would naturally lead to the conclusion that this notion of creation was derived from **Genesis**: that Hebrew source.^b

¹Crabb, *Mythology*, 6-7.

²Crabb, *Mythology*, 8-9.

^bThis account of Etruscan mythology derives from *Suidas (Souda)*, a tenth-century Christian lexicon and encyclopedia. See Alexander P. Kazhdan and others, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3:1930. To the extent that his account of Etruscan mythology is in fact at all accurate, the apparent parallels to the Genesis account of creation are thus probably due to Christian interpolations.

The sects of the Greek and Roman cultus. The religion of both the Greeks and the Romans gave rise to a multitude of deities, mostly identical in character, but under different names, and by both Greeks and Romans were worshipped but indifferently, a tone of insincerity running through the whole cultus. The followers of religion and philosophy—for the two were closely blended by these ancient peoples—were mainly grouped into three sects, or schools: The Stoics, Epicureans and the Academicians. All three schools existed before the opening of the Christian Era.

The Stoics. Zeno was the founder of the Stoics. He lived in the third century B.C.,^c and taught at Athens in a public porch (stoa in Greek) from which came the name applied to his followers. The Stoics inculcated virtue for its own sake. They believed—and it would be difficult to frame a better human creed—that “man’s chief business is to do his duty.” They schooled themselves to bear with composure any lot that destiny might appoint; any sign of emotion on account of calamity was considered unmanly. Thus a certain Stoic, when told of the sudden death of his son is said merely to have remarked: “Well, I never imagined that I had given life to an immortal.” The Stoics believed (1) that there were gods; (2) they undertook to define their character and nature; (3) they held that the universe is governed by them; (4) that they exercise a superintendency over human affairs. The evidence for the existence of the gods they saw primarily in the universe itself. What can be so plain and evident, they argued, when we behold the heavens and contemplate the celestial bodies as the existence of some supreme, divine, intelligence, by which these things are governed. Of the nature of the deity, they held two things: first of all, that he is an animated though impersonal being; second, that there is nothing in all nature superior to him. “I do not see,” says one versed in their doctrines, “what can be more consistent with this idea and preconception than to attribute a mind and divinity to the world the most excellent of all things.”

The Epicureans. The school of the Epicureans was founded by Epicurus (379-341 B.C.). He taught somewhat in opposition to the Stoics—that pleasure is the highest good. He recommended virtue indeed, but only as a means for the attainment of pleasure, while the Stoics made virtue an end in itself. In other words, Epicurus says, be virtuous, because virtue will bring you the greatest amount of

^cZeno (335-263 B.C.) was born in Cyprus but was ethnically Phoenician. For general background and bibliography on these philosophical movements and religions, see A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 1974); and Luther H. Martin, *Hellenistic Religions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

happiness. Zeno said, be virtuous, because you ought to be. Epicurus had many followers in Greece, and his doctrines were eagerly embraced by many of the Romans during the later corrupt period of the Empire. Many of his disciples carried the doctrines of their master to an excess, allowing full indulgence to their appetites, for the whole philosophy was expressed in the proverb: "Let us eat, and drink, for tomorrow we die."³

The Epicureans held that gods existed, they accepted the fact from the constant and universal opinion of mankind, independent of education, wisdom or law. It must be necessary, so they said, that this knowledge is implanted in our minds, or, rather, is innate in us. Their doctrine was that the opinion respecting which there is a general agreement in universal nature, must necessarily be true; therefore it must be allowed that there are gods. Of the form of the gods they held, that because the human body is more excellent than that of other animals, both in beauty and for convenience, therefore the gods are in human form. Yet these forms of the gods were not "body, but something like body"; nor do they contain blood, but something like blood; nor are they to be considered as bodies of any solidity; nor is the nature or the power of the gods to be discerned by the senses, but by the mind. They held that the universe arose from chance, and the gods neither did nor could extend their providential care to human affairs. The duty to worship the gods was based upon the fact of their superiority to man.⁴

The Academicians. The Academicians can scarcely be regarded as a school of **religion or** philosophy, though they refer their origin to Plato.⁵ Their name stands for a method of thought rather than for a system of truth. They had no philosophy but rather speculated about philosophy. They advocated nothing; they were the agnostics of their time. That is, they were people "who did not know," and like our modern agnostics, had a strong suspicion that nobody else knew. They represented merely the negative attitude of mind of their times, but numbered in their following some of the most **considerable** men of Rome, Cicero being among the number. The Academy is said to have exactly corresponded to the moral and political needs of Rome in the days of Cicero,⁶ which means that most men in the empire at that

³In these remarks on both these schools, I follow Myers, *General History*, 184–86 [source not found].

⁴See Cicero, "Nature of the Gods," 266–68. I commend to those who would have from first hand information on the religion of the Greeks and the Romans, these Disputations.

⁵See Smith, *Student History of Greece*, 596.

⁶See *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., s.v. "Academy."

period were in a state of doubt in respect of God and of all human relationship to him.

The religions of northern Europe.^d Turning from the south of Europe to the northern regions among the Scandinavian and Germanic tribes, there was held a shadowy, and not well understood belief in the existence of an all pervading influence or spirit; a supreme being to whom the people of those lands gave the name of “Alfader,” meaning the father of all; yet, strange to say, they paid him no divine honors, gave him no worship, but conten[t]ed themselves in worshipping inferior divinities, their old war heroes in the main, whom they had apotheosized; and who represented the national quality of the people of northern Europe at that time. To this “Alfader” they attributed infinite power, knowledge and wisdom, and forbade any representation of this being under a corporeal form, and enjoined the celebration of his worship in consecrated woods. Under the “Alfader” they recognized a number of inferior divinities who were supposed to govern the world and preside over the celestial bodies. The doctrine of a future state formed an important part of the mythology of these people, but as to the state of the soul after the death of the body there was a diversity of beliefs. Their fundamental maxims were to serve the deity with sacrifice and praise, to do no wrong to others, to be brave and intrepid. That they worshipped the sun and moon, may be inferred from two days in the week being sacred to them, “Sonndag” and “Mondag,” that is Sunday and Monday. The heaven of these northern tribes was in the highest regions of the earth, and consisted of two abodes, namely, Valhalla, or Hall of Odin, where warriors only were admitted; and a higher abode called Gimle where the good and virtuous in general were to be admitted. They also had two abodes for the wicked, namely, Niflehein or Evilhome, and Nastrond, the shore of the dead.⁷

The Mohammedan religion.^e Mohammed, the son of Abdallah and Amina, was born in Mecca, 569 A.D. It was not until he was forty years

^dFor a modern discussion and bibliography on pagan northern European religions, see Hilda R. Ellis Davidson, *Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe: Early Scandinavian and Celtic Religions* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1988).

⁷See Crabb, *Mythology*, 165–67; also Burder, *History of All Religions*, 525–26; Dobbins, *Story of the World’s Worship*, 88; and Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe*, 240.

^eSee generally Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam* (New York: Macmillan, 1985). For a brief biography, see Michael Cook, *Muhammad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). The standard biography in English remains

of age, however, that he began delivering his message to the world, and this after a long period of communing with his own heart in the silence of the mountains, himself silent, open to the still small voices which he claimed to hear and the visitation of super-natural appearances, the voices often accosting him as the prophet of God, “even the stones and trees joined in the whispering” until he suspected himself as becoming insane. Then a happy interpretation by his wife, Cadijah, of these mysterious voices and appearances, declaring them to be good spirits and angels, threw a note of optimism into his gloomy meditations and the career of the prophet began. Since those days to the present, it is estimated that “nine thousand millions <9,000,000,000> of human beings have acknowledged him to be a prophet of God.”⁸

The creed of Islam.

There is no God but God, the living, the self-subsisting: he hath sent down unto thee the book of the Korân with truth, confirming that which was revealed before it; for he had formerly sent down the law, and the gospel, a direction unto men; and he had also sent down the distinction between good and evil. Verily those who believe not the signs of God, shall suffer a grievous punishment; for God is mighty, able to revenge. Surely nothing is hidden from God, of that which is on earth, or in heaven: it is he who formeth you in the wombs, as he pleaseth; there is no God but he, the mighty, the wise. . . . It is God who hath created you, and hath provided food for you: hereafter will he cause you to die; and after that will he raise you again to life. Is there any of your false gods, who is able to do the least of these things? . . . It is God who sendeth the winds, and raiseth the clouds, and spreadeth the same in the heaven, as he pleaseth; and afterwards disperseth the same: and thou mayest see the rain issuing from the midst thereof; and when he poureth the same down on such of his servants as he pleaseth, behold, they are filled with joy. . . . It is God who created you in weakness, and after weakness hath given you strength; and after strength, he will again reduce you to weakness and grey hairs: he createth that which he pleaseth; and he is the wise, the powerful.⁹

William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953) and *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956). Roberts exaggerates the role of “voices” in Muhammad’s early life. Also, following standard early-twentieth-century practice, he sometimes refers to Islam as “Mohammedanism,” and to Muslims as “Mohammedans.”

⁸Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe* 1:330–31.

⁹Al Koran, 35, 333–34. As announced in the Koran, the syllable “al” in single quotations in the word “Al” Koran, sometimes written Al Coran, is the Arabic article signifying “the,” and ought to be omitted when the English article is prefixed, hence “the Koran” of the text. See Sale, *Alcoran of Mohammed*, 40.

“The creed of Mohammed,” comments Claybourn [Gibbon],

is free from suspicion and ambiguity, and the Koran is a glorious testimony to the unity of God. The prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets, on the rational principles that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish. In the author of the universe his rational enthusiasm confessed and adored an infinite and eternal being, without form or place, without issue or similitude, present to our most secret thoughts, existing by the necessity of his own nature, and deriving from himself all moral and intellectual perfection. These sublime truths thus announced in the language of the prophet, are firmly held by his disciples and defined with metaphysical precision by the interpreters of the Koran.¹⁰

The acceptance of other prophets than Mohammed. Mohammed allowed of inspiration in other teachers than himself, who had preceded him; from Adam to his own time there had been hundreds of inspired men. “The authority and station of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, and Mohammed rise in just gradation above each other; but whosoever hates, or rejects any one of the prophets is numbered with the infidels.” For the author of Christianity, the Mohammedans are taught by the prophet to maintain a high and mysterious reverence. Verily Christ-Jesus, son of Mary, is the apostle of God, and his word, which he conveyed unto Mary and the spirit proceeding from him honorable in this world, and in the world to come, and one of those who approached near to the presence of God.

These elements of truth in the doctrine of Mohammed together with his zeal against idolatry in all its forms, constituted the strength of that faith which at one time menaced even Christian Europe with a seemingly all-conquering front. It had a mighty strength in it, this faith of the Arabian prophet: “*Allab akbar*, God is great.” And then also the other part of the faith, which so influenced the lives of so many of God’s children: “Submit [the will] to God.” Carlyle best stresses this for Islam: “Our whole strength lies in resigned submission to Him, whatsoever He do to us. For this world, and for the other! The thing He sends to us, were it death and worse than death, shall be good, shall be best; we resign ourselves to God.”¹¹

¹⁰Gibbon, *Decline and Fall* 1:223–26 [Bury, ed., 1946, p. 1737].

¹¹Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 52.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson include Browne, *This Believing World*; Clarke, *Ten Great Religions*. Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations* was especially recommended.

A Review of Ancient Religions III

The religions of India. We next turn to the religions of Asia, and consider first the ancient faiths of India.

The Vedas. The knowledge of the Hindu faiths is to be derived from the Vedas, which means “knowing,” or “knowledge.” This name is given by the Brahmans, the priests of the cultus, not to one work, but to the whole body of their ancient sacred literature, comprising more than a hundred books, grouped into four classes.^a The Greek equivalent of Vedas is, “I know”; and in the English “wise” or “wisdom.”¹

The Vedas are based upon the conception of a universal spirit pervading all things. God they held to be a unity; and according to the teachings of the Vedas, there is but one deity, the supreme spirit, the Lord of the universe, whose work is the universe, the god above all gods, who created the earth, the heavens, and the water.^b The world was considered an emanation of God, and therefore a part of him; it is kept in a visible state by his energy and would instantly disappear if that energy were for a moment withdrawn; even as it is, it is undergoing unceasing changes, everything being in a transitory state. In these perpetual movements the present can scarcely be said to have any existence, for as the past is ending, the future has begun. In such a never ceasing career, all material

In this chapter, Roberts summarizes materials from his *Seventy's Course in Theology: Hinduism*, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 3:93-98; Buddhism, 3:98-100; and Chinese religions, 3:101-4.

^aThe four Hindu vedas are the Rig-veda, Sama-veda, Yajur-veda, and Atharva-veda. See “Vedas,” *Encyclopedia of Religion* 15:214-17.

¹Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop* 1:8.

^bThe earliest elements of the Vedas are thoroughly polytheistic, describing gods of the archaic Indo-European pantheon, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, “Vedism and Brahmanism,” 15:217-42. Hindu Monism, as described here by Roberts, did not begin to develop until the period of the Upanishads (700-300 B.C.), and did not reach its full expression until Shankara (A.D. 788-820); *Encyclopedia of Religion*, “Vedanta” 15:207-14. See Alain Danielou, *The Gods of India: Hindu Polytheism* (New York: Inner Traditions, 1985).

things are “flowing” and their forms continually changing, and returning through revolving cycles to similar states. For this reason it is thought we may regard our earth and the various celestial bodies as having had a moment of birth, as having a time of continuance in which they are passing onward to an inevitable destruction and that after the lapse of countless ages a similar progress will be renewed and a similar series of events will occur again and again.²

Brahmanism. The Hindu religion may be summed up in the word pantheism. God is one, because he is All. The Vedas in speaking of the relation of nature to God make use of the expression that he is the material as well as the cause of the universe, “‘the Clay as well as the Potter.’ They convey the idea,” continues Draper,

that while there is a pervading spirit existing everywhere of the same nature as the soul of man, though differing from it infinitely in degree, visible nature is essentially and inseparably connected there-with; that as in man the body is perpetually undergoing changes, perpetually decaying and being renewed, or, as in the case of the whole human species, nations come into existence and pass away, yet still there continues to exist what may be termed the universal human mind, so for ever associated and for ever connected are the material and the spiritual. And under this aspect we must contemplate the Supreme Being, not merely as a presiding intellect, but as illustrated by the parallel case of man, whose mental principle shows no tokens except through its connexion with the body; so matter, or nature, or the visible universe, is to be looked upon as the ⟨corporal⟩ [corporeal] manifestation of God.³

It should be observed, however, that pantheism has two general aspects; first, the pantheism that sinks all nature into one substance and one essence, and then concludes that the one substance or essence is God. This undoubtedly is the view of the old Hindu faiths, sometimes referred to as “purest monism.” That is, the one substance theory, and is regarded by some philosophers as the purest theism. The existence of one God truly, since as stated above by Draper, “God is one, because he is all.” Second, the other form of pantheism expands the one substance into all the varieties of objects that we see in nature, and regards those various parts expanded into nature as gods. This leads to the grossest kind of idolatry, as it did in Egypt—at least among the common people of that country. Under this form of pantheism men have worshipped various objects in nature, the sun, moon, stars; in fact anything and

²Most of this paragraph is quoted from Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe* 1:58–59.

³Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe* 1:59–60.

everything that bodied forth to their minds some quality of power or attribute of the deity. This is the pantheism of Egypt as contrasted with the pantheism of India.

Hindoo triads. In some of the Vedic hymns some find a conception of a trinity of deities. The matter is somewhat confused because of frequent changes in the names of the triad, but resolves itself to at least this: Agni, god of fire, becomes Brahma; Surya, the sun-god, becomes Vishnu; and Indra, the atmosphere-god, becomes S[h]iva. These constitute what is called the “tri-murti,” and are generally said to represent one god, as creator, preserver, and destroyer. A verse in their honor stands as follows:

“In those three persons the one God was shown—
Each first in place, each last—not one alone;
Of Siva, Vishnu, Brahma, each may be
First, second, third, among the Blessed Three.”⁴

Not much importance, however, is to be attached to these triads; there seems to be several of them, and the significance is chiefly fanciful.^c

Buddhæism. From India came Buddhism, established by Siddhartha, or Gautama, who assumed the title Buddha, meaning “the enlightened.” He was born between 562–552 B.C.^d He is said to have passed his youth in opulence, was married, had a son who later became a member of his cult. At the age of 29 Gautama left parents, wife, and son for the spiritual struggle of a recluse. After seven years he believed himself possessed of perfect truth and assumed the title of “Buddha.”^e He passed through a long period of doubt as to whether to keep for himself the knowledge he had won or share it with others. Love of others is said to have triumphed and he began to preach, first at Benares. He did not array himself against the old religion of India. His doctrines are said to be rather the outgrowth of Brahmanical schools. His special concern was to produce salvation from sorrow, which he

⁴Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 216.

^cThe Hindu Triad—Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva—is of fundamental importance in modern forms of Hinduism.

^dOn the Buddha, see H. W. Schumann, *The Historical Buddha* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Arkana, 1989); and Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzky, *The Life of the Buddha: Ancient Scriptural and Pictorial Traditions* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1992). On Buddhism, see B. Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and articles on Buddhism in *Encyclopedia of Religion* 2:319–560.

^eThe Buddha's Enlightenment is said not to come through reason, but through spiritual power and meditation. On the Buddha's Enlightenment, see Karetzky, *The Life of the Buddha*, 83–153; and Schumann, *The Historical Buddha*, 53–60.

saw to be inseparably connected with individual desire and life; and hence the main object of his teaching was to rid men of desire, and induce a state of mind of perfect rest and peace, which is difficult to distinguish from a state of mental coma, acquiescence of all the senses. This is the “Nirvana” of Buddhism generalized. There are those, however, who insist—from its many forms and interpretations of the faith in many lands—upon interpreting Nirvana to be annihilation—nihilism pure and simple.⁵ It is difficult to believe that any one would hold to the “hopeless despairing doctrine of annihilation,” since that would be to believe that nonexistence is to be preferred to existence, even an existence which might give more happiness than sorrow. Edwin Arnold, in his *Light of Asia*, represents Gautama as saying:

If any teach NIRVANA is to cease,
 Say unto such they lie.
 If any teach NIRVANA is to live,
 Say unto such they err; not knowing this,
 Nor what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
 Nor lifeless, timeless bliss.⁶

Speaking of one who has entered the state of Nirvana, Arnold further represents the teaching of Gautama to be—

No need hath such to live as ye name life;
 That which began in him when he began
 Is finished: he hath wrought the purpose through
 Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor sins
 Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and woes
 Invade his safe eternal peace; nor deaths
 And lives recur. He goes

Unto NIRVANA. He is one with Life,
 Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.
 OM, MANI PADME, OM! the Dewdrop slips
 Into the shining sea!⁷

Nirvana: Is it or is it not annihilation? To the refinement of metaphysical minds this may not spell annihilation even to the individual soul, since that soul may be held to be “one with life,” though he

⁵The subject is discussed at length by Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop* 1:276–87. Cf. Dobbins, *Story of the World's Worship*, 517; and also Browne, *This Believing World*, 134–50.

⁶Arnold, *Light of Asia*, 187–88.

⁷Arnold, *Light of Asia*, 179–80.

“lives not”; and though the “dewdrop slips into the shining sea,” and that particular dew drop shall not again recur, yet the sea remains, and the dew drop remains with it. This may not be annihilation for the “dew drop,” yet for all practical purposes it is so close akin to it, that it is not worthwhile to dispute about the difference.

As a religion Buddhism is inadequate to all human needs;^f it rises from mystery and ends in silence. It is a bridge suspended in midair; one end seemingly lodged on shrouded mists, and the other lost in darkness. A bridge, the existence of which is a misfortune; since it serves no purpose. Worse it is than a bridge of sighs; for under the best phases of Buddhist teaching, it is a bridge of torture that leads to no assured advantage to those who traverse its painful distance, and the best that can be hoped for is to escape from it: “he is blest, ceasing to be!”

Of the understanding of things, the universe, the sympathetic versified presentation by Edwin Arnold represents the thought to be:

Measure not with words
 Th’ Immeasurable; nor sink the string of thought
 Into the Fathomless. Who asks doth err,
 Who answers, errs. Say nought! . . .
 Pray not! the Darkness will not brighten!
 Ask Nought from the Silence, for it can not speak!⁸

Gautama set forth four alleged “noble thoughts” on which his doctrine rests: (1) existence is suffering; (2) cessation of pain is possible through (and only through) the suppression of desire—the desire for existence with the rest; (3) the way to this is “the knowledge and observance of the good law of Buddha,” which may be said to be a highly moral law with self-suppression as its objective; and (4) the attainment of Nirvana—the ending of conscious existence.⁸

^fRoberts’s negative views on Buddhism were common in the early twentieth century. Recent studies, such as the sources noted above, provide more positive and sympathetic interpretations which explain why the religion is followed by hundreds of millions and has been so successful in eastern Asia.

⁸Arnold, *Light of Asia*, 171–72.

⁸Roberts’s presentation of the Four Noble Truths should be supplemented. The Buddha presented his basic doctrine in his first Sermon (c. 528 B.C.) at the Deer-Park at Isipatana (now Sarnath) near Benares (Varanasi). “In brief, these are that suffering is inherent in life, that suffering and repeated lives [reincarnation] are caused by craving, that craving and thus suffering can be destroyed, and that the Holy Eightfold Path is the course leading to this.” Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, 23. The Holy Eightfold Path includes: right views, resolve, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration. See Schumann, *The Historical Buddha*, 64–65, for a translation of part of this sermon. An English translation of this sermon is in Karetzky, *The Life of the Buddha*, 155–64.

The morality of Buddhism. Whatever may be said of these alleged “four great truths” and the whole Buddhist system, as a religion, in effect, Buddhism writes down the universe and conscious personal existence, itself, as a failure. And yet its following is estimated to be from three hundred fifty to five hundred millions of human beings! It has the most numerous following of any of the religions. While disappointing as a religion, however, Buddhism stands high as a system of morals, and it is this, doubtless, which commends it to its numerous following. Buddhism as a religion, and as a political fact, was a reaction from Brahmanism, though it retained much of that more primitive form of faith and worship.

“The morality which [Buddhism] teaches,” says Max Müller,

is not a morality of expediency and rewards. Virtue is not enjoined because it necessarily leads to happiness. No; virtue is to be practiced, but happiness is to be shunned, and the only reward for virtue is that it subdues the passions, and thus prepares the human mind for that knowledge which is to end in complete annihilation. There are ten commandments which Buddha imposes on his disciples. They are—

1. Not to kill.
2. Not to steal.
3. Not to commit adultery.
4. Not to lie.
5. Not to get intoxicated.
6. To abstain from unseasonable meals.
7. To abstain from public spectacles.
8. To abstain from expensive dresses.
9. Not to have a large bed.
10. Not to receive silver or gold.⁹

These ~~duties~~ ***precepts*** were enjoined upon all; those who specifically entered the religious life as teachers, their duties were more severe, and their lives of self denial even more rigid than these moral precepts imply.

The philosophy which presented such a moral code to its devotees, think what you will of it as a religion, is entitled to the respect of mankind.

Religions of China. China has a population—all divisions—of 400,800,000, and three general systems of Religion. These are Buddhism,

⁹Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop* 1:244.

Confucianism and Taoism. The state tolerates all three and a Chinaman may be at the same time an adherent of all three of the national religions. The mass of the Chinese people accept the three and see no inconsistency in so doing. It is somewhat as if Americans or Englishmen were at the same time Protestants, Romanists, and Sceptics. The Chinese support the priests of all these religions, worship in all their temples, and believe in the gods of all.

Buddhism. Of Buddhism we have already sufficiently spoken. That faith early penetrated China; one missionary is mentioned in the Chinese annals as early as 217 B.C. It was not, however, until the year 66 A.D. that Buddhism was officially recognized by the government as a third state religion in China.^h

Confucianism. The most influential teacher of the Chinese, however, is Confucius, 551–478 B.C.ⁱ He was not a “prophet” in the sense that he presented himself as a teacher sent of God, in fact he laid no claims to a supernatural knowledge of God or of the hereafter. He said nothing of an infinite spirit, and but little of a future life. His cardinal precepts were obedience to parents and superiors, and reverence for the ancients and imitation of their virtues. He himself walked in the old paths, and added the force of example to that of precept. On one occasion he was asked how the “spirits could be served?” To which he made answer, “If we are not able to serve man, how can we serve the spirits?” On another occasion he said to his followers, “Respect the gods and keep them at a distance.” He gave the Chinese the golden rule, stated in the negative way however, as follows: “What you don’t want others to do to yourself, do not do to others.” The influence of Confucius has been greater than that of any other teacher so far as mass of followers is concerned, excepting Christ and Buddha. The influence, however, can scarcely be accredited to a religion, but to the

^hRoberts here alludes to two legendary incidents in the history of Buddhism in China. The first is the 217 B.C. visit to China of Buddhist missionary Shih Li-fang, who was supposedly sent by the Indian emperor Ashoka (268–239 B.C.). In the second, the Han emperor Ming (A.D. 58–75) is said to have had a dream in which the Buddha commanded him to send envoys abroad to learn of Buddhism. These events are generally considered legendary. See Kenneth Ch’en, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 27–31. Although there were Buddhist influences during the later Han dynasty, the significant spread of Buddhism in China occurred only in the age of crisis in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., following the collapse of the Han empire.

ⁱOn early Chinese religion and thought, see “Chinese Religions,” *Encyclopedia of Religion* 3:257–323; and Frederick W. Mote, *Intellectual Foundations of China*, 2d ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989). On Confucius and Confucianism, see *Encyclopedia of Religion* 4:15–42; and Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. Dim C. Lau (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1979).

force of merely human moral precepts. Confucianism speaks to moral nature, it discourses on virtue and vice, and the duty of compliance with the law, and the dictates of conscience. Its worship rests on this basis: the religious veneration paid to ancestors—for that is the worship of the system—is founded on the duty of filial piety, the moral sense of the Chinese is said to be offended if they are called on to resign this custom.

*Taoism.*⁹ Taoism is accounted materialistic, and yet it approaches more nearly to religious concepts than the doctrines of Confucius; its notion of the soul is of something physical, “a purer form of matter.” The soul is supposed to gain immortality by a physical discipline, a sort of chemical process which transmutes it into a more ethereal essence, and prepares it for being transferred to the regions of immortality. The gods of Taoism are also very much what might be expected of a system which has such notions as these of the soul. It looks upon the stars as divine, it deifies hermits, and physicians, magicians and seekers after the philosopher’s stone, and the plant of immortality. Max Müller, in his *Science of Religion*, sums up the character of the religions of China proper in the following paragraph. He describes the religion as:

[A] colorless and unpoetical religion, a religion we might almost venture to call monosyllabic, consisting of the worship of a host of single spirits, representing the sky, the sun, storms and lightning, mountains and rivers, one standing by the side of the other without any mutual attraction, without any higher principle to hold them together.¹⁰

In addition to this, we likewise meet in China with the worship of ancestral spirits, the spirits of the departed, who are supposed to retain some cognizance of human affairs, and to possess peculiar powers which they ~~may~~ exercise for good or evil. This double worship of human and natural spirits constitutes the old and popular religion of China, and it has lived on to the present day, at least in the lower ranks of society, though there towers above it a more elevated range of half religious and half philosophical faith, a belief in two higher powers, which, in the language of philosophy, may mean “form and matter,” in the language of ethics, “good and evil” but which in the original language of religion and mythology are represented as “Heaven and Earth”!

⁹On Taoism and Lao-tzu, see *Encyclopedia of Religion* 14:288–332; Max Kaltenmark, *Lao Tzu and Taoism*, 2d ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969). On the foundational scripture of Taoism, the Tao Te Ching, see Robert G. Henricks, *Lao-Tzu Te-Tao Ching* (New York: Ballentine, 1989).

¹⁰Müller, *Science of Religion*, 61.

It is true that we know the ancient popular religion of China from the works of Confucius only, or from even more modern sources. But Confucius, though he is called the founder of a new religion, was really but the new preacher of an old religion. He was emphatically a transmitter, not a maker. He says himself, "I only hand on; I cannot create new things. I believe in the ancients, and therefore I love them."¹¹

Spiritual touches: Reflection on ancient religions. Such was the ancient religion of China and such, to a very large extent, is the religion of China today. And one can not find in it as a religion, whatever may be accorded to its moral qualities, much that commands our respect; and yet now and then, there arises from the Chinese classics, a touch of spirit conception that would lead one to think that this great body of people had not been left without some streakings of the morning light of a high spirituality. For instance: A Chinese writer of the 13th century, 1279, A.D., in fact, Wan-Tien-Hsiang, had opposed Kublai-Khan, the Tartar conqueror.^k Hsiang was imprisoned by the Tartar conqueror for three years, and in his prison he wrote as follows:

In all that is or ever was,
Or ever yet will be,
There "Is" what shapes the sun and stars,
And makes the land and sea.

In man "Its" spirit; but un-named
In earth and sea and air,
Below us and above, around—
Behold, "Its" everywhere.

And though in harmony and peace
"It's" not perceived by men,
When storm and stress the nations shake,
We all can see "It" then.

. . . O "It" pervades
The sky, sun, land and sea;
From all eternity has been
And ne'er can cease to be.¹²

¹¹Müller, *Science of Religion*, 61–62.

^kKhubilai Khan (1215–94) was Great Khan of the Mongols from 1260–94, and conqueror of southern China; see Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Wen T'ien-hsiang (1236–83) was the most important civilian official at the southern Sung court at Hangchow. He was captured by the Mongols, and when he refused to cooperate with the new rulers of China, he was executed. See William Andreas Brown, *Wen T'ien-hsiang: A Biographical Study of a Sung Patriot* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1986). David C. Wright of the BYU history department assisted on this note.

¹²[Roberts here quotes from Wen's "Song of Uprightness" (*Cheng-ch'in ke*). David C. Wright identified this quote.]

A fine recognition of God as universal spirit among those, whom Christians call heathens!

This completes our brief review of the world's chief religions outside of those which may be more especially considered as directly the result of revelation, meaning the Hebrew and Christian faiths. Of course, our review could only be cursory, and yet some such review is necessary to the completeness of our theme, and in order to get before the reader the reports of those who have been "seekers after God." It perhaps will have occurred to the reader that at bottom all these religions have much in common, that certain characteristics tend to unite their several cults into one source of origin, and to point to one objective unity. One could easily conceive of them as but the broken rays of light from some noble sun of truth of an antiquity greater than these systems, if such they may be called. They seem, however, to be as detached stones that have broken off and rolled away from some ancient wall in which they once found orderly place. In other words they are fragments from the primitive revelation given to ancient patriarchs of antediluvian days and early postdiluvian days of which the Bible speaks. This the source of those truths, spiritual and moral, found in these religions, and which constitutes such truth, and beauty and virtue as they possess, and this is not inconsiderable, since it certainly may not be thought to be the purpose of an Intelligence dominant in the universe to permit the light of truth to enter into total eclipse with any part of the human race. More consistent is it with right reason—which is but intelligence in action—to accept the light-giving and inspiring thought of the ancient American scripture, the Book of Mormon, where it says: "Behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have" (Alma 29:8).

And, of course, that which "he seeth fit they should have" is that measure of the truth suited to their capacity and their development. This we shall hope, will grow more apparent as the general theme unfolds.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Clarke, *Ten Great Religions*; standard presentations in *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Roberts found Müller's presentation "acceptable" and Arnold's "sympathetic."

A Review of Ancient Religions IV— The Hebrew Religion I

The Hebrew revelation. In this review of the ancient religions, I have purposely reserved consideration of the Hebrew religion to the last, because that religion, more than any other, must be accorded higher claims upon direct revelation for its origin, and will therefore bring us more closely to grips with the question of revealed religion.

The Hebrew scriptures. The record of the alleged Hebrew revelation is to be found in what is commonly known as the Old Testament, comprising, according to Josephus (writing near the beginning of the Christian Era), twenty-two sacred books. In our Protestant version of the Old Testament they are distributed into thirty-nine books; the difference arises from a slightly altered grouping of the several books from that followed by Josephus.¹

I think Josephus is the most reliable authority that may be followed on the origin of the sacred literature of the Hebrews, and therefore I quote him somewhat at length on the subject. After granting superiority for excellence of composition and eloquence to the writings of the Greeks, Josephus claims the honor of accuracy and integrity for the Hebrew writings, and details with what care the Hebrew writers of sacred things were chosen. He then proceeds to say:

Josephus on the integrity of the Hebrew scriptures.

Every one is not permitted of his own accord to be a writer, nor is there any disagreement in what is written; they being only prophets

¹What are generally known as the minor prophets, twelve in number, are connected as one book in the grouping by Josephus; the book of Ruth is coupled with the book of Judges; Ezra with Nehemiah, Lamentations with Jeremiah, while the two books each of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles are counted but one book each, making a reduction of seventeen in number from the authorized Protestant version which, plus the twenty-two books counted by Josephus, would complete

that have written the original and earliest accounts of things, as they learned them of God himself by inspiration; and others have written what hath happened in their own time, and that in a very distinct manner also. For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have), but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine. And of them, five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; but as to the time from the death of Moses (1451 B.C.—Ussher^a) till the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes (these two kings—father and son—reigned from 485 B.C. to 424 B.C.); the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time: and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation, is evident by what we do: for during so many ages as have already passed, no one hath been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem those books to contain divine doctrines and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them. For it is no new thing for our captives, many of them in number, and frequently in time, to be seen to endure racks and deaths of all kinds upon the theatres, that they may not be obliged to say one word against our laws and the records that contain them.²

I may add that comparatively recent discoveries by George Smith, Professor Sayce and others of more recent times, showing that in the ancient religions of Chaldea and Babylonia there were elaborate narratives of the creation which in most prominent features may have been the source of the creation statements in the Old Testament, **do** not

the thirty-nine books of our authorized King James Version of the Old Testament. [Josephus, like Origen and Jerome, counted twenty-two books in the Old Testament—the same number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. For a recent discussion, see James A. Sanders, “Canon,” *Anchor Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David Noel Freedman and others (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1992), 1:840.]

^aRoberts often used the Ussher chronology in his works. It was a standard relative chronology compiled and published 1650–54 by Bishop James Ussher. As noted by the *LDS Bible Dictionary* under “Chronology,” “much work has still to be done in this direction. The dates found at the top of many printed English Bibles are due to Archbishop Ussher. Some of them have been shown to be incorrect.”

²Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews, against Apion*, 581–82. [Roberts omitted the comma in the phrase “the prophets, who were after Moses.”]

disparage the account here given by Josephus of the origin of the Hebrew literature.^b There can be no doubt but **that** what the accounts of the Creation and other ancient events found in both Assyrian and Egyptian sources are earlier than those written by Moses; and that their accounts of ancient events are somewhat similar in import; but because of these facts it is not necessary to disclaim either the Mosaic authorship of the five books of the Bible accredited to that prophet, or doubt the inspiration of those accounts given by Moses; and yet **on many minds** this has been the result to some extent of these discoveries. The truth is that the outstanding facts of the creation, the fall of man, the flood, etc., have been known by the human race from the earliest historical times, from the days of Adam, in fact. They were matters of common knowledge by tradition among the antediluvian patriarchs, and through the family of Noah were preserved to the families and races of men subsequent to the flood.^c The variously distorted creation stories and other ancient events [were] possessed by nearly all people. But all this did not prevent the Lord from revealing the creation history to Moses, together with subsequent events; nor does this new knowledge require us to doubt the inspiration which rested upon him and that enabled him to weave into splendid, coherent form the fragmentary truth among the ancient Egyptian, Babylonian, and other peoples.

Testimony of the New Testament to the integrity of the Old.

It should also be noted that in addition to the testimony of Josephus, the writers of the New Testament give emphatic testimony to the authenticity and divine authority of the Old Testament, since these

^bSimilarities between the biblical creation story and texts which predated Moses and which were found in Assyria and Babylonia caused some scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to argue that the biblical creation story was not original with Moses, but rather a later composite account heavily influenced by the earlier Mesopotamian mythologies. An account of some of these discoveries from the time of B. H. Roberts can be found in A. H. Sayce, *The Archaeology of the Cuneiform Inscriptions* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1907). See also George Smith and others, "Chaldean Account of the Deluge and Translation of the Deluge Tablet," in *Records of the Past*, ed. Henry Mason Baum and Frederick Bennett Wright, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Records of the Past Exploration Society, 1902), 363-79. A recent discussion of the parallels can be found in Alexander Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963). Roberts's argument here is a summary of a lengthier treatment in *Seventy's Course in Theology* 1:24-26. He also treated this subject in the *Young Men's Manual*, 1903-4 (no. 7), ch. 1.

^cOn this issue, Roberts cites the example of the account of creation in the book of Abraham; see *Seventy's Course in Theology* 1:25.

writers so frequently quoted it as a work of divine authority. “Indeed,” say a group of commentators on the New and the Old Testament,

the references are so numerous and the testimonies so distinctly borne to the existence of the Mosaic books throughout the whole history of the Jewish nation, and the unity of character, design and style pervading these books is so clearly perceptible, notwithstanding the rationalistic assertions of their forming a series of separate and unconnected fragments,^d that it may with all safety be said, there is immensely stronger and more varied evidence in proof of their being the authorship of Moses than any of the Greek or Roman classics being the productions of the authors whose names they bear.³

One thing more should be borne in mind with reference to this whole volume of ancient Hebrew scripture, the Old Testament, and that is whatever the subdivisions may be—history, legislation, poetry, prophecy, biography, or proverbs—it is alleged to have been written under the inspiration of God. That does not mean that human elements are not to be found in it, but rather that a divine spirit is present in the midst of human elements, giving forth light and truth and wisdom such as is to be found in no merely human production. There is a divine spirit always present in these scripture narratives, prophecy and poetry, that makes the whole to contain a revelation of God and an account of his methods of doing things among men. All of which gives those writings an authority that does not pertain to the ordinary writings of men.

The revealed religion of the Hebrews. The message of these scriptures to the world on the great themes that have occupied thus far our attention, the source, or origin of things, the nature of the world, and man’s place in it, are now to be considered. God is referred to as the

^dThis is an allusion to the scholarly theory, called the Documentary Hypothesis, that developed primarily in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and is still widely held by many scholars. This hypothesis attempts to explain the apparent doublets in the text of the Pentateuch as the result of an editorial combination of several different accounts. In the case of the creation story, this theory claims the creation story in Genesis 1 was written by an author who refers to God as Elohim (KJV “God”) and Genesis 2 is a different creation story from a different time period by a different author who uses Jehovah (KJV “Lord”). Roberts treated this topic in more detail in the *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:33, as well as in the *Young Men’s Manual*, 1903–4 (no. 7), chapter 1. For a more modern discussion of this issue by a Latter-day Saint scholar, see S. Kent Brown, “Approaches to the Pentateuch,” in *Studies in Scripture: Volume Three, The Old Testament*, ed. Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet (Salt Lake City: Randall Book, 1985), 13–23.

³Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, “Preface to the Pentateuch and Historical Books,” *Commentary*, 5.

Creator of the world and all that is in it. The story of the creation as given by Moses is the most magnificent account known among men. Listen to its opening statement:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. (Gen. 1:1-5)

Then follow the successive acts of the creation, the waters were divided and gathered together and called seas; the dry land appeared and was called earth; and God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind” (Gen. 1:11). The seas also were made to bring forth life “abundantly”; and the fowls of the air also were to multiply, each after his kind.

“And God made the beast of the earth after \langle their \rangle [his] kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after \langle its \rangle [his] kind: and God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:25).

Thus the earth was made ready for the coming of man, but when that point was reached in creation by the divine Intelligence, or Intelligences—for there appears to have been more than one person in the work of the creation^c—then something special seems to have happened, for God said:

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let \langle him \rangle [them] have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl \langle in \rangle [of] the air, [and] over the cattle, and over all the earth. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. . . . And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. (Gen. 1:26-28, 31)

This story of creation, the origin of the various forms of life upon the earth, and finally crowned with the advent of man upon it, his commission to have dominion over the earth, and subdue it—all this, at once so simple, yet sublime, involves us in none of the speculations, and hair-splitting definitions of “being” and “becoming”; and of “matter,” of “space,” and of “spirit.” It simply shows us God at work in the midst of things, of which in the proper place we shall have more

^cThe Pearl of Great Price account of creation in Abraham 4-5 constantly refers to the various acts of creation performed by the “Gods.”

to say, and upon it much will depend for the right unfolding of the great theme we have undertaken. But for the present this will be sufficient on this point of origins—this accounting for the commencement of things *as according to* revelations.

Developments following creation events. Following this commencement came the development of events that have made the history of man in the earth. It seems that man was created “sufficient to stand,” yet “free to fall”^f—if he so willed it: and the opportunity was afforded in the economy of the Creator to test this man’s power of free, moral agency. The commandment was given concerning a certain fruit, which seemed to have in it in some way the elements of ~~life and~~ death.[†] Of all the fruit of God’s garden, man was at liberty to partake save only this one—the fruit of the tree of “the knowledge of good and evil.” “In the day [that] thou eatest thereof,” ran the divine commandment, “thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:17). That is *to say*, it might not be eaten without certain consequences following the partaking of it.

The story is well known, and we need not dwell upon the details of it. The tempter came, contradicting the decree of the Almighty. “Ye shalt not surely die,” was the tempter’s assurance. “Eat . . . and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil”! (Gen. 3:5). The law was broken and man learned that God’s word was true. Death ensued, and has reigned in the earth from then until now. Separation from God, a spiritual death; and later separation of man’s spirit from his body, resulting in physical death.

~~*God’s decree found true.*~~ ***Enter death.*** Man, I say, learned God’s decree was true, death entered the world, but it was not intended that a lasting victory should be granted unto death. Even when announcing the sentence upon man, in consequence of his transgression of the commandment, the word of hope was whispered to his heart. Pronouncing the curse upon the tempter who had induced man to break

^fRoberts quotes here from John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* 3.98-99. God, outlining his plan to the hosts in heaven, says the following of his human creations: “I made him just and right, / Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.”

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve that reviewed the draft of this book submitted by Roberts to the Church in 1928 questioned “that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil had in it the seeds of life and death.” In a handwritten note, Robert responded: **wh[ich] see 6, 7**. Reporting to President Rudger Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith asked: “Since the tree had in it the seeds of death, and no reference is made to seeds of life, cannot this word be eliminated?” Roberts changed the typescript in response to this comment.

the law, God said of the seed of the woman, that while his heel should be bruised by the tempter, the tempter's head should be bruised by the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15).

The hope of deliverance. The time came when the unfolding of this hope of deliverance through the promised seed of the woman, took the form of a more direct prediction of the advent of God into man's earth life. One of the inspired prophets declared that a virgin would "conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," which by interpretation means God with us, or God with man (see Isa. 7:14; cf. Matt. 1:23).

In another prophecy the message ran: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). And, of course, what he is "called" that he will be—the "mighty God," the "everlasting Father"—"Immanuel"—God among men!

Again the advent of God among men is prophetically proclaimed including the promise of a resurrection from the dead of all the hosts of Israel—and impliedly of all men—by Isaiah. To comfort Israel at a period when Israel was painfully conscious of failure to establish the things of God hoped for—then Isaiah took the account of their afflictions before God. "We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth," was Isaiah's complaint. "Neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen." Then God, to give comfort to this prophet and to his people, said—and gave it to his prophet as a message to Israel: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. 26:18-19).⁸

⁸Roberts saw in this verse an allusion to the resurrection of Christ and mankind. His interpretation, which runs counter to most of the standard Jewish and Christian interpretations of this passage, was the basis for Roberts's article in the periodical *Redeemed Hebrew* (1926-27), where he attempted to prove the divinity of Christ to Jewish rabbis, and for his subsequent response to objections to his argument raised by Rev. Max Wertheimer, a Jew converted to Christianity. Both of these articles appear in Roberts, *Rasha the Jew: A Message to All Jews* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1932), 11-34. It is interesting that the interpretation Roberts put forth is suggested in the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown *Commentary*: "However, as Jesus is the antitype to Israel (Matt. 2:15), *English Version* gives a true sense, and one ultimately contemplated in the prophecy: *Christ's* dead body being raised again is the source of Jehovah's people (*all*, and especially believers, the spiritual Israelites) also being raised (1 Cor. 15:20-22)." See Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary*, 459.

This has in it the same ring of assurance as that found in the book of Job, included in Hebrew literature, who said, when his fortunes were at their lowest:

I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold \langle him \rangle , and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. (Job 19:25-27)

This conviction of a resurrection from physical death (which is in part a redemption from the consequences of the broken law in Eden), viz. redemption from physical death, implanted in the heart of Israel, inspired the prophet Daniel to say: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2).

The call and mission of Abraham and Israel. Going back now to the early period of the Hebrew literature, we have in Genesis the story of the Patriarchs to the time of the flood, the destruction of the world by that cataclysm, and the subsequent story of mankind to the selection of a special family, the family of Abraham, a family through whose “seed” all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. This a promise frequently iterated in the sacred records.⁴ This family was finally to be developed into a chosen people with a mission, the mission of being God’s witnesses in the earth. A people, who, whatever might be their fortunes, prosperous or disastrous, obedient or disobedient, they should nevertheless be a witness for God, and for the truth of this body of sacred literature (the Old Testament) among all people. God made a covenant with the Hebrews before the death of their prophet Moses, the consequences of which were set forth in great plainness; on the one hand, for good; on the other hand, for evil. This was the covenant—the Lord said:

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, [that] the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, . . . if thou \langle wilt \rangle [shalt] hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. (Deut. 28:1-2)

⁴Genesis 18:19—“I know him,” [Abraham, said the Lord] “that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him” (see also Gen. 22).

Then follows an enumeration of blessings that should come upon Israel for their obedience; and truly that blessing includes everything that national well-being could hope to enjoy: no blessing, or power that would make for prosperity, or honor, or glory, or power for good. The enumeration rears a monument to national aspiration, prosperity, and perpetuation, that would satisfy the highest righteous ambition of the patriot and the statesman (Deut. 28:3-14).

Per contra, the terms of the covenant were:

But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. . . . And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever. (Deut. 28:15, 46)

Then follows an enumeration of curses that would follow disobedience. These *are* the most awful and calamitous that could possibly befall a people or nation. Every disaster that could come within human experience is therein enumerated. But I must ask the reader to turn to the original document for a perusal of them, as the document is too long to quote at length, and nothing but completeness can reveal how terrible it all is (Deut. 28:15-68).

The effective testimony of Israel. I say nothing more terrible than this prophecy of disaster may be found in human literature, and that is true. But there is the more terrible truth that Israel, having been disobedient, has reaped the full harvest that grew from his sowing of the Dragon's teeth of disobedience, and every calamity mentioned in the conditional prophecy has overtaken Israel, and especially the Jewish tribe of Israel. Whether Israel would or not, having accepted the role or witness given him of God, and accepted by him, he could not, and has not escaped producing that evidence in his national and racial history. It was ordained that it should be so. For obedience, prosperity, and God's upholding power; for disobedience, calamity the like of which has overtaken no other people. Bishop Lightfoot was right when he said:

You may question if you will every single prophecy in the Old Testament, but the whole history of the Jews is one continuous prophecy, more distinct and articulate than all; you may deny, if you will, each successive miracle which is recorded therein, but again the history of the Jews is from first to last one stupendous miracle, more wonderful and convincing than all.⁵

⁵Lightfoot, *Quarterly Review*, April 18, 1888. [Source not found.]

Such the evidence that God has given for the truth of this great revelation contained in the Hebrew Old Testament.

This line of thought will be resumed when in addition to what is here set down, we shall take up what is properly supplemental to the Hebrew Old Testament account of this revelation, namely the advent of the Christ among the Jews and the fulfillment of his mission in redeeming man from the Fall through the resurrection from the dead and the reestablishment of man's union with God, thus bringing to pass, ultimately, the complete healing of that wound which brought death into the world and "all our woe,"^h and the alienation of man from God. Meantime there are yet two other things in regard to the revelation of God to the world through the Hebrew scriptures that are of the utmost importance; and each has to do with the nature of the Deity revealed.

^hRoberts quotes from the opening lines of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* 1.1-3: "Of Man's First Disobedience, and the Fruit / Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste / Brought Death into the World, and all our woe."

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Kitto, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*; Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*; Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 1:22-73.

A Review of Ancient Religions IV— The Hebrew Religion II

The two things referred to in the closing lines of the preceding chapter, as having to do with the nature of the Deity revealed in the Hebrew scriptures, are, first, *Deity*—plural or singular; and the second has to do with the “form” of God. Here we take up the first.

The interpretation of “Elohim.”^a The Hebrew word “Elohim” used in Genesis is plural; and if literally translated the passage in the creation story would read: “In the beginning Elohim (the Gods) created the heavens and the earth . . . And the Spirit of Elohim (the Spirit of the Gods), moved upon the face of the waters; and Elohim (the Gods) said, let there be light, and there was light” (cf. Gen. 1:1-3). And so it follows throughout the story of creation. It is quite generally conceded by scholars that Elohim is of plural form—(of which the singular is “Eloah”)—and represents more than one. A variety of devices **has** been employed to explain away this use of the plural form of the noun in the first chapter of Genesis, and to make it conform to “the one only God” idea. Some Jews, in explanation of it, and in defense of their belief in “one only God,” hold that there are several Hebrew words that have a plural form, but are singular in meaning, of which “Elohim” is one. They

^aThis section is a summary of Roberts’s lengthy and documented discussion of the meaning of *Elohim* in *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*, 139–47, and *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 3:211–12. Roberts has for the most part summarized an argument that has not changed in recent years. Scholars have always conceded the word *Elohim* to be a plural. Most often however it takes a singular verb reflecting that at some point in time it was understood to be a singular divine name. On the other hand, there are several times in the Hebrew Bible when *Elohim* occurs accompanied by a plural verb or adjective in reference to the God of Israel (Gen. 20:13; 35:7; Ex. 32:4, 8; 2 Sam. 7:23; Ps. 58:11). For recent scholarly discussion, see *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, “God, Names of,” 7:679; and Martin Rose, “Names of God in the Old Testament,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 4:1006–7.

quote as proof of this word “maim,” meaning water; “shamaim,” meaning heaven; “panim,” meaning the face or surface of a person or thing. “But,” says a Christian Jewish scholar, the Reverend H. Highton, M.A. and Fellow of Queens College, Oxford—

But, if we examine these words we shall find that though apparently they may have a singular meaning, yet in reality they have a plural and collective one; thus, for instance, “maim” water, means a collection of waters, forming one collective whole; and thus again, “shamaim,” heaven, is also in reality, as well as in form, of the plural number, meaning what we call in a general way in English, “the heavens,” “comprehending all the various regions which are included under that title.”¹

Other Jewish scholars content themselves in accounting for this inconvenient plural in the opening chapter of Genesis by saying that in the Hebrew, “Elohim” (the Gods) better represents the idea of strong, and mighty, than the singular form would, and for this reason it was used, a view accepted by many Christians, Dr. Elliot, Professor of Hebrew in Laffayette College, Easton, Pa., says: “⟨The name⟩ Elohim is the generic name of God, and, being plural in form, is probably a plural of excellence and majesty.”²

Rabbi Jehuda Hallevi (12th Century) found

in the usage of ⟨the plural⟩ *Elohim* a ⟨process⟩ [protest] against idolaters, who call each personified power *eloab*, and all collectively “Elohim.” He interpreted it as the most general name of the Deity, distinguishing Him as manifested in the exhibition of his power, without reference to his personality or moral qualities, or any special relation which He bears to man.³

Havernick derives the word “Elohim” from a Hebrew record now lost, “Caluit,”^b and thinks that the plural is used merely to indicate the abundance and super-richness contained in the divine Being.⁴

¹H. Highton, “God: A Unity and Plurality,” *Voice of Israel* (February 1844), cited in Roberts, *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*, 139.

²Elliott, *Vindication of the Mosaic Authorship*, 65.

³Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. “Jehovah,” 1241-42.

^bThis is an error in reading from Havernick’s article “God” in Kitto’s *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, which renders the Hebrew root ‘-l-b (the same root as *Eloab*) as *eoluit*. The type for the letter *e* looks like a *c*, hence Roberts copied *Coluit*. This is most likely a simple transcription error, for Roberts did not know Hebrew; the same error occurs in *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*, 140.

⁴Kitto, *The Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature* 1:777.

Christian scholars' interpretation of "Elohim." A number of Christian scholars attempt to account for the plural "Elohim" by saying that it "foreshadows the doctrine of the Christian Trinity!" That is, it recognizes the existence of the three persons in one God.

It is expressive of omnipotent power; and by its use here [Gen. 1] in the plural form, is obscurely taught at the opening of the Bible, a doctrine clearly (referred to) [revealed] in other parts of it, viz., that though God is one, there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead—Father, Son, and Spirit, who were engaged in the creative work.⁵

This view was maintained at length by Reverend H. Highton in the *Christian Jewish Periodical*, "The Voice of Israel." ~~Before quoting~~ ***But*** Calvin, Mercer, Dresius, Ballarmine," says Dr. Hackett of the Theological Institution of Newton, Mass., Editor of Smith's Bible Dictionary, "have given the weight of their authority against an explanation so fanciful and arbitrary." Others explain the use of the plural "we" or "us" by saying that in the first chapter of Genesis, Moses represents God as speaking of himself in that manner in imitation of the custom of kings who speak of themselves as "we" instead of the singular "I." In other words, it is "the royal" "we" or "us." This theory, however, is answered, as pointed out by Rev. H. Highton, by the fact that the use of what is called the "royal plural" is a modern, not an ancient custom, and refers to the usage of the kings of the Bible, which discloses the fact that they always spoke of themselves as "I" or "me."

Bible use of plural form—"Gods." Throughout, these several suggestions take on a sort of confession and avoidance of a rather stern fact, namely that a plurality of divine persons were engaged in the creation, according to the use of the word "Elohim" in the Hebrew scriptures. In addition to the use of the plural form "Elohim" (the Gods) however, there is the further fact that when Elohim contemplated the creation of man, "Elohim said: Let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." Nor is that the whole of the story. In other parts of the Old Testament writings occur other pluralistic expressions which indicate the existence of a plurality of deities, though doubtless, harmonized Intelligences all, so that really but one mind, a community mind, enters into the plan of creation and of the government of the world.

Some of these expressions referred to are as follows:

"The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords." That is from Moses (Deut. 10:17).

⁵Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary* (Gen. 1:1-2).

“The Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know.” That is from Joshua (Josh. 22:22).

“O give thanks unto the God of gods. . . . O give thanks unto the Lord of lords.” That is from David (Ps. 136:2–3).

“And shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods.” That is from Daniel (Dan. 11:36).

“God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.” “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.” That is from David again (Ps. 82:1, 6).

Were such expressions taken from the lips of pagan kings, or false prophets who are sometimes represented as speaking in the scriptures, we might question the force of such quotations as representing a multiplicity of divine Intelligences—Gods. But coming, as they do, from recognized prophets and servants of God, who may deny the force of the testimony they give to the truth that is here contended for, namely, a multiplicity of divine Intelligences, harmonized into a community mind, and which, though taking counsel in knowledge and wisdom, control and direct the affairs of the universes in perfect harmony?

The conviction of reason on plurality of presiding Intelligences—Gods. Far stronger, however, as affecting this question of a multiplicity of divine ruling Intelligences in the universe—far stronger than all the pluralistic references in the scriptures concerning the Elohim (the Gods), will be the consciousness of that truth that must rise in the mind of man as he contemplates the vastness of the universe, and the great number of suns, extending into thousands of millions, some of them—and likely most of them—peopled by sentient and intelligent inhabitants. **Also further that** many of these inhabitants, without doubt superior Intelligences to those we have known in our earth; Intelligences who have subdued the worlds given to them as habitations, and which they have carried into immensely higher states of social order and excellence than we know, and whose affairs are governed by councils of Intelligences rising in gradation of power and authority over worlds and world-groups, and these groups gathered into immense empires of orderly worlds, all governed by harmonized Intelligences who have partaken of the one God-Nature. These governing Intelligences are incarnations of that Nature, of all the qualities or attributes of it, for in them, and in each of them, “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9). These, gathered into assemblies and into councils, constitute David’s congregation of the “Mighty Ones”—the Gods of eternity, and of the universe. Not distraught and divided and confused, but harmonized into One-ness

that makes our universe, though pluralistic in its nature, yet also “uni-verse”: A “uni-verse” where system obtains, where orderly government controls, where all things exist under “a reign of law.”

“And the Spirit of God”—Deity viewed as unity. Proceeding forth from these divine and harmonized Intelligences, the Gods, as rays of light, vibrate from our sun and from all the thousands of millions of suns of the universe to give us cosmic light and cosmic power, so from the presence of these divine Intelligences proceeds the spirit of the Gods, “to fill the immensity of space” (D&C 88:12); becoming God Omniscient, God Omnipotent, and God Omnipresent in the world; everywhere present, and everywhere present with knowledge, and everywhere present with power; with power to act, power to be self-moving; power to move other things than self; creative power in fact; upholding power; intelligence-inspiring-power; vital force—a mighty ocean of Being, extending God everywhere; holding within its ocean of Being all that is—A spirit proceeding from, and yet ever ~~returning~~ **united** to its source—the divine, harmonized Intelligences of the universe! All this is told in the first unmarred verses of Genesis:

In the beginning the Gods created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of the Gods moved upon the face of the waters. And the Gods said, Let there be light: and there was light. . . . And the Gods said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. (cf. Gen. 1:1-3, 26)^c

In other words, as in each of the great created classes of animals we are repeatedly told, they were created, and were to reproduce each “after his kind”; so man was produced, after his kind: He, the offspring of God.

“These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth *when* they were created, in the day (i.e. in the period) that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens” (Gen. 2:4).

It is not difficult, with this large vision of the universe and its **innu-**merable Intelligences before us as set forth in previous chapters—it is not difficult, I say, to understand how that in the creation of our little earth in the universe, a plurality of Divine Personages were united in directing its organization, and decreeing the lines of its development, and these Intelligences were the incarnation of all that is known as Deity, ***each one of them***; and doubtless were the Intelligences known as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We can understand now that “as

^cRoberts paraphrases these verses, adding the words “the Gods” (as found in Abraham 4) in place of the singular “God” found in Genesis.

pertaining to us,” there is indeed but these—one Godhead! And in being loyal to this Godhead, incarnated in that Trinity, or divine council, and in each one of that Trinity, God and the fullness of God, even as such “fullness of the Godhead bodily,” was said to have dwelt in Jesus Christ (Col. 2:9). And in being loyal to them—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—we shall be loyal to all that is or can be included in that greatest of all generalization—God!

The form of God.^d The second matter we promised to consider here, and having to do with the form of God, is a question much debated through the ages; and pertinent here to our unfolding truth. That, too, is determined in the Hebrew scriptures, the “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him” (Gen. 1:26, 27). It must follow, as clearly as the night the day, if God created man in his own image, then God also is in the image *or form* of man. I know there has accumulated a lot of theological rubbish about this scripture meaning man being created in the “moral image” of God—meaning consciousness, intelligence, and will; and limiting what should be a full length portrait of Deity—including mind qualities, and also physical form—to this so-called “moral image.” This limitation is the work of the theologians, an assumption purely without authority of the revelation itself.

When the same terms are used in another chapter of Genesis, we have no difficulty in understanding the significance of them, viz: “And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth” (Gen. 5:3). The unstrained meaning of which is **that** Seth was like unto his father; and in like manner the creation of man “in the image and likeness of God,” should be understood.

All through the revelation contained in the Old Testament this truth is iterated and reiterated. It occurs in nearly all the passages in which God as a person, is unveiled. It was so in the visitation of divine beings to Abraham in the Plains of Mamre, when the three “men” came into his tent, one of whom is always spoken of as “the Lord,” who conversed with Abraham in the most familiar terms, and even partook of the Patriarch’s food! (Gen. 18).^e

^dThis is a summary of Roberts’s lengthy argument about the anthropomorphic form of God found in his *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*, 69–91, and *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 3:200–206.

^eRoberts’s interpretation of the Lord coming to Abraham as one of the “three men” seems to square with the simplest reading of the Hebrew text in which three messengers come to Abraham. The Lord, apparently one of the messengers, speaks

Jacob's contact with a divine personage is equally vividly described, and with all evidence of physical contact. Jacob sought to learn the name of his visitor, but it was not revealed. Nevertheless, he blessed Jacob, and Jacob called the name of the place of his experience, Peniel, "for," he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Gen. 32:30).^f

There surely was physical manifestation of God unto Israel both in Mt. Sinai and later to a special company made up of Moses and his inner council, and "seventy of the Elders of Israel," for it is recorded:

Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet . . . as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. (Ex. 24:9-11)^g

And this in the presence of the Lord.

Summing up the experiences of Israel at Sinai, and the giving of the law, Moses reminds Israel in his recital of those events that

the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he ⟨the Lord⟩ wrote them ⟨his commandments⟩ in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me. (Deut. 5:22; see also Ex. 4-5)

"The Lord talked with you," he said again, "face to face . . . out of the midst of the fire" (Deut. 5:4).

What shall I say more? Joshua, during the siege of Jericho, beheld a personage in the form of a man with drawn sword in hand, and asked him, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" "Nay," said the personage,

with Abraham, and then only two, presumably the mortals, leave to go to Sodom and Gomorrah. But this interpretation presents the theological problem as to whether a spirit being, Jesus Christ, would have eaten. JST Gen. 19:1 changes the number of the messengers who leave from two to three suggesting none were the Lord. In addition Joseph Fielding Smith taught, perhaps in response to Roberts, "We are not justified in teaching that our Heavenly Father, with other heavenly persons, came down dusty and weary, and ate with Abraham." *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-56), 1:16.

^fGenesis 32:30. Roberts apparently also interpreted Jacob's wrestling with a divine being as indicating the anthropomorphism of God. Joseph Fielding Smith interpreted this passage as a reference to a mortal: "Later in this chapter when Jacob said he had beheld the Lord, that did not have reference to his wrestling." Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 1:17.

^gRoberts omitted the words "as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone." The clearness describes the sapphire pavement.

“but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.” And Joshua paid him divine honors by an act of worship—“And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship. . . . And the captain of the Lord’s host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so” (Josh. 5:13–15).

Isaiah, prophet par excellence, “saw [also] the Lord [sitting] upon a throne, high and lifted up.” And in his ecstasy, and yet in humility, he cried out, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (Isa. 6:1, 5).

These are visions of other prophets and seers in Israel to the same effect. The revelations of the Old Testament are full of the anthropomorphism, but the climax of its demonstration must be necessarily reserved for a later chapter when dealing with the supplemental phase of the Hebrew revelation found in the New Testament, and in the mission of Messiah of the Old Testament revealed in Christ Jesus of the New Testament.^h

^hSee chapter 19 of this volume.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Roberts, *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*; Smith, “King Follett Discourse”; Smith, *History of the Church* 1:473–79.

The Mission Given to Israel

Enumeration of mission items. This was the mission given to Israel by his revealed religion: To testify to the reality of God; that he is Creator of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are; that he is the eternal cause of events within the universe.

To testify to the unity of God, but a unity arising from harmonized personal Intelligences, each the incarnation of the one God Nature. And yet such a unity as will warrant the prophet's ringing message, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord [our] God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). For ~~them~~ *Israel* and *for* this world there is no other.

To testify of the definite form of God—of all divine Intelligences, who are but incarnations of the one God Nature; that man was made in the very image and likeness of God; and that man possesses this form of God, as well as the moral qualities, mind, or intelligence, and a will.

To testify that men are "the children of the Most High." That a redemption was promised through a Messiah, that was to come, and who would save "that which was lost" through disobedience to law: that the original **innocence?** righteousness of man might be regained; and redemption from physical death would be secured through resurrection from the dead.

This the mission given unto Israel. This the means through which the seed of Abraham would be a blessing unto all nations of the earth; because through his seed these several things would be made known to the world, and through his seed would the Messiah come to earth.

Israel not always faithful to his mission. It must be confessed that Israel was not wholly true to this high mission. There is throughout, after his deliverance from Egypt, a tendency to play fast and loose with this mission. He was not sufficiently faithful to warrant God giving to him a complete victory over the land of Palestine which had been promised as an heritage to him. Remnants of old tribes remained in the land to plague Israel; and it was not until the reigns of David and

Solomon that the Israelites won entire possession of the land, and when they so possessed it, it was but for a short period. With the close of Solomon's reign came the revolt of the ten tribes against Rehoboam, resulting in the establishment of the Northern Kingdom; which in 722 B.C. was overthrown by the Assyrians. The Northern Kingdom destroyed, its population carried into Assyria, and from there led away, and finally lost among the northern peoples of Europe; and ever since they have been spoken of as "the lost tribes."

Judah, and half of the tribe of Benjamin which remained with him, continued 135 years longer and then that kingdom was also overthrown; and the king and the people carried away captive to Babylon, where they remained until delivered under Cyrus; but not again to become an established sovereign and independent people. They became victims first to one of the neighboring kingdoms, and then to another; and finally came under the jurisdiction of all-conquering Rome. Such their political condition at the time of the coming of their Messiah.

This the outline merely of the melancholy history of Israel. During the early centuries of their existence in Palestine, including the reign of the Judges, there was all the while an inclination to follow after the false gods of the lands which they took possession of; and the chief messages and preachments of their prophets were against this infidelity and sacrilege of the chosen people. Then just at the time when the great climax of their revelation was about to be reached in the advent of their Messiah, they were in the lowest state of their apostasy from God, and neglect of the high mission given to them.

The Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures. The fact **of this apostasy** is noted by many historians and scholars. Among them Alfred Edersheim, the author of a ~~splendid~~ two-volume work on *The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah*. He holds as a preliminary to the turning away of Israel from his high mission, and as contributing to it, the Greek translation of the Hebrew scripture usually called the Septuagint, or the "LXX."^a This latter name is given to the version because of the tradition that the translation was accomplished by seventy elders of the Jews. The most generally accepted theory concerning it, however, is that it was a work accomplished at various times between 280-150 B.C. The books of Moses were translated as early as the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, 284-246 B.C. The prophets and psalms were

^aThe translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek in the third century B.C. was apparently intended to serve many public or secular purposes, as well as religious and liturgical functions.

translated somewhat later. After mentioning “clerical mistakes” in the work, “misreadings” and “making allowance for errors of translation, ignorance and haste in the performance of the work,” Edersheim says:

The distinctly Grecian elements, however, are at present of chief interest to us. They consist of allusions to Greek mythological terms, and adaptations of Greek philosophical ideas. However few, even one well-authenticated instance would lead us to suspect others, and in general give to the version the character of Jewish Hellenising. In the same class we reckon what constitutes the prominent characteristic of the LXX. version, which, for want of better terms, we would designate as rationalistic and apologetic. Difficulties—or what seemed such—are removed by the most bold methods, and by free handling of the text; it need scarcely be said, often very unsatisfactorily. More especially a strenuous effort is made to banish all anthropomorphisms, as inconsistent with their ideas of the Deity.¹

It was this version of the Hebrew scripture that became really the people’s Old Testament to that large Jewish world through which Christianity was afterwards to address itself to mankind. “It was part of the case,” says Edersheim,

that this translation should be regarded by the Hellenists (Greeks) as inspired like the original. Otherwise it would have been impossible to make final appeal to the very words of the Greek; still less, to find in them a mystical and allegorical meaning.²

This translation of the Hebrew scripture laid the foundation for a superstructure of false philosophy, and there was not wanting builders who were anxious to place a pagan structure upon it. About the middle

¹Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* 1:28. [With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it is apparent that the transmission of the LXX is much more complex than had been supposed. Many of the translations that had been deemed to be “free handling of the text” are really translations of various Hebrew textual traditions. In other words, many of the textual variations had already occurred in Hebrew before the Greek translations were made. For discussion see R. A. Kraft, “Septuagint,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible Supplement* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), 807–15. Likewise, the charge that in the Septuagint “a strenuous effort is made to banish all anthropomorphisms” has been shown to be overstated. While attempts to de-anthropomorphize God are found in Jewish and Christian religious traditions that used the LXX, examples in that text of the Bible are not as widespread as has been argued. In fact, probably as many examples of anti-anthropomorphism exist in the Hebrew as in the Greek tradition of the Old Testament. See Harry M. Orlinsky, “Introductory Essay: On Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Septuagint and Targum,” in Bernard M. Zlotowitz, *The Septuagint Translation of the Hebrew Terms in Relation to God in the Book of Jeremias* (New York: KTAV, 1981), xxv–xxvi.]

²Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* 1:29.

of the second century B.C., one Aristobulus, a Greek Jew of Alexandria, sought to so explain the Hebrew scriptures as to bring the Peripatetic philosophy (the philosophy of Aristotle, Greek philosopher, who flourished in the 4th century B.C.) “out of the law of Moses, and out of the other prophets.” Following is a sample, according to Edersheim, of his allegorizing: “Thus, when we read that God stood, it meant the stable order of the world; that He created the world in six days, the orderly succession of time; the rest of the Sabbath the preservation of what was created.” And in such manner could the whole system of Aristotle be found in the Bible. But how was this to be accounted for? Of course, the Bible had not learned of Aristotle, but he and other philosophers had learned from the Bible. Thus, according to Aristobulus, Pythagoras, Plato, and all the other sages had really learned from Moses, and the broken rays found in their writings were united in all their glory in the “Torah,”³ meaning the Pentateuch, or the five books of Moses, “the Law.”

Philo of Alexandria: His mischievous interpretations. Following Aristobulus in the same kind of philosophy was Philo, the learned Jew of Alexandria, born about the year 20 B.C. He was supposed to be a descendant of Aaron and belonged to one of the wealthier and most influential families among the merchants of Egypt. He is said to have united a large share of Greek learning with Jewish enthusiasm. According to him the Greek sages had learned their philosophy from Moses in whom alone was all truth to be found. Says Edersheim:

Not, indeed, *in* the letter, but *under* the letter, of Holy Scripture. If in Numb. 23:19 we read “God is not a man,” and in Deut. 1:31 that the Lord was as a man, did it not imply, on the one hand, the revelation of absolute truth by God, and, on the other, accommodation to those who were weak? Here, then, was the principle of a twofold interpretation of the Word of God—the literal and the allegorical. . . . To begin with the former: the literal sense must be wholly set aside, when it implied anything unworthy of the Deity, anything unmeaning, impossible, or contrary to reason. Manifestly, this canon, if strictly applied, would do away not only with all anthropomorphisms, but cut the knot wherever difficulties seemed insuperable. Again, Philo would find an allegorical, along with the literal, interpretation indicated in the reduplication of a word, and in seemingly superfluous words, particles, or expressions. These could, of course, only bear such a meaning on Philo’s assumption of the actual inspiration of the LXX. version.⁴

³Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* 1:36.

⁴Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* 1:40–43; italics in original.

It is not necessary to enter ~~the~~ *into* further details as to Philo's method except to note what another has said in relation to the results growing out of that method. This "other" (in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*) says: "So far as we can judge . . . his (Philo's) aim was to put upon the sacred text a sense which would appeal to Greek readers, and in particular to get rid of all anthropomorphic utterances about God."⁵

Philo's false doctrine of God. Philo's doctrine starts from the idea that God is "Being," absolutely bare of all quality.

All quality in finite beings has limitation, and no limitation can be predicated of God, who is eternal, unchangeable, simple substance, free, self-sufficient, better than the good and the beautiful. To predicate any quality of God would be to reduce him to the sphere of finite existence. Of him we can only say *that* he is, not *what* he is, and such purely negative predications as to his being appear to Philo . . . the only way of securing his (God's) absolute elevation above the world (that is, above and outside of the material universe). . . . A consistent application of Philo's abstract conception of God would exclude the possibility of any active relation of God to the world, and therefore of religion; for a being absolutely without quality and movement can not be conceived as actively concerned with the multiplicity of individual things. And so, in fact, Philo does teach that the absolute perfection, purity and loftiness of God would be violated by direct contact with imperfect, impure, and finite things.⁶

Of which it will be sufficient to say, that such is not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, nor of Moses, nor of the prophets of Israel, nor of the Bible or any part of it.

In all Philo's wresting of the Jewish scriptures, one sees only too plainly the efforts to harmonize Jewish theology with Greek philosophy—an effort to be rid of the plain anthropomorphism of the Hebrew scriptures, for the incomprehensible "being" of Greek metaphysics. And thus the Jews, the people who had been chosen witnesses for God to the world, appeared to have grown weary of the mission given to them, tired were they of standing in a position where their hands seem to be raised against all men, and all men's hands raised against them, because of this message of theirs. They had lost the spirit that had supported their fathers, and hence were searching out these cowardly compromises by which harmony could be shown to exist between the philosophy of the Gentiles and the revelation of God to their fathers.^b

⁵*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., s.v. "Philo."

⁶*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., s.v. "Philo."

^bIt is ironic that Philo had very little impact on Rabbinic Judaism, the Judaism that survived the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70. The hellenization of Judaism,

This ends our survey of the ancient religions including this Hebrew religion which more emphatically than any of the others is founded upon direct revelation from God. And as to that, we must have seen that the people to whom the positive and direct revelation of God was given, often appeared to be unfaithful to the trust imposed in them, and from the beginning gave evidence of an inclination to follow after other gods, the gods of the heathen; and in the last phases of their national existence, philosophized themselves out of the robust religion contained in their scriptures to accept the attenuated, hair-splitting metaphysics of the subtle Greek mind, substituting these speculations for the revelations of God, until we shall presently see, when the supreme moment had arrived for the complete manifestation of God in the flesh, their minds were prepared to reject him and to cry blasphemy when he proclaimed himself God, “the Son of God,” and “God manifested in the flesh.”

Earth advent of Messiah. It was in the midst of these conditions as to the affairs of Israel, that the promised Messiah of the chosen people was born in Bethlehem of Judea, two thousand years ago: The greater part of Israel (ten tribes) more than a century ⟨?⟩ before had been carried captive into Assyria; thence led away and dispersed among the peoples of northern Europe. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin after captivity and varied national experiences, arising chiefly in being subjected to one or another of the neighboring kingdoms, were now in complete subjection to Rome, shorn of national glory ⟨?⟩, in a state of apostasy against God and indifferent to their mission as God’s witness to the world.

Preparation for the revelation of God: Betrothal of Mary. The betrothal of Mary of Nazareth in preparation of the birth of the “only begotten Son of God” ***in the flesh***, was conducted by the angel Gabriel, the account of which is given in St. Luke’s gospel in the most delicate terms. The angel said to Mary, after his gentle “all hail” to her,

blessed art thou among women, . . . for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive . . . and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. . . . The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the

especially as represented by Philo, ultimately exerted more influence on Christianity than in Judaism: “Philo remained almost unknown in Jewish tradition until the 16th century. It was the Christian Church which preserved and adopted Philo under the heading of ‘Philo the Bishop.’” Peter Borgen, “Philo,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1992), 341.

power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:28-32, 35)

And, of course, he will be what he is called—the Son of God!

Witness of the shepherds. At his birth, in the humble quarters of the stable at Bethlehem, God sent his angels to bear witness of the fact of it to the shepherds who were watching their flocks in the fields by night. The angel of the Lord came to them, and assured them of good tidings—“Christ, the Lord was born” (cf. Luke 2:8-11). Then came other angels with their song of “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to[ward] men” (Luke 2:14).

Later the shepherds found the babe in the manger, as they were told they would; and they made known the great message which had been revealed to them: Christ the Lord had been born in the city of David—Bethlehem!

The witness of the Magi. From afar came other witnesses and of a different class. These were learned men from the East who had seen his star which they followed and had come to worship him. They, as befit their station, called at Herod’s palace in Jerusalem, and desired to know where “he that \langle was \rangle [is] born King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2) was to be found. The palace could give them no information, so they followed the “star” until it stood where the young child was, and there, where the humble shepherds had first found him, the wise men also found him and paid him royal, if not divine, honors with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Warned in a dream not to return to the palace to disclose what they had learned, the birth of him who is destined to be King of the Jews, and of all the earth, they departed to their far-off homes which some traditions place respectively in Persia, India, and Egypt (cf. Matt. 1:1-12).

Thus began the life of God’s Son in the earth. Childhood was spent in Egypt, until the passing of those who in their jealous hate sought his life. His youth was spent in the humble village of Nazareth, until the beginning of his formal ministry, which opened when he was about thirty years of age, a ministry in which was proclaimed the full message and mission of God’s Son.

The message of the Son of God. That the “Word” which was in the beginning with God “and which was God” was now made flesh, and dwelt with men, and was “the only begotten of the Father in the flesh” (cf. John 1:1, 14).

That Jesus of Nazareth was and is the Son of God (John 10:36).

That Jesus and the Father are one (by being alike in nature and power and knowledge and wisdom and glory—one, i.e., alike, in all things) (John 10:30; 17).

That Jesus was God manifested in the flesh—i.e., revealed in the flesh (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16).

That Jesus is the Savior of men and that he is the Redeemer of the world; that no other name under heaven is given whereby men may be saved (John 3:14–19; Acts 4:12).

That men through him must be born again of the water and of the spirit in order for entrance into the kingdom of heaven (John 3:5).

That Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and that through him all men will be raised from the dead in their order; “For as in Adam all die, [even] so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22; cf. Matt. 27:50–53; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20 and 21; Acts 1:1–11; 1 Cor. 15:1–26).

The mission of the Son of God. (Of course the message above overlaps in places the mission, since they are so closely allied.)

To bear witness to the truth (John 3:11; 18:37).

To “teach all things,” and witness the truth that Jesus was the Son of God.

Woman: I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

Jesus: I that speak [un]to thee am he. (cf. John 4:25–26)

Jesus: (to one whom he had healed) Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

The Man: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe?

Jesus: Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee!

The Man: Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him. (cf. John 9:35–38)

“To preach good tidings unto the meek; . . . to bind up the broken-hearted. . . . To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God” (Isa. 61:1–2).

“To comfort all ⟨who⟩ [that] mourn” (Isa. 61:2).

Messengers from John the Baptist: Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

Jesus: Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. (Matt. 11:3-6)

“To proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isa. 61:1).

Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached [un]to the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah. . . . For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pet. 3:18-20; 4:6)

To be a Light to the Gentiles, as well as to Israel, and a universal savior:

Prophecy as to the Messiah—the Christ:

It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. (Isa. 49:6)

Jesus: Father, glorify thy name.

Voice: I have **both** glorified it, and will glorify it again. (The people heard the voice. Some thought it thundered and others said an angel spake to him.)

Jesus: This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth (i.e. upon the cross), will draw all men unto me. (cf. John 12:28-32)

This in outline [is] the message and the mission of the Christ, which message and mission is testified of in the collection of books known as the New Testament and which, when united with the prophetic message of the Old Testament, makes up the whole mission of Israel to the world. **Add “other sheep I have”—Christ mission to western continents. St. John. 10 ch.**

At this stage in the development of our theme, we shall concern ourselves next with developing the fact of the true deity of the Christ, as that truth is set forth in both the Old and in the New Testament, leaving the other phases of the message and mission of the Christ to be dealt with under the middle title of our three-fold theme, the Truth, the Way, the Life.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Josephus, *Works of Flavius Josephus*; Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*; and *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

The Revelation of God in Jesus Christ

The coming of God through incarnation promised. Prophetically in the Old Testament, the coming of God into the world is proclaimed. In previous pages we have noted that a “virgin ⟨would⟩ [shall] conceive, and bear a son” and call his name “Immanuel,” the interpretation of which is “God with us”—that is, God with men (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23).

Again, “a child” under special circumstances, is to be “born” in Israel, and “the government” is to be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called “Wonderful,” “Counsellor,” “The mighty God,” “The everlasting Father,” “The Prince of Peace” (cf. Isa. 9:6).

The prophet Isaiah in giving comforting words to Israel, said: “⟨Your⟩ [Thy] dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. . . . And the earth shall cast out the dead” (Isa. 26:19). This was Jehovah (the preexistent spirit of the Christ) speaking to Isaiah, and is a plain prophecy that Jehovah, the spiritual personage and deity who manifested himself to the ancients—and especially to Moses—shall have a “body,” shall “die,” and shall be raised from the dead. All which, of course, the reader will recognize the Christ did, according to the New Testament, seven hundred years after Isaiah’s time; hence it is proper to proclaim this “child,” this “son that was given”—Jesus of Nazareth—to be “the mighty God,” “the everlasting Father,” “God with us,” and “God manifested in the flesh.”

The Christ proclaimed to be God. Turn we now to the New Testament, and first to that sublime poem of St. John’s preface to his gospel, which, like the book of Genesis, carries us back to the “beginning,” “when God created” not the universe, but our earth and its heavens:

In the beginning was the Word, and [the] Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. . . . And

In introducing this chapter, Roberts noted: “Also 3 Nephi ch. 11: The appearance of the risen Christ to the Nephites; also book of Ether ch. 3; appearance of the preexistent Christ to the brother of Jared.”

the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. . . . For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:1-2, 14, 17)

There can be no question but direct reference is here made to the Lord Jesus Christ as being the “Word,” and the “Word,” or Jesus, being with the Father in the beginning “when” he created our heaven and our earth; and the “Word,” or Jesus Christ, also being God. So then the “Word” as used here by John is one of the titles of Jesus in his preexistent estate as a spirit. Called the “Word,” because by “Word” we give forth expression, and since Jesus Christ was to be an expression or revelation of God, he was called so to be the brightness of his (the Father’s) glory and the express image of his (the Father’s) person (cf. Heb. 1:3).

Jesus declares himself to be God and in the form of God. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in ⟨the Lord⟩ [Christ] Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philip. 2:5-7).

Jesus was crucified on the charge that he was an impostor, that he, though plainly to the Jews being a man, said that God was his father, making himself equal with God. Jesus had said to a helpless cripple **on this occasion**—a cripple of thirty-eight years standing—Rise, take up thy bed and walk, and the man arose healed. This healing attracted the attention of the Jews, and because this act of mercy was done on the sabbath day they were scandalized greatly and sought to kill the Christ, but Jesus answered rather independently, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (John 5:17). On which they sought the more to kill him because from their viewpoint he had not only broken the sabbath in healing the cripple, but had now blasphemed by saying that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Further he answered: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19).¹

Again this Son of God offended the Jews by saying: “The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. . . . I and my Father are one” (John 10:25, 30). On this declaration “the Jews took up stones to stone him.” Then Jesus said unto them: “Many good works have I

¹The whole chapter should be read as it manifests the close relations and sympathetic cooperation between this God’s Son, the Christ, and that Father who begot him into this earth life, to be the revelation of God to the World.

shewed you from my Father; for which *of* ⟨these⟩ [those] works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For *a* good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (John 10:31–33). Did Jesus deny that he was God to these infuriated Jews? What an opportunity to correct their misconception, if misconception it was! But Jesus did not deny their charge, on the contrary he confirmed it by a quotation from the Old Testament:

Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken (i.e. denied); Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore [they] ⟨the Jews⟩ sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand. (John 10:34–39)

Again when accused before Pilate who declared he could “find no fault in him,” the Jews answered: “We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God” (John 19:6–7). When before the Sanhedrin of the Jews, the High Priest in the court said directly to Jesus: “I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus ⟨answered⟩ [saith unto] him, Thou hast said.” And further on, “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 26:63–64).

Once the Christ himself turned questioner of the Jews, and said to them; “What think ye of Christ?”—having reference, of course, to the Anointed One, the Messiah of the Old Testament—and of whom there was lively expectation that this Messiah would manifest himself unto Israel; and the question of Jesus referred to that Anointed One, then yet to be revealed—so,

What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, ⟨un⟩till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? (Matt. 22:42–45)

“No man was able to answer him [a word], neither durst any man from that day forth,” saith the record, “ask him any [more] questions” (Matt. 22:46).

The above question can only be answered by the plain truth, that the first Lord (the Father), said unto the second Lord (the Son, Jesus

Christ), “Sit thou on my right hand, 〈un〉til I make thine enemies thy footstool”; and the second Lord could become the “Son of David” only on the maternal side, Mary being a descendant of David. The Jews dare not answer, nor make further inquiry about this seeming mystery without admitting that the anointed one, their Messiah, was to be veritably the “Son of God.”

Jesus Christ is to be worshipped, hence God. Jesus Christ, according to the New Testament scriptures, is to be worshipped by men and angels, and worship is an honor to be paid only to true Deity. The angels of heaven refuse the adoration we call worship. When an angel appeared to the Apostle John while on the Isle of Patmos, and the apostle, awed by the brightness of his glory, fell upon his face to worship him, the angel said, “See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren: . . . worship God” (Rev. 19:10). Again,

unto which of the angels said he 〈God〉 at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? . . . When he bringeth in the 〈first born〉 [first-begotten] into the world 〈who is Jesus〉, he 〈God〉 saith, [And] let all the angels of God worship him. (Heb. 1:5-6)

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philip. 2:9-11)

Jesus Christ is the Creator, hence God. Evidence of this is found in the testimony of John in the opening verses of his great gospel, as we have already seen:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. (John 1:1-4)

The Father . . . hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son . . . Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Col. 1:12-17)

So also the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken

unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (That is to say under the direction of the Father, Jesus Christ as preexistent spirit, created the worlds). (Heb. 1:1-2)

Jesus Christ equal with God the Father; hence God. After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples on a mount in Galilee, and said:

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and [of] the Son, and [of] the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (Matt. 28:18-20)

Observe in this passage, that this Jesus Christ is placed upon a footing of equality with God the Father and with the Holy Ghost. This brings to mind the scripture of St. Paul who, speaking of Jesus, said: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Philip. 2:6). Also the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is declared to be “the brightness of his (the Father’s) glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down (at) [on] the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3). So Paul to the Corinthians, “Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4). And again in his letter to the Colossians, “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1:15). Being the express image of his person, then the “image of the invisible God,” Jesus becomes a revelation of the person of God to the children of men as well as a revelation of God’s attributes, “for it pleased the Father that in him (the Lord Jesus Christ) should all fulness dwell. . . . For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 1:19; 2:9). All there is then of God, there is in Jesus Christ, and all is revealed through him. All that Jesus Christ is, God is; and Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, is an immortal man of flesh and bone and spirit united; and who, with his Father, and the Holy Ghost reigns eternally in the heavens, our Godhead. “Great is the mystery of godliness”; and yet “God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Tim. 3:16).

God revealed to the world in the person of Jesus Christ. The world stands in need of a revelation of God. He whom Babylonians, Assyrians, and Egyptians sought for in their pantheism must be made known. God whom Confucius would have man respect, but keep at a distance, must draw near. The “Alfader” of the Goths and Huns and

Syphians, mysterious and incomprehensible to them, must be brought out of the northern darkness into a glorious light. The God idea that prevailed among the Greek philosophers, must be brought from out of the midst of their idle speculations and made to stand before the world. Him whom they ignorantly worshipped must be preached unto them. He whom the Jews were seeking to deny and forsake because of their misunderstanding, must be revealed, and that concretely, to the children of men. And lo! when the veil falls, and the darkness moves back through the revelation that God gives of himself, what form is that which steps forth from the background *of* the world's ignorance and mystery? A man, as God lives! Jesus of Nazareth, the great Peasant Teacher of Judea! And he is God revealed henceforth to the world!

Those who thought upon God as impersonal, without form, must know him henceforth as a person in the sense of being an individual, in the form of man—or, more properly, man in his form; for in the image of God was man created. Those who held him to be “without quality,” must henceforth know him as possessed of the qualities of Jesus of Nazareth. Those who have regarded him as infinitely “terrible,” must henceforth know him as infinitely gentle. Those who would hold him at a distance, will now permit him to draw near.

This is the world's mystery revealed. This is God, “manifested in the flesh.” This is the Son of God, who comes to reveal the Father, for he is the “express image” and likeness of the Father's person, and the revealer of the Father's mind. Henceforth when **men** shall say, “shew us the Father,” Jesus, as when he answered Philip, will point to himself as the complete revelation of the Father and say: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:8-9). Henceforth when men shall dispute about the “being” and “nature” of God, it shall be a perfect answer to uphold Jesus Christ as the complete and perfect revelation, and manifestation of God; and through all the ages it shall be so—eternally so. For there shall be no excuse for men saying that they know not God, for all may know him from the least to the greatest, so tangible, so real a revelation has God given of himself in the person, character, and attributes of Jesus Christ. Jesus lived his life on earth, a life of sorrow, its pathway strewn with actions fraught with mercy, kindness and love. A man, he was approved of God among men by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him. But him men took, and by wicked hands crucified and slew. God raised him up, however, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of *them*; and exalted him on high, at the right hand of God, whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. (This synopsis of the Christ's life is in Acts 2.)

Mark you, in all this there is not a word about the “mysterious, ineffable generation of the Son of God” from the Father; and nothing about any other of the many mysteries that men indulged in their learned disquisitions of God. Yet the foregoing is the revelation of God as seen in Jesus Christ, according to the New Testament scriptures.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Roberts, *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*; Smith, “King Follett Discourse”; 3 Ne. 11; Ether 3; Joseph Smith-History, on the First Vision.

Departure of the Church from the True Doctrine of God

The revealed God. In the revelation of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, set forth in the last chapter, the true doctrine of God as to his nature, attributes and physical form is established from the scriptures (Old and New Testament). That vision of him on the “Mount” in Galilee, where he had appointed a meeting with his eleven apostles, is the true vision of God. The resurrected Christ, a spirit and body in human form, indissolubly united, never more to be separated, spirit and body fused into a sole being, the true God-type; and in the case of the Christ is God absolutely revealed, “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).

This is not the revelation of God ridiculed by those who have a scorn of anthropomorphic notions of God, ~~whom~~ **who** they claim is represented as an “old man with a gray beard,” and whom they scornfully reject as God. But the revelation of God presented here is the immortal and eternal, youthful Christ; resurrected at the age of thirty-three years, the height of gloriously developed manhood, and caught at that age and made eternal by a union of a perfect body with a perfect spirit, in eternal youth and youthfulness. God as perfected man, and manifested in the flesh for all time as the God-type of the universe, God blessed forever more!

More complete presentations of Roberts’s views on departure from true doctrine can be found in his other works: *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 2:152-212; 3:118-36; *The “Falling Away” or the World’s Loss of the Christian Religion and Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1950), which is a reprint of radio addresses given in 1929; *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History* (1895), part 2; *New Witness for God* (1895), 1:45-136. Two fundamental reference works for the study of early Christianity are Everett Ferguson and others, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990); and Angelo Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

This is the revelation of God through Jesus Christ, of which the apostles were to bear witness to the world, of which the church is to bear witness in all ~~the world~~ *time*. The apostles were faithful throughout their age to make known this revelation of God to the world; but the church after the death of the apostles and those associated with them—the apostolic fathers—were not so faithful and successful. Rather like the Hebrew race, they failed to maintain the truth committed to them; and it is our business in this chapter to trace the melancholy story of the departure of the primitive church from this great doctrine of the Christ and of the apostles.

The Christian doctrine of God. The existence of God both Jesus and the apostles accepted as a fact. In all the teachings of Jesus, he nowhere seeks to prove God's existence. He assumes that, and proceeds from that basis with his mission. He declares the fact that God was his father, and frequently calls himself the Son of God (Matt. 27; Mark 14:61-62; John 10). After his resurrection and departure into heaven, the apostles taught that he, the Son of God, was with God the Father in the beginning; that he, as well as the Father, was God; that under the direction of the Father he was the Creator of worlds; that without him was not anything made that was made (cf. John 1:1-4, 14; Heb. 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-19; 2:9); that in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and that he was the express image of the Father's person (Heb. 1:2-3). Jesus himself taught that he and the Father were one (John 10:30; 17:11-22); that whosoever had seen him had seen the Father also (John 14:9); that it was part of his mission to reveal God, the Father, through his own personality, for as was the Son, so too was the Father (John 1:18; 14:1-9). Hence Jesus was God manifested in the flesh—a revelation of God to the world (1 Tim. 3:16). That is, Jesus was a revelation not only of the being of God, but of the kind of being God is.

Jesus also taught and prayed (and in doing so showed in what the "oneness" of himself and his Father consisted) that the disciples might be one with him, and also one with each other, as he and the Father were one (John 14:10-11, 19-20; 17). Not one in person, of course—not all merged into one individual, and all distinctions of personality and individuality lost—but one in mind, in knowledge, in love, in will; one by reason of the indwelling in all of the one Spirit, even as the mind and will of God the Father was also in Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:14-19).

The Holy Ghost, too, was upheld by the Christian religion to be God.¹ Jesus ascribed to him a distinct personality: proceeding from the

¹Acts 5:1-14. To lie to the Holy Ghost is to lie to God, because the Holy Ghost is God.

Father; sent forth in the name of the Son; feeling love; experiencing grief; forbidding; abiding; teaching; bearing witness; appointing to work; and interceding for men. All of which clearly establishes for him, too, a personality (John 14-15).

The distinct personality of these three individual deities (united however into one Godhead, or divine council), was made apparent at the baptism of Jesus; for as he, God the Son, came up out of the water from his baptism at the hands of John, a manifestation of the presence of the Holy Ghost was given in the sign of the dove which rested upon Jesus, while out of the glory of heaven surrounding the personage in the scene, the voice of God the Father was heard saying, "This," referring to Jesus, "is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:16-17).

The distinctness of the personality of each member of the Godhead is also shown by the commandment to baptize those who believe the gospel in the name of each person of the Holy Trinity, that is, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). And again, in the apostolic benediction, viz., "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14).

The Christian Godhead. These three personages constitute the Christian Godhead, the Holy Trinity. In early Christian theology they were regarded as the supreme governing and creating power in heaven and in earth. Of this Trinity, the Father was worshipped in the name of the Son, while the Holy Ghost bore record of both the Father and the Son. And though the Holy Trinity was made up of three distinct personages as being individuals, yet did they constitute but one Godhead, or supreme governing power.

This outline of the doctrine of God derived from the New Testament represents God as being anthropomorphic, that is, like man in form; or, rather, it reaffirms the old doctrine found in the book of Genesis, viz., that man is created in the image of God, and after his likeness. The outline of New Testament doctrine also ascribes to God what are called human mind qualities and feelings. But as in the foregoing, we first say that God is represented as being in human form, and then to get the exact truth say: or, rather, man was created in the image and likeness of God. So in this latter case, when we have said that the doctrine of the New Testament ascribes human mind qualities and feelings to God, to get the exact truth we should say: or, rather, man possesses in lower degree the mind qualities of God—the power of knowing, willing, judging, loving, etc.—though it should be stated, of course, that man does not possess these attributes in their perfection,

as God does. The same may also be said of the physical perfections. While man has been created in the image and very likeness of God, yet our bodies in their present state of imperfection—sometimes stunted in growth, deformed, diseased, subject to sickness, wasting decay, and death—can not be said to be like God’s glorious, perfect, physical, but also spiritual body. Yet we have the divine word that our bodies finally shall be made like unto his body:

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Philip. 3:20-21)

So also the attributes of the spirit of man—the attributes of the mind—now imperfect and limited in the range of vision ~~and~~ apprehension of things, owing largely to the conditions in which man finds himself placed in this earth life (and all for a wise purpose in God’s economy); yet the time will come that it will be with the mind as with the body; for God shall change our perhaps vile mind that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious mind, “according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” That whereas “now we may see only as through a glass darkly,” but when that more perfect state is come, we shall see as we are seen; that whereas now we know but in part, then we shall know even as we are known (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12).

First authoritative formula on doctrine of God. Perhaps the finest formula of an expression of faith as to God and which was a truly authoritative Christian creed came from the famous conversation of St. Peter with the Christ. “Whom ⟨do ye say⟩ [say ye] that I am?” inquired Jesus of the apostles, and Simon Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Whereupon the Master declared that his Father had revealed this truth to the apostle, and upon that truth he would build his church. The Christ’s benediction also went with St. Peter’s confession: “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 16:15-17). Incidentally it should be noted here that the Christ not only accepts this declaration of himself as the “Son of the Living God,” but proclaims that “Living God” as his “Father in Heaven.”

As an instance of the felt need of some form of a confession as warranting entrance into the church, we may take the case of the

officer of the court of Queen Candace, instructed from the scriptures on the redemptive mission of the Christ by Philip, one of the seven evangelists:

Officer: “What doth hinder me to be baptized?”

Philip: “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.”

Officer: “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

The chariot was halted straightway and the baptism performed (Acts 8:36–38).

St. Paul represented the “word of faith” which we preach to be that, “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. 10:9).

The Apostles’ Creed. According to a tradition in the early Christian church, before the apostles dispersed to go upon their worldwide mission they met and formulated what stands in ecclesiastical history as the “Apostles’ Creed.”^a The genuineness, however, of this tradition is doubted, indeed it is strongly denied by respectable authority. Dr. Mosheim doubts of the apostles’ formulating it in the following language: “There is indeed extant, a brief summary of Christian doctrines, which is called the *Apostles’ Creed*; and which, from the fourth century onward, was attributed to *Christ’s* ambassadors themselves. But at this day, all who have any knowledge of antiquity, confess unanimously that this opinion is a mistake, and has no foundation.”²

To this also substantially agrees Dr. Neander. The creed itself is as follows:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, buried, arose from the dead on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and sits at the right hand of the Father; whence he will come, to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Church; the remission of sins; and the resurrection of the body.³

While in the face of the historical evidence to the contrary we may not believe this “creed” was formulated by a council of the apostles; and

^aFor basic background and bibliography on the Apostles’ Creed, see *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 73–75.

²Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History* 1:79; italics in original.

³Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion* 1:306–7 [quote not found].

also certain inconsistencies therein would bar one from believing this “creed” to be of apostolic origin, still, emphasizing as it does, belief in God, the Father Almighty, and on Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord, . . . and in the Holy Spirit (i.e., the Holy Ghost)—in all this, since it became so widely accepted by the church during the early Christian centuries, it is a valuable Christian document on the belief in God, especially as expressed in the Holy Trinity.

The Apostolic Fathers (Christian writers contemporaneous with some of the Apostles) attempted no speculative construction of the doctrine of the Trinity.^b They merely repeated the biblical phraseology without endeavoring to collect and combine the data of revelation into a systematic form. They invariably speak of the Christ as Divine and make no distinction in their modes of thought and expression between the deity of the Son and that of the Father. These immediate pupils of the apostles enter into no speculative investigation of the doctrine of the logos (the “Word”) but contented themselves with the simplest and most common expressions respecting the Trinity.⁴

The Patristic view of the divinity of Christ. The following brief excerpts from the early Fathers of the church will be sufficient to indicate the freedom with which the Fathers apply the term of God to the second person, who is most commonly conceived of as the God-man and called Jesus Christ by them. “Brethren,” says Clement of Rome (and bishop, lived 30–100 A.D.), “we ought to conceive of Jesus Christ as of God, as of the Judge of the living and the dead.”⁵ Ignatius addresses the church at Ephesus as “united and elected by a true passion, according to the will of the Father, and to Jesus Christ our God.”^c Writing to the church, Clement of Rome describes the saints there in his greeting as

^bFor a basic survey of ideas on the Trinity among early Fathers, see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, vol. 1 of *The Christian Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 172–277; J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th ed. (San Francisco: Harper, 1978), 83–162. See also *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 911–17; *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* 2:851–53 (for a Catholic perspective).

⁴Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine* 1:261–65 [Greek terms omitted].

⁵Clement, *Epistle* 2, 1:1. [All passages quoted by Roberts in this paragraph are found in Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 265–67.]

^cThe writings of the Apostolic Fathers are conveniently collected in Maxwell Staniforth, *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers*, 2d ed. (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1987); and Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2 vols. (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1912–13). Information on the individual Apostolic Fathers, their writings and recent studies can be found in articles under each individual’s name in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* and *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*.

“illuminated by the will of Him who willeth all things that are according to the love of Jesus Christ our God.” In somewhat like manner he makes reference to the Holy Trinity: “Have we not one God, and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace, who is poured out upon us . . . ?” Polycarp (bishop of Smyrna, lived 69–155 A.D.) closed his prayer at the stake by saying: “for this, and for all things, I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee (God, the Father), together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus, thy beloved Son; with whom to thee, and the Holy Ghost, be glory, both now, and to all succeeding ages.”⁶

The foregoing doctrine of God, taught to the Christians in Apostolic times, awakened their pious reverence without exciting their curiosity. They dealt with no metaphysical abstractions, but were contented to accept the teachings of the apostles in humble faith, and believed that Jesus Christ was the complete manifestation of deity, and the express image of God, his Father; and hence a revelation to them of God; while the Holy Ghost they accepted as God’s witness and messenger to their souls for the truth about God and the gospel.

Paganization of the New Testament doctrine of God. But primitive Christianity, as is well known, came in contact with other doctrines concerning deity. It was almost immediately brought in touch with the mysticism of the Orient, and also with the philosophy of the Greeks, who took so much delight in intellectual subtleties. In the Oriental philosophies, and in the Greek, there was conceived the idea of a trinity in deity; an idea which possibly may have come down from the doctrines revealed to the patriarchs concerning the godhead, but which had been corrupted and rendered unintelligible by the vain philosophizings of men. In some of the Oriental systems the trinity or trimurti consisted of Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu, the Preserver; and Siva, the Destroyer. It will be seen, however, that this trinity is not necessarily one of persons, or individuals, but may be one of attributes, qualities, or even a trinity of functions in one being; and in this way it is usually understood.⁷

Doctrine of trinities. Plato’s trinity is sometimes stated in the terms, “First Cause; Reason, or Logos; and Soul of the Universe”; but more commonly in these: “Goodness, Intellect, and Will.”^d The nature of the Greek trinity has long been a matter of contention among the learned,

⁶Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine* 1:267. [In the Roberts typescript, this text was not quoted precisely; the discrepancies were insignificant and have been corrected.]

⁷See Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine* 1:342–43 and note.

^dThe basic discussion of Plato’s “Trinity” is in *Timaeus* 27c–69a.

and one indeed that is not settled to this day. Is there indicated in his system “a true and proper tri-personality, or merely a personification of three impersonalities,” a trinity of attributes or functions? The answers to these questions are varied, and would require too much space for consideration here. Christians having been taught to accept the New Testament doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as constituting one Godhead, no sooner came in contact with the philosophies of the Greeks and Egyptians than there was an effort made to identify the Christian trinity with that of the Greek and other philosophies.

The temptation to do this was very great. Christianity was a proscribed religion and its followers detested. Whenever it could be shown, therefore, that under new symbols the church was really teaching the same doctrines that the old philosophers did, it was regarded as a distinct gain to Christianity. The mere fact of Christianity teaching a trinity of any kind was a sufficient basis of comparison, under the temptation offered, and hence in a short time we have the alleged followers of Christ involved in all the metaphysical disputations of the age. The chief difficulty in those speculations was to define the nature of the “Logos,” or “Word” of God—a title that is given to our Savior by the Apostle St. John, be it remembered (John 1:1-5, 14).

The nature and relations of the Christ. Adopting absolute “being” as the postulate of their conception of God, absolute oneness, and therefore absolute singleness, their difficulties arose in trying to reconcile the existence of three persons in the Godhead to the postulate of unity. The disputations were carried on chiefly concerning the Christ, the “Word,” in his relationship to the Godhead; and the disputants concerned themselves with such questions as these: “Is Jesus the Word?” “If he be the Word, did he emanate from God in time, or before time?” “If he emanated from God, is he coeternal and of the same, that is, identical substance with him, or merely of a similar substance?” “Is he distinct from the Father, that is, separate from him, or is he not?” “Is he made or begotten?” “Can he beget in his turn?” “Has he paternity, or productive virtue without paternity?”

Similar questions were asked as to the other person of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost. These questions were violently agitated at Alexandria by the bishop of that city, Alexander, and one of the presbyters, Arius, 318-321 A.D.;^c thence the contention spread throughout

^cArius lived from A.D. 260-336; see *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 92-94; for Arianism, *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 84-90; and *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* 1:76-78.

Christendom, and culminated finally in the Council of Nicea, 325 A.D. Arius held the doctrine that the Logos or “Word” was a dependent or spontaneous production created out of nothing by the will of the Father; hence the Son of God, by whom all things were made, begotten before all worlds; but there had been a time when the Logos was not; and also he was of a substance, however similar it might be, different from the Father. This doctrine, in the minds of the opponents of Arius, detracted from the divine nature of Christ; in fact, denied him true deity, and relegated him to the position of a creature (i.e., a created being) against which the piety of a large number of Christians rebelled. After six years of hot disputation and frequent appeals by the contestants to the emperor Constantine, the Council of Nicea was assembled and the mysteries of the Christian faith submitted to public debate, a portion of the time, at least, in the presence of the emperor, who, to some extent, seemed to exercise the functions of president over the assembly.^f The doctrine of Arius was condemned, and after “long deliberations, among struggles, and scrupulous examinations,” the following “creed” was adopted:

The Nicene Creed.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of the same substance with the Father, by whom all things were made in heaven and in earth, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, was incarnate, was made man, suffered, rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens and he will come to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost. Those who say there was a time when He was not, and he was not before he was begotten, and he was made of nothing (he was created), or who say that he is of another hypostatis, or of another substance (than the Father), or that the Son of God is created, that he is mutable, or subject to change, the Catholic church anathematizes.⁸

^fOn Constantine, see *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* 1:193; *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 225–27. On the Council of Nicaea, see *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 648–51; *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* 2:594–95. For a collection of representative primary sources on Arius and the Council of Nicaea, see James Stevenson, *A New Eusebius: Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church to A.D. 337*, revised by W. H. C. Frend (Cambridge: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1987), 317–65. The most complete study is R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy, 318–381* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1988).

⁸Modified version cited in Roberts, *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, 171–72.

Arius himself was condemned as a heretic and banished into one of the remote provinces, Ilyricum, his friends and disciples branded by law, with the odious name of “*Porphyrians*” ***because it is supposed that Arius like Porphyry*** had sought to injure Christianity. His writings (i.e. of Arius) were condemned to the flames and a capital punishment was pronounced against those in whose possession they should be found. Three years later, however, through the influence of the women at the imperial court, Constantine softened in his demeanor towards Arius and his followers. The exiles were recalled and Arius himself was received at court and his faith approved by a synod of prelates and presbyters at Jerusalem; but on the day that he was to be publicly received in the cathedral church at Constantinople, by the order of the emperor, who by the way, received the sacrament at the hands of Arians, he expired under circumstances which have led many to believe that other means than the prayers of the orthodox against him were the cause of his death. The leaders of the orthodox party—Athanasius, of Alexandria; Eustathius, of Antioch; and Paul, of Constantinople—were now to feel the wrath of the first Christian emperor. They were deposed on various occasions and by the sentence of numerous councils, and banished into distant provinces. In fact, so far from the adoption of the Nicene Creed ending the conflict which had arisen, it was more like the opening of that controversy which agitated Christendom for so long, and resulted in so many shameful conflicts. Councils were arrayed against councils, and though they never could convince one another of error, they never failed, in the spirit of such Christian charity as was then extant, to close their decrees with anathemas. Votes were bartered for and purchased in those councils, and the facts justify the latent sarcasm in Gibbon’s remark that “the cause of truth and justice was promoted by the influence of gold.”⁹ There were persecutions and counter-persecutions, as now one party and then the other prevailed; there were assassinations and bloody battles over this doctrine of Deity, the accounts of which fill, as they also disgrace, our Christian annals. The creed which was adopted at Nicea, however, became the settled doctrine of orthodox Christendom, and remains so to this day.

It may be thought that this historical setting has no place in this writing, but how else than by the setting down of these historical facts—well attested by the highest authority—shall the spirit of this controversy be known?

⁹See generally, Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 21.

The Athanasian Creed. It is doubtful if the creed called Athanasian was really formed by Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, and in the fourth century. The more authoritative opinion seems to be that ~~it was composed by~~ **“the creed used in the Catholic, Lutheran, and English churches, and called the Nicene creed, is in reality the creed set forth by the council of Constantinople”**¹⁰ in the fifth century, but however much doubt may be thrown upon its authorship, no one hesitates to accept it as the explanation of the orthodox Christian doctrine of Deity; and, in fact, it is accepted as one of the important symbols of the Christian faith, and is as follows:

We worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet there are not three eternal, but one eternal. As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated; but one uncreated and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty, and yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God.¹¹

As already stated, this creed of St. Athanasius is quite generally accepted as one of the symbols of the orthodox Christian faith. It is understood that these creeds—the Apostles’, the Nicene, and Athanasian—teach that God is incorporeal, that is to say, an immaterial being. The Catholic church says: “There is but one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Supreme, incorporeal, uncreated Being, who exists of Himself, and is infinite in all His attributes.”¹² While the Church of England teaches in her articles of faith that “there is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body,¹³ parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.”¹⁴ This view of God as an incorporeal,

¹⁰Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History* 1:291.

¹¹Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 47-48. [On Athanasius and the Athanasian Creed, see *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 110-12; *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* 1:93-95; see also Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine of God.*]

¹²Faa di Bruno, *Catholic Belief*, 1.

¹³I.e., without materiality—non-material.

¹⁴*Book of Common Prayer*, Articles of Religion, Article 1.

immaterial, bodiless, partless, passionless being is now, and has been, from the days of the great apostasy from God and Christ in the second and third centuries, the doctrine of Deity generally accepted by Christendom. The simple doctrine of the Christian Godhead, set forth in the New Testament is corrupted by the jargon of these creeds and their explanations. The learned who profess a belief of them are wandering in the darkness of the mysticisms of the old pagan philosophies. No wonder that Athanasius himself, whom Gibbon with a quiet sarcasm calls the most sagacious of the Christian theologians, candidly confessed that whenever he forced his understanding to meditate on the divinity of the Logos (and which, of course, involved the whole doctrine of the Godhead), his “toilsome and unavailing efforts recoiled on themselves; that the more he thought, the less he comprehended; and the more he wrote, the less capable was he of expressing his thoughts!” It is a fine passage with which Gibbon closes his reflections upon this subject, and hence I shall give it place here:

In every step of the inquiry, we are compelled to feel and acknowledge the immeasurable disproportion between the size of the object and the capacity of the human mind. We may strive to abstract the notions of time, of space, and of matter, which so closely adhere to all the perceptions of our experimental knowledge. But, as soon as we presume to reason of infinite substance, of spiritual generation; as often as we deduce any positive conclusions from a negative idea, we are involved in darkness, perplexity, and inevitable contradiction.¹⁵

Recurrence to the New Testament doctrine of God, and a comparison of it with the doctrine of Deity set forth in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, will exhibit the wide departure—the absolute apostasy—that has taken place in respect of this most fundamental of all doctrines of religion—the doctrine of God. Truly “Christians” have denied “the Lord that bought them” (2 Pet. 2:1), and turned literally to fables. They have enthroned a conception of a negative idea of “being,” which can stand in no possible relationship to man, nor man to it; and to this they ascribe divine attributes and give it title, knee and adoration and worship which belong to God alone.

One does not have far to seek to find the origin of those ideas which led the early Christians away from the plain anthropomorphism of the New Testament revelation of God through Jesus Christ. It has already been referred to in this chapter, but further consideration of it is deemed necessary to a full presentation of the case.

¹⁵Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chapter 21, before I.

Pagan origin of the creedal doctrine of God conceded. In his great work on the *History of Christian Doctrine*, Mr. William G. T. Shedd says:

The early Fathers, in their defences of Christianity against the pagan opponent, contend that the better pagan writers themselves agree with the new religion in teaching that there is one Supreme Being. Lactantius (*Institutiones* 1, 5), after quoting the Orphic Poets, Hesiod, Virgil, and Ovid, in proof that the heathen poets taught the unity of the supreme deity, affirms that the better pagan philosophers agree with them in this. "Aristotle," he says, "although he disagrees with himself, and says many things that are self-contradictory, yet testifies that one supreme mind rules over the world. Plato, who is regarded as the wisest philosopher of them all, plainly and openly defends the doctrine of a divine monarchy, and denominates the supreme being, not ether, nor reason, nor nature, but as he is, *god*; and asserts that by him this perfect and admirable world was made. And Cicero follows Plato, frequently confessing the deity, and calls him the supreme being, in his treatise on the Laws."¹⁶

It is conceded by Christian writers that the Christian doctrine of God is not expressed in New Testament terms, but in the terms of Greek and Roman metaphysics, as witness of following from the very able article in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* on "Theism" by the Reverend Dr. Flint, Professor of Divinity, University of Edinburgh:

The proposition constitutive of the dogma of the Trinity—the propositions in the symbols of Nice, Constantinople and Toledo, relative to the immanent distinctions and relations in the Godhead—were not drawn directly from the New Testament, and could not be expressed in New Testament terms. They were the product of reason speculating on a revelation to faith—the New Testament representation of God as a Father, a Redeemer and a Sanctifier—were only formed through centuries of effort, only elaborated by the aid of the conceptions, and formulated in the terms of Greek and Roman metaphysics.

The same authority says: "The massive defense of theism, erected by the Cambridge school of philosophy, against atheism, fatalism, and the denial of moral distinctions, was avowedly built on a Platonic foundation."

¹⁶Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine* 1:55. [For notes on Lactantius' (c. 250–325) pagan, poetic, and philosophical sources, see *Divinarum Institutionum*, ed. Pierre Monat (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1986), 1, 5. For an English translation, see M. F. McDonald, trans., *Lactantius: The Divine Institutes, Books 1–7* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1964), vol. 49 in *Fathers of the Church*. See also *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 524–25; and *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* 1:469–70.]

Guizot, the eminent statesman and historian of France, in one of his lectures of which this is a subdivision of the title, “Of the Transition from Pagan Philosophy to Christian Theology,” says, in concluding his treatment of this theme:

I have thus exhibited the fact which I indicated in the outset, the fusion of Pagan philosophy *with* Christian theology, the metamorphosis of the one into the other. And it is remarkable, that the reasoning applied to the establishment of the spirituality of the soul is evidently derived from the ancient philosophy rather than from Christianity, and that the author seems more especially to aim at convincing the theologians, by proving to them that the Christian faith has nothing in all this which is not perfectly reconcilable with the results derived from pure reason.¹⁷

In method of thought also, no less than in conclusions, the most influential of the Christian fathers on these subjects followed the Greek philosophers rather than the writers of the New Testament. Platonism, and Aristotelianism, says the author of the *History of Christian Doctrine*:

exerted more influence upon the intellectual methods of men, taking in the whole time since their appearance, than all other systems combined. They certainly influenced the Greek mind, and Grecian culture, more than all the other philosophical systems. They reappear in Roman philosophy,—so far as Rome had any philosophy. We shall see that Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero exerted more influence than all other philosophical minds united, upon the greatest of the Christian Fathers; upon the greatest of the Schoolmen; and upon the theologians of the Reformation, Calvin and Melancthon. And if we look at European philosophy, as it has been unfolded in England, Germany and France, we shall perceive that all the modern theistic schools have discussed the standing problems of human reason, in very much the same manner in which the reason of Plato and Aristotle discussed them twenty-two centuries ago. Bacon, Des Cartes, Leibnitz, and Kant, so far as the first principles of intellectual and moral philosophy are concerned, agree with their Grecian predecessors. A student who has mastered the two systems of the Academy and the Lycaenum, will find in Modern philosophy (with the exception of the department of Natural Science) very little that is true, that may not be found for substance, and germinally, in the Greek theism.¹⁸

It is hoped that enough is said here to establish the fact that the conception of God as “pure being,” “immaterial,” “without form,” “or parts or passions,” as held by orthodox Christianity, has its origin in pagan philosophy, not in Jewish nor Christian revelation.

¹⁷Guizot, *History of Civilization* 2:140.

¹⁸Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine* 1:52.

The call—“Back to God.” In view of all this that is here set forth, we can understand how it is that to St. John, when given the vision of an angel in the hour of God’s judgment, in the last days, coming with the “everlasting gospel” to be preached to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, would make as part of that message this ringing call of back to God: “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Rev. 14:7).

Evidently in the hour or time of God’s judgment men would not be worshipping God “that made heaven and earth and the sea”—hence an angel warning them and calling upon them to the worship of the true, and living, and personal God; the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; three personal beings united in one Godhead, or Divine Council, in which all fullness and perfection dwells.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: “All the standard church and ecclesiastical histories”; Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*; Milman, *History of Christianity*; Milner, *History of the Church of Christ*; Brueck, *History of the Catholic Church*; Roberts, *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*. For a discussion about Roberts’s conception of the Godhead, see pages 624–26 below.

Of Kindred Subjects to the Knowledge of God Which Men Have Misapprehended

Creation. It was not alone in the matter of departing from the revealed God of the Old and the New Testament that the Jewish and the Christian world turned from the path direct respecting the knowledge of God. Kindred things—the creation of the world, and the origin and nature of man are among the things of revealed knowledge that have been lost. The Christians converted into dogma the false notion of the creation of the universe out of “nothing.” Assuming God’s transcendence of the universe, they accepted the idea that “creation” meant absolutely bringing from nonexistence into existence, and ultimately pronounced anathema upon those who might attempt to teach otherwise. While it is true that the use of the word “create” is applied to the idea of bringing forth something from nothing, from nonexistence into existence, yet there is nothing in the word itself, we are assured on good authority, that demands any such interpretation of its use in Holy Scripture.³ On the contrary, “fashioned” or “formed” from preexistent materials is just as consistent an interpretation of “create” and “creation” as the idea of creation from nothing. After conceding that most of the Jewish philosophers find in Gen. 1:1 that “creation” meant “creation out of nothing,” the *Jewish Encyclopedia* says that the etymological meaning of the verb (“create”), is to “cut out,” and “to put into

³For modern studies of the issue of creation *ex nihilo*, see Johnathan A. Goldstein, “The Origins of the Doctrine of Creation Ex Nihilo,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 35 (Autumn 1984): 127–35; David Winston, “Creation Ex Nihilo Revisited: A Reply to Jonathan Goldstein,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 37 (Spring 1986): 88–91; Keith Norman, “Ex Nihilo: The Development of the Doctrines of God and Creation in Early Christianity,” *BYU Studies* 17 (Spring 1977): 291–318; and Gerhard May, *Schöpfung aus dem Nichts: Die Entstehung der Lehre von der Creatio Ex Nihilo*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte, 48 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1978).

shape” (fashion); and thus “presupposes the use of material.”¹ It is significant that in Gen. 1:1 it is the verb that is used—“in the beginning God created” etc.; that is, “cut out,” “put into shape,”—or fashioned out of preexistent material, the heaven and the earth.

Even Roman Catholic authorities—and the Roman Catholic Church may be regarded as the staunchest proponent of the doctrine of “creation from nothing”—concedes that the idea of “creation from nothing” is “the implicit, rather than specifically explicit statement of the Bible.”² It is only fair to say, however, that this authority holds that her deductions from the implication of scripture on the creation of the universe from nothing is warranted. It is important, however, that this authority should admit that the “creation from nothing” idea is implicitly rather than explicitly found in the Bible. The Protestant division of Christendom have generally been in substantial agreement with both Jews and Catholics on this subject.

A word of evidence [is in order] of what was said a moment since as to good authority sustaining the view that there is nothing in the word “create” itself that requires its interpretation to mean “create out of nothing.” This in addition to what is quoted above from the Jewish and Roman Catholic Encyclopedias.

The Reverend Baden Powell of Oxford University, writing for Kitto’s *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, says:

The meaning of this word <create> has been commonly associated with the idea of ‘making out of nothing.’ But when we come to inquire more precisely into the subject, we can of course satisfy ourselves as to the meaning only from an examination of the original phrase.³

The professor then proceeds to say that three distinct Hebrew verbs are in different places employed with reference to the same divine act, and may be translated, respectively, “create,” “make,” “form or fashion.” “Now,” continues the professor,

though each of these has its shade of distinction, yet the best critics understand them as so nearly synonymous that, at least in regard to the idea of making out of nothing, little or no foundation for that doctrine can be obtained from the use of the first of these words.⁴

And, of course, if no foundation for the doctrine can be obtained from the first of these words—viz., the verb translated “create,” then chances are still less for there being any foundation for the doctrine of creation from nothing in the verb translated, “made,” “formed,” or “fashioned.”

¹*Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Creation.”

²*Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Creation, Part III.”

³Kitto, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, s.v. “Creation.”

⁴Kitto, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, s.v. “Creation.”

Professor Powell further says:

The idea of creation, as meaning absolutely making out of nothing, or calling into existence that which did not exist before, in the strictest sense of the terms . . . is *not* a doctrine of *Scripture*; but it has been held by many on the grounds of *natural theology*, as enhancing the ideas we form of the divine power, and more especially since the contrary must imply the belief in the *eternity* and *self-existence* of matter.⁵

Dr. William Smith's great *Dictionary of the Bible* has no article on the term "create" or "creation," but in the article "earth" we have reference to the subject, and really an implied explanation as to why his work contains no treatise on "create" or "creation."

The act of creation itself, as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, is a subject beyond and above the experience of man; human language, derived, as it originally was, from the sensible and material world, fails to find an adequate term to describe the act; for our word "create" and the Hebrew *bara*, though most appropriate to express the idea of an original creation, are yet applicable and must necessarily be applicable to other modes of creation; nor does the addition of such expressions as "out of things that were not," . . . or "not from things which appear," . . . contribute much to the force of the declaration.⁶

Philosophers on creation. The philosophers with equal emphasis sustain the contention as to the facts of science being against the idea of "creation from nothing." Herbert Spencer, in his *First Principles*, says:

There was once universally current, a notion that things could vanish into absolute nothing, or arise out of absolute nothing. . . . The current theology, in its teachings respecting the beginning and the end of the world, is clearly pervaded by it. . . . The gradual accumulation of experiences . . . has tended slowly to reverse this conviction; until now, the doctrine that Matter is indestructible has become a commonplace. All the apparent proofs that something can come out of nothing, a wider knowledge has one by one cancelled.⁷

John Fiske follows Spencer, and in his *Cosmic Philosophy* sums up the matter in these words: "It is now inconceivable that a particle of matter should either come into existence or lapse into non-existence."⁸

⁵Kitto, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, s.v. "Creation."

⁶Smith, *Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "earth."

⁷Spencer, *First Principles*, 176-77.

⁸Fiske, *Outline of Cosmic Philosophy* 1:94.

Bible meaning of “create.” Turning to the Bible, we have in the chapter which is supposed to dispose of the matter of creation (Gen. 1:1-2) three things given as existing when the work of the creation began:

- (1) “In the beginning God . . . ;”
- (2) “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep” (chaos or earth-material in chaotic existence);
- (3) The Spirit of God; “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

These three things we have and then the work of “creation” of “fashioning” began.

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” This the first creative act; and it occurred on the first of the six creative days. “And God saw the light, that it was good: and divided the light from the darkness. . . . And the evening and the morning were the first day” (Gen. 1:3-5). Thence followed the other creative acts, climaxed by the creation of man in God’s own likeness and in God’s own image; and in giving man dominion over the earth.

Two things should here be observed with reference to this sublime account of creation: first, that the whole introduction to the drama of creation (Gen. 1:1) should be rendered in the light thrown upon the whole subject of creation by Genesis 2:4, viz., “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth *when* they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.” This rendering of Genesis 1:1-2 will then be, “In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” On this rendering creation is not out of nothing, but out of preexisting material in a state of chaos.

The second thing referred to as necessary to remember in the exposition of the creation story is to note the fact that the creation of the heaven and the earth mentioned in Genesis 1:1—“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” etc.—“creation” mentioned there did not precede the work of the six days, but comprised it. The creation did not begin until the first of the six days, when God said on that first day or period, “Let there be light, and there was light.”

In addition to the fact that there is no explicit, direct authority from the Bible itself that “creation” is “creation from nothing to something,” but on the contrary the etymology of the verb “create” implies creation from preexisting materials, the theologians of the “creation from nothing” school have to meet the stern facts presented by

science on the eternal existence of the universe, manifested both by the uncreatability and the indestructibility of matter and force—and hence the necessary eternity of the universe. There is a possibility of ceaseless and infinite changes within the universe, and this under the direction of eternal Intelligences operating within the universe—but no possibility of absolute beginning or absolute end. These subjects have been dealt with in previous pages, to which the attention of the reader is again invited (see chapters 7 and 8 above).

We next turn to the second subject mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, viz., the origin and nature of man. These remarks will be addressed only to those people who have supposedly built their faiths upon the revelations of God found in the Old and in the New Testament; and it should be observed that the people having access to the revelations of God and professing belief in them, could more reasonably be expected to have the clearest and most accurate ideas on this subject; but I shall make bold to say that they are without clear-cut, definite ideas upon this important subject; and nowhere is there an authoritative statement pointed to by them in the scriptures, or to be found in their creeds in the interpretation of the scriptures, anything that is satisfactory upon this subject.

The origin of man. “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,” exclaimed David, addressing himself unto God,

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet . . . O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! (Ps. 8:3-6, 9)

Paul in substance quotes these words of David (Heb. 2:6-8), but neither David nor Paul answer the questions propounded, nor have others in the Jewish or Christian world given definite, authoritative answer to them. While both Jewish and Christians may refer man’s origin to God, as their “Creator,” yet a divided conception is held with reference to the manner of his creation. These views are expressed usually under what is known as “creationism” or “truduscianism.”

Creationism is generally defined as the doctrine that the universe was originally brought into existence without preexistent material, by the word of God, and also that new species or forms of being have been successively produced by the direct formative exercise of the divine wisdom and power; and as applied to the creation of man’s soul, or

spirit, that God creates a new soul whenever a human being begins to live. This is the Roman Catholic view, and so far as Protestant divisions commit themselves on the subject, the general Protestant Christian view also. That this is the Catholic view is sustained by their *footnote* comment on Gen. 2:2 which is as follows: “*He still worketh . . . by conserving and governing all things, and creating souls;*”⁹ and of course, from the Catholic viewpoint of creating, creates out of nothing new souls, each time that a human being is begotten by act of generation. Professor Draper in his *Conflict Between Religion and Science* suggests that “to many devout persons there is something very revolting in the suggestion that the Almighty is a servitor to the caprices and lusts of man, and that, at a certain term after its origin, it is necessary for him to create for the embryo a soul.”¹⁰

The other theory of the origin of man already mentioned, “Traducianism,” the doctrine that human souls (spirits) are propagated by generation along with human bodies, is opposed, as will be seen, to “Creationism.” This theory consigns to man, except as to the first, a purely human origin.

There remains one other theory as to man’s origin, but it has no general standing among Jews, Roman Catholics or Protestants, namely “Infuscianism”: the doctrine that the soul is preexistent to the body, and infused into it at conception or birth. This is sometimes called “Pre-existentism,” meaning that every soul has been in existence either from all eternity or from the creation of the world, the birth of the individual being viewed as the conjoining of the soul and the body in one person. The theory was held by Origen, a Greek Christian Father of the third century. It seems to have been adopted by him from the speculations of Plato and of the Pythagoreans. It has emerged occasionally in modern theology but as before stated it has had no wide acceptance.

Purpose of God in the earth life of man—not known. With reference to the purpose of God in the earth life of man there appears no clear-cut ringing statement to be found in either the Old or the New Testament. As far as that revelation is contained in these books, the best statement on the subject is to be found in St. John’s Revelation: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11). And let this be considered, for the purpose of emphasis, in connection with Proverbs 16:4, “The Lord hath made all things for

⁹Douay Bible, 6, note on Genesis 2:2; italics in original.

¹⁰Draper, *Conflict between Religion and Science*, 127.

himself”; and again, for enlargement of the view, “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible ⟨or⟩ [and] invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” (Col. 1:16). And, of course, including man. And this also is quoted by those who seek to know the purpose of God in the creation from the Bible: “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever” (Rom. 11:36). This is as far as the revelation contained in either the Old or New Testament gives light upon the subject. And it must be confessed that this light is not very clear; these statements are not very definite. They amount simply to this, that God has created all things for his pleasure; for himself; for his glory; but as to how this creation is to contribute pleasure to him, or glory, nothing definite is stated; and as to man’s part in it—what knowledge may he gather as to God’s purpose with reference to him—there is only—silence; and that, it must be confessed, in this case, is not “golden”—not of value!

The creeds of Jews and Christians so far as they have expressed themselves on this subject have been under the necessity of doing so by such deductions as may be made from these unsatisfactory passages of scripture; or else by their conjectures merely.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* which stands for the Presbyterian subdivisions of Christendom generally, ascribes the purpose of all the creative acts of God to be the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness.¹¹ In an authoritative explanation of this part of the creed it is said: “The design of God in creation was the manifestation of his own glory.” And again:

Our Confession very explicitly takes the position that the chief end of God in his eternal purposes, and in their temporal execution in creation and providence is the manifestation of his own glory. . . . The Scriptures explicitly assert that this is the chief end of God in creation. . . . The manifestation of his own glory *is* intrinsically the highest and worthiest end that God could propose to himself.¹²

The Commentator refers for proof of his assertions both for his comment and for the substance of his creed, to the Scripture passages quoted above, and those passages are the only warrant for the statement in the Westminster Confession.

The great Protestant body of Christians, known as the Episcopal Church, English and American, whose doctrines are set forth in the

¹¹*Westminster Confession of Faith*, “Of Creation,” section 1.

¹²Hodge, *Commentary on the Confession*, 84.

Book of Common Prayer; are silent on the purpose of God for man's existence, except that their creed proclaims faith in God "the Maker and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible";¹³ but nowhere does it declare the purpose of that creation and consequently they have no word as to the object of man's existence.

The Roman Catholic view is perhaps best explained in their catechism, the *Douay Catechism*, as follows:

Q: What signify the words, "Creator of heaven and earth"?

A: They signify that God made heaven and earth, and all creatures in them, of nothing, by His word only (Gen. 1).

Q: What moved God to make them?

A: His own goodness—so that He might communicate Himself to angels, and to man, for whom He made all other creatures.

Referring again to man's creation the following occurs:

Q: Do we owe much to God for creation?

A: Very much, because He made us in such a perfect state, creating us for Himself and all things else for us.¹⁴

From all this it may be summarized that the purpose of God in the creation of man, according to the Catholic view is: (1) that God might communicate himself to them; (2) that they might be partakers of his glory; (3) that he created them for himself and all things else for them.

While this may be in part the truth, and so far excellent, it has no higher warrant of authority than human deduction based upon rather indefinite scripture; and it certainly falls short of giving to man that "pride of place" in existence to which his higher nature and his dignity as an intelligence entitles him.

Several "origins of man" have no warrant of scripture. It is not my purpose in this chapter to undertake an extended discussion of man's origin, nor the purpose of God in his earth life, but the development of our theme to this point, and the intended conclusion of this Part I—which approaches—seemed to require that something be said as to the doctrine taught in the revelation of the Old Testament and of the New Testament in regard to man's origin. Moreover that it should be considered from the scriptural view point rather than from any

¹³*Book of Common Prayer*, 557.

¹⁴*Douay Catechism*, 11, 13.

discoveries that may obtain in the world of Science. There is nothing in the scripture, let me be bold enough to say, that warrants the idea of “Creationism” namely that God with every new human physical life begotten, creates at conception or at birth a soul for each such person; nor is there scripture warrant for “Traduscianism,” the doctrine that man, spirit, and body, is the product of his parents by act of propagation, giving to man no higher origin than a merely human, physical origin—mental, and spiritual, except as to the first man.

It will be seen from the above that the revelation-believing world are far removed from a strong scriptural doctrine of man’s origin. The fuller treatment of this theme, however, belongs to a subsequent chapter. It is merely to note the world’s limited and unsatisfactory knowledge on the subject that it is mentioned here.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Roberts, “Man’s Relationship to Deity,” in *Gospel*, 3d ed.; Smith, “King Follett Discourse;” the standard Bible dictionaries and commentators under “subjects here treated.”

Revelation: Our Revelation Local, Pertaining to Our Earth and Its Heavens

As to revelation in modern times. It is quite generally the understanding that while God “at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past [un]to the fathers by the prophets” (Heb. 1:1), and by the ministering of angels and by his own voice from heaven, and some two thousand years ago gave a supreme revelation through his son, Jesus Christ—it is the general understanding now that revelation in modern times has not only ceased, but is no more to be expected. The volume of revelation is alleged to have been completely closed and the awful voice of God in revelation has been heard for the last time. Since what we have to say in the remaining chapters of this work will rest largely upon revelation in recent times, it is quite necessary that we should call attention to this prevailing belief about the cessation of revelation.

Let the reader be reminded in the first place that there is nothing in the nature of revelation itself that would lead us to think that revelation from God in modern times is impossible, or improbable. If it be conceded that God in past ages spoke to chosen men whom he made his prophets, seers, and apostles, and sent them with a message to mankind, it would be vain to argue that it would be impossible for him to do the same now. To think of revelation as now impossible, would be to deny God’s power to do what he afore time did. Belief in God at all will certainly include belief in his power to reveal himself when and how [it] will please him.

Moreover, there is nothing in the revelations that have been given, and that are contained in the Old and New Testament, that gives any warrant for saying that revelation would ever cease. True, God has cautioned men at various places in his revelation that they must not “add to” or “take from” the particular revelation given of God. One such caution was given to ancient Israel, wherein God said:

“Ye shall not add unto the ⟨words⟩ [word] which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you” (Deut. 4:2). But this was no general proclamation that revelation would cease. Indeed we know that the great volume of Israel’s revelation was given after those days.

Written in the last book of the New Testament as at present compiled, in the last chapter and in the closing verses, is St. John’s solemn warning: “I testify [un]to every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.” Per contra: “And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:18-19). This being within one of the last verses of the Bible, has been held by expositors to represent the formal closing up of the whole volume of revelation! The inhibitions, however, are limited to the book of St. John’s revelation—the few leaves that make up the book of that prophecy—and have no reference to the whole Bible or the whole volume of revelation. St. John’s book of Revelation is well known to have been written before his gospel, and if John’s gospel is to be held as an inspired book containing a revelation, then the apostle himself would be guilty of violating his own prohibition of further revelation from God if the inhibition of adding to the word of God contained in the last chapter of the revelation is held to mean a prohibition of all further revelation from God.

There is the further consideration also, namely, the language of St. John’s book is if any *man* shall add to the words of the prophecies of this book, then calamity shall follow. This merely forbids man to add to God’s word, it makes no attempts to forbid God to add to his own revelations for the enlightenment of the children of men.

The reader may fix it in his mind as a settled conviction founded upon reason that (1) there is nothing in the nature of revelation itself to prevent God from giving revelation in modern times as well as in times past; and (2) there is no inhibition pronounced in what has been revealed in past ages that would estop God from giving revelation in modern times, or in any times, however far in the future. The power and the right to give revelation is within the sovereign power and will of God. God will speak when he will and how he will; and it is vain in man to undertake to set limitations for God in the matter of his giving revelations.

All the implications of the scriptures are to the effect that we may look for revelations in dispensations later than those whose history is given in the Bible, later than the dispensation of two thousand years ago, namely the Christian *or Meridian* dispensation. St. Peter, for instance, addressing himself to the Jews on a somewhat momentous occasion in which he witnessed that Christ had fulfilled the things predicted by the previous prophets, gives then this admonition to the listening multitude of the Jews:

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of ~~the~~ restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21)

Mark the words of this chief of the apostles “whom the heaven must receive,” this referring to Jesus Christ, “until the times of restitution of all things.” This is clearly a promise of some future unfolding and enlargement of God’s work of revelation in the earth. The “time of restitution of all things” that God had in mind, which he has committed to his servants the prophets and seers, and all these things in the future, God here promises to gather together and unite in one splendid whole, which will disclose his purposes with reference to the whole earth and the inhabitants thereof. A prominent feature of this future dispensation will be that God will again send Jesus Christ, which before had been preached unto the Jews, but whom now the heaven must receive until the time promised: “the time of the restitution of all things.” This unquestionably has reference to some mighty revelation subsequent to the apostolic days of St. Peter.

St. Paul is no less emphatic in prophesying of a similar dispensation to this—the same in fact—in these terms:

⟨God⟩ Having made known unto us the ⟨mystery⟩ [mysteries] of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him. (Eph. 1:9-10)

The “Dispensation of the Fullness of Times” corresponds admirably with St. Peter’s “Times of Restitution of All Things” of which God had spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets.

The Holy Ghost as a source of revelation. It should be noticed also, in passing, that the chief source and means of God's revelation to man is through the Holy Ghost, which is declared in the scriptures to be the "very spirit of prophecy." And the spirit of prophecy can be no other than the spirit of revelation also. St. Peter, officially opening the mission of himself and his fellow apostles upon the day of Pentecost, bore witness to the people that if they would repent of their sins and be baptized for the remission of them they should receive the *gift of the* Holy Ghost; that the promise of receiving this spirit of prophecy, the Holy Ghost, was to all those who heard his word, to their children, to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord should call. Take note that the spirit of inspiration and revelation—the spirit of prophecy—was promised unto all who should receive the gospel. After that pledge of God, to argue for the cessation of inspiration and revelation from God is illogical and leads to the denial of the perpetuation of the powers of the Holy Ghost himself, as well as to a denial of the power of God the Father. Great emphasis was laid upon the powers of the Holy Ghost in this line by the Savior himself. He promised to send to his disciples "another Comforter," that "he may abide with [you] ⟨them⟩ for ever; Even the Spirit of truth," which later he identifies as the Holy Ghost (John 14:16-17). "The Comforter," he continues, "which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). Again, "when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John 15:26). And still again, "when he, the Spirit of truth, is come ⟨identified as the Holy Ghost, be it remembered⟩, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13). [The Holy Ghost is] identified again as the spirit of prophecy, and the chief source of prophecy is necessarily revelation. And hence it must be that revelation and prophecy will be perpetual where the gospel of the Christ and the church of Christ is; and where these spiritual powers cease to be in manifestation, there neither the gospel nor the church of Christ has been perpetuated. So that when so-called Christianity repudiates continuous revelation in the churches, they do but proclaim their own departure from God and the truth of God.

The modern world's need of revelation. Is there anyone who will question the world's need for revelation in these days on the

great fundamental questions concerning God, the Christ, the Christ's nature, and relationship to God, and to man; the origin of man and his relationship to whatever creative power has produced him; the purpose of his earth life; his future, whether there is tangible, personal immortality for him in a wider, deeper and larger existence? Or only an endless sleep in oblivion—extinction? In respect of positive, authoritative enlightenment the world is in doubt and ignorance in relation to all these questions. Christianity set forth in the New Testament, I know, is supposed to have furnished revealed knowledge concerning these things. But does it? Cite chapter and verse. Review the various interpretations given to such revelations as are therein contained by the several divisions of Christendom, and see what you have. Where is there in any of these divisions and sub-divisions of Christendom a clear-cut, outstanding word or interpretation of these subjects that can be accepted as authoritative and final? Why are such divisions in Christendom, if there is clearness in the original revelation in which they are supposed to have their origin and commission? Why this multitude of “lo heres,” and “lo theres” concerning one revelation, the one gospel, and supposedly the one church? Confusion is confounded in this multitude of various voices proclaiming many faiths and shades of faith over this supposed revealed religion and interpreting the Christ and his mission.

The limited victory of Christianity. Then again there is the very limited victory of Christianity, even if we should consent to regard it as essentially one religious movement and one church. After two thousand years of existence Christianity counts in its membership—and that is its nominal membership merely, not active membership—less than one-third of the earth's inhabitants! During that time, two thousand years, though in constant contact with the Jews, Christianity has been unsuccessful in persuading that branch of the house of Israel (Judah) to accept the Christ as their Messiah; and Judah is as much in rebellion against acceptance of Jesus of Nazareth as their manifested Jehovah in the flesh, as they were two thousand years ago. And the great mass of humanity are still strangers to God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

All these considerations loudly plead for some further word of God that shall make clear the revelations that have been given; and for such additions to them as will unfold the fullness of truth that shall make it clear to the understanding of men, the meaning of this world of ours; God's purpose in creating it; man's life upon it, and man's future. The world was never more in need of revelation than now. What an infinite pity if no word of God is spoken to meet the world's need!

Our revelation social local. The first thing to be observed with reference to those things which are to occupy our attention in these closing chapters of part I, is to note the important fact that such revelations as God has given to man on our earth, pertain to our earth alone, and the heavens immediately associated with it. That is to say, the limited family of worlds to which our earth belongs. This important truth is made known in the book of Moses, the fragment of revelation brought to light by Joseph Smith, as already stated, early in his ministry, shortly after the Church was organized in 1830 (Moses 1).

God's revelation to Moses in the Mosaic fragment. God in this fragment is represented as saying to Moses:

Worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son (Jesus Christ) I created them, which is mine Only Begotten. . . . For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And . . . all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them . . . But only an account of this earth (the earth whereon Moses stood), and the inhabitants thereof, give I unto you. (cf. Moses 1:33, 35)

Then Moses: “Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and then thy servant will be content” (Moses 1:36).

And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine. And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words. . . . And now, Moses, my son, I will speak unto thee concerning this earth upon which thou standest; and thou shalt write the things which I shall speak. (Moses 1:37-40)

And again:

It came to pass that the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I reveal unto you concerning this heaven, and this earth; write the words which I speak. I am the Beginning and the End, the Almighty God; by mine Only Begotten I created these things; yea, in the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest. And the earth was without form, and void; and I caused darkness to come up upon the face of the deep; and my Spirit moved upon the face of the water; for I am God. And I, God, said: Let there be light; and there was light. (Moses 2:1-3)

Then follows the account of the creation, substantially as in the first chapter of Genesis.

This is a wonderful ~~bit~~ *item* of information, this fact that God's revelations which he gave through Moses, and subsequently of course to all the prophets, are limited to the earth and the immediate heavens with which the earth is associated. The revelations pertain to our earth, to the inhabitants thereof, and to the divine Intelligences which constitute its Godhead, its Creator, its Redeemer, its Witness—the Holy Ghost. The revelations which God has given to our earth-prophets undertake no treatment of the entire universe—the hundreds of millions of suns and their attendant planetary systems with the inhabitants thereof, all which make up the tremendous galaxy of our universe—much less a revelation that attempts to account for those other innumerable galaxies out in the space depths. ~~which through the discovery of science we are just now beginning to find out~~

What science discovers helps us to realize the greatness and wonderfulness of this revelation in the new fragment of the revelation of God to Moses, wherein we are told that “there are many worlds,” so many, that they are innumerable to man; “the heavens they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man. . . . Many worlds have passed away, by the word of God's power; and as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come” (cf. Moses 1:35, 37-38);^a and there is no end to God's works!

Let it be remembered that these wonderful statements were made by a confessedly unlearned youth, unschooled in the sciences, even of his time, unlearned in the lore of astronomy, and the speculations as to origins; and it is not until recent development that modern science and modern instruments of science have brought to light such fullness of knowledge concerning the universe and the extent of it as is here proclaimed by the Prophet of the new age of revelation in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. That is to say, a knowledge of the immensity of the universe, and the notion of worlds passing away and others created to take their place, or the recreation of those which had passed away coupled with the notion, already referred to, that all this obtains under a reign of law in the universe, holding that the destructive forces—so called—as well as the creative forces in the universe are under the dominion of law, which will conserve and perpetuate through eternity the orderly cosmos.

The thing which I wish to emphasize here, however, in referring to the Mosaic fragments, is the limitation of revelation to our earth

^aThe phrases are again used out of order. Roberts inserts a paraphrase of verse 35 between the quotations from verses 37 and 38.

and its heavens and its affairs and relationships; all which will have important influence in understanding the great truths we hope to unfold; the importance of which, however, can only be realized as we proceed with the application of the thought to the facts as they are passed in review.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Pratt, *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, chs. 1-3; Pratt, *Orson Pratt's Works on the Doctrines of the Gospel*; Moses; and Abraham.

Revelation: Abrahamic Fragment^a

The book of Abraham. Here also will be the proper place to take note of those things which God revealed to Abraham, and which are to be found in the fragment of Abraham's writings in the book of Abraham, brought to light by Joseph Smith, and published just previous to his death.

The knowledge on the subject of the heavens and the earth was imparted to Abraham by means of the Urim and Thummim, a divine instrument through which God gave revelations in ancient times to his seers, of which Abraham was one (cf. Abr. 3:1).

It may be admitted that there is some lack of clearness in what is revealed, owing to the fragmentary character of the book of Abraham, and only the partial interpretation that our prophet gives of it; but somewhat of the immensity of the universe is made out: "I saw the stars," reports Abraham,

⟨and⟩ [that] they were very great. . . . ⟨And⟩ I, Abraham, talked with the Lord, face to face, as one man talketh with another; and he told me of the works which his hands had made; And he said unto me: My son, [my son] (and his hand was stretched out), behold I will show you all these. And he put his hand upon my eyes, and I saw those things which his hands had made, which were many; and they multiplied before mine eyes, and I could not see the end thereof. (Abr. 3:2, 11-12)

Then God told the patriarch the names of some of these creations: "He said unto me: [This is] Shinehah, which is the sun. And he said unto me: ⟨Kolob⟩ [Kokob], which is star. . . . And he said unto me:

In recommending his own work on *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity* as background reading for this chapter, Roberts commented on the contents page at the beginning of this chapter: "It is recommended with all the more confidence because the mss. before publication was read to the late Presidents Joseph F. Smith and Anton H. Lund, and approved by them."

^aRoberts wrote "Incomplete" at the top of the cover page at the beginning of this chapter.

Kokaubeam, which signifies stars, or all the great lights which are in the firmament of heaven,” that is, the universe (Abr. 3:13).

It was on this occasion that the Lord said unto Abraham that he would be greatly multiplied, and that his seed after him should be numerous as the stars, or as the sands upon the seashore. And the Lord said unto Abraham: “I show these [things] unto thee before ye go into Egypt, that ye may declare all these words” (Abr. 3:15).

And now to throw what God had revealed unto Abraham into something like systematic form as it may be gathered from this fragment of the Patriarch’s writings:

Abrahamic system of the “heavens” with which our earth and solar system seem to be connected.

The world of God’s residence. A great celestial orb where God resides, where the throne of God is (Abr. 3:2-9). “And there ⟨are⟩ [were] many great ⟨stars⟩ [ones] which ⟨are⟩ [were] near unto it” (Abr. 3:2).

Kolob. A sun nearest to the celestial residence of God, a mighty governing and controlling center; the first creation (i.e., of the group); also first in government in that subdivision of the universe—the “heavens” to which our earth belongs. Kolob is first in government, but last, or slowest in the measurement of time. Kolob’s time is celestial time, after the reckoning of the Lord’s time—one day in the Lord’s resident-world and in Kolob being equal to one thousand years of time upon our earth. Kolob is the controlling center of all those worlds which belong to the same order as our earth (Abr. 3:3-9).

Oliblish.^b A great star, also near to the celestial world—home of God, and second only to Kolob in governing power, holding the key of light and power to other planets. Oliblish is equal to Kolob in the measurement of time—one day being as a thousand years of time upon our earth. The fact that Kolob and Oliblish are both near the celestial world where God resides, that both are said to be governing centers over other suns and their planetary systems, that they both have the same time measurements rather suggests that they may be “twin,” or “binary stars,” of which there are several hundred known to exist in our galaxy.¹ The binary stars are double stars, whose members have a revolution around their common center. In this case of Kolob and Oliblish, the great celestial residence-world of God, binary stars are accounted as among the most interesting and beautiful phenomena of the heavens.

^bThe information concerning Oliblish, Kae-e-vanrash, and Hah-ko-kau-beam is found in the explanation of facsimile #2, book of Abraham.

¹See Phillips and Steavenson, *Splendour of the Heavens*.

Kae-e-vanrash. This is one of the governing stars also and controls fifteen of the so-called fixed stars, or suns, including in the number our own sun and the earth; and, of course, the whole solar system. This noble center of fifteen other stars—suns—with their planetary systems, as in the case of our own sun—receive light and power from and through—

Hah-ko-kau-beam, a group of stars in the Sidereal system of our galaxy, receiving light and power from the controlling force of Kolob which in turn receives conserving power and dynamic force from—

Ko-kau-beam, which signifies stars in general, the whole universe or all the great lights which are in the firmament of heaven (Abr. 3:13).²

Comments on the indicated system. As already stated, it may be that this Abrahamic system is not completely set forth, owing to the fragmentary character of the book of Abraham itself, and also for the reason that some portions of it were not completely translated by the Prophet of the New Dispensation, which appears from the explanation he gives and which will be found opposite the Egyptian Disk No. 2 in the book of Abraham, ~~some~~ ***several items*** of which it was unlawful for him to reveal unto the world, and are to be had only in the temple of God. But even though confessedly fragmentary, one may discern in this grouping of worlds and their relations to each other, a worked out system of a section of the universe with which our earth and our solar system are connected; for the statements of the patriarch include our sun in this grouping, all which is under the controlling force exerted by the master star of these associated worlds, Kolob.

It is only a cursory view, that this book of Abraham gives us of the structure of that section of the universe with which it deals, and our prophet gives but a partial translation of that fragment. ***Nevertheless*** it is important, ~~however,~~ this fragment and its partial translation, in that it discloses the fact that in ancient times some considerable knowledge was had as to the immensity of the universe and the orderly system on which it was constructed: that God was the power within it; creating power; conserving power; and governing power—God in his templed universe! All shall be well with the universe!

Value of the knowledge that revelations to our earth are local. ~~For practical use, this knowledge that comes to us from the Mosaic and Abrahamic fragments of revelation centers in the important~~

²See book of Abraham, plate 2, and its accompanying explanation—Also Abraham 3.

~~fact that~~ ***This important truth has already been referred to as having been imparted to Moses concerning him, and*** the revelations given to ***Moses him***, and, of course, by implication, to other ~~of~~ ***and in fact to all*** our world seers; ~~are local~~; that is, they pertain to our earth and its heavens: and chiefly to our earth and its affairs. So enlightened we shall be able to approach the revealed knowledge of our world scriptures from new viewpoints, and with a better prospect of understanding the things whereof they treat.

Of God in the light of revelations being local. The first, as it is also the most important theme to be considered in the light of our new information—the limitation of revelation to our earth and its heavens—is God. As matters now stand in our consciousness, we are facing a pluralistic universe, a universe made up of many things, of many beings, among them personal Intelligences; kingdoms—meaning worlds and world systems—wherein is present dominant, creating, conserving, perpetuating, and governing Mind; in a sense, universal Mind, made up of harmonized, individual Intelligences, united in perfect knowledge, wisdom, purpose, and will. So perfectly united are these Intelligences, and so all powerful, that the universe under their control and direction, is secure in its power to persist and in its power to hold the good dominant. The welfare of the whole is secured by perfect wisdom, founded upon and rising out of perfect knowledge; with truth as the solvent of all problems; with justice as the end of all relations; with mercy and her handmade [*sic*] patience, rising from love, as the bond of union among all Intelligences; with righteousness as the crowning glory of individual and community life. These qualities, and the attributes from which they spring, make up the “Divine Nature” in which the highly developed Intelligences participate; and by partaking of this “Divine Nature,” they become one with all such similar Intelligences throughout the universe, and throughout eternity. Let us go more into detail through the means of illustration:

The earth as a local God's kingdom. Let us contemplate our earth as a distinct planet, inhabited by our human race, which is, though perhaps slowly, fulfilling the divine injunction to subdue the earth and have dominion over it, accepting the fact of progress made in the past as a prophecy for its continuance for the future. We may think of our earth with its inhabitants as attaining to very great heights of development in all things that make for worth-whileness and glory. And if in some way there could be vouchsafed for the world an immortality—continuance, as a glorified, celestialized world; and likewise vouchsafed

immortality for its inhabitants, or for such portion of them as would qualify for habitancy on such a world—we would then have a world with something like real meaning to it, and it doubtless would develop a governing council of Intelligences which would put the world into a class of redeemed and sanctified and in a way, self-governing, celestial kingdoms.

Empires of kingdoms. Perhaps also the same thing could happen to the other planets of our solar system, each world having for its presiding council or presidency *a number* of divine, and of course, harmonized Intelligences. Then the solar system itself as an empire of kingdoms redeemed and sanctified and glorified would have its grand presidency constituting a unit in a group of related worlds; being one of a number of solar systems grouped into still greater empires than a solar system would form an empire of empires! And so on, and up, through the heights until we might contemplate the whole galaxy that comprises our universe, consisting as it does of its thousands of millions of suns and their planetary systems; and all the universe of the space, depths as organized worlds and world kingdoms presided over by the organized and harmonized Intelligences of eternity—each group or council of Intelligences acting in its place and station and appointed office, and organizing what would doubtless be patriarchal, and theo-democratic order of government, constituting, as a whole, the priesthood of the cosmos.

We used above the term “theo-democratic order of government.” We do so for the reason that it will appear in subsequent discussions of these matters that things in the orderly government of the universe will be done on the principle of common consent, expressed in the form of the consent of those who must submit to the authority which obtains; for we shall find this government obtaining in the universe largely, if not entirely, moral government; government based upon love and persuasion, truth and wisdom, mercy and justice, rather than upon force; for after all, these are the stronger elements in government, even as we know it among the higher forms of government, even in the imperfect conditions and the broken harmonies which obtain in this our present world.

The Spirit of God—God immanent. One other great truth should here be noted. The stellar system is made up of self-luminous suns, that shine, we say, by virtue of their own nature. They emit rays of light that extend from their own bodies into the space depths. The sun of our own system, 92,000,000 of miles away, sends forth from its surface

the light and the heat waves, which, striking our atmosphere, burst into sunshine, and the warmth and the light of the sun and his vital force visit our earth, and render it habitable and splendid. In like manner the rays of our sun pass beyond our earth and visit the other planets of our solar system. Before reaching us these rays fell upon Mercury, 36,000,000 miles from the sun; and then upon Venus, 67,000,000 miles from the sun; passing us at 92,000,000 miles, they go on to Mars, 141,000,000 miles distant from the sun; thence to Jupiter, 463,000,000 miles distant; to Saturn, 886,000,000 miles distant; thence to Uranus, 1,781,000,000 miles distant from the sun; and to Neptune—the outermost plant of our system—2,791,000,000 miles distant from the sun. The same is true as to the light of all the suns of our universe, they are self-luminous by nature, they shine of their own power and send out waves of light and warmth and vital force to the respective groups of planets which encircle them, until from all these great stars ~~centers of light and heat and vital force:~~ ***or suns there is radiated forth and blended into the universe the cosmic light and warmth and vital force that come from all these great centers.***

And now as from these self-luminous suns there radiates forth these light waves and heat waves and vital force waves, so there proceeds forth from the divine Intelligences inhabiting the universe, the spirit of these Intelligences, which moves throughout the universe as in the beginning of the creation of our earth, “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:1-2). These radiations are of the same nature and qualities and attributes as are the mind of divine Intelligences from which they proceed, and extend the spirit of these Intelligences who have attained unto the divine nature—hence Gods—into all the space depths, filling the “immensity” of space with the spirit of the Gods, bearing with that spirit knowledge, wisdom, truth, holiness, justice, mercy, judgment, and love,—all these blended into one divine essence, constituting the spirit of the Gods and spoken of in the revelations of God to our Prophet of the New Dispensation, as being for us “the Light of Christ.” ~~The~~ ***This*** Light ~~of our~~ ***he goes on to say, is in the*** sun and his retinue of worlds, and ***is*** the power by which they were created or made; also ~~as~~ the “Light which shineth, which ~~gives to men~~ [giveth you] light, ~~which~~ ***is through him who enlighteneth ~~their~~ [your] eyes, ~~and~~*** is the same light that quickeneth ~~their~~ [your] understanding” (D&C 88:11), therefore the intelligence-inspiring power as well as creative and world-sustaining power, “The [true] Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9; D&C 93:2). Also the power which giveth “life to all things,” hence vital force; also “the law by which all things are

governed, even the power of God,” proceeding from the Gods, one spirit essence in which all are united. This is God immanent in the universe; omnipresent, and present with power; omniscient, all knowing; omnipotent, almighty.³ This united force and power of all the Gods of the universe; from whose all-seeing eye there is not escape; from whom the darkness cannot hide evil thoughts or evil deeds; **from whose judgment there is no escape**; the universal consciousness that holds all things in an eternal present; the power that holds in balance the stars, and judges the thoughts “and **weighs** the deeds of men”; the spirit that moves throughout the space depths—throughout the immensity of space—and executes the decrees of the councils of divine Intelligences, from whom this spirit proceeds! Thus the harmonized Intelligences of the universe—the Gods: thus the one Spirit of the Gods—God immanent.

The Holy Ghost. Let no one here confound this universal everywhere-present spirit of the Gods—proceeding forth from their presence to fill the immensity of space—the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world—and for us of this world called the light of Christ—let no one confound this spirit with the Holy Ghost, which is a spirit personage of the Godhead, and from whose immediate personal presence there goes forth a special, spiritual, witnessing power—pure spirit of intelligence—which brings to those brought into contact with it a witness of the truth, of all truth; for “by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moro. 10:5). This is the very “Spirit of Truth” of the discourse of Jesus—“the Comforter . . . which is the Holy Ghost”; the spirit that will “teach” the disciples “all things,” “bring all things to their remembrance,” and “guide **them** into all truth.”⁴ But “whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye ⟨the disciples⟩ know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17). This is the special gift to those who receive in obedience, the gospel. “Repent, and be baptized . . . for the remission of ⟨your⟩ sins,” said St. Peter on the day of Pentecost, “and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (i.e. the Holy Ghost as a gift); and this “promise” was unto “as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:38–39). “We are his ⟨the Christ’s⟩ witnesses of these things,” said St. Peter, “and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to ⟨all⟩ [them] that obey him” (Acts 5:32), and not otherwise. Thus, then stands the truth as to these two things:

1. There is a universal spirit which proceeds forth from the presence of divine Intelligences to “fill the immensity of space” (D&C

³For all this see D&C 88:1–13, and context.

⁴For all the above expressions of the Christ, *see* St. John’s Gospel chapters 14–15.

88:12), a creative and upholding power and vital force—intelligence-inspiring power—“the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9)—the common heritage of man.

2. There is another spirit, the Holy Ghost, whom the world cannot receive, but is given as a gift to those who obey the gospel—“Whom God giveth to them that obey him”; and the Holy Ghost possesses and imparts to those who by obedience are in fellowship with him the special gifts and spiritual power ascribed to him above.

Of the Godhead. We must turn again to the fact that such revelations as God has given to our earth’s seers and prophets, are local; that is, they pertain to our earth and its heavens and the affairs thereof; and to our Godhead. ~~Of this Godhead we are now to speak:~~

This Godhead consists of three divine personages, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Each separate and distinct as persons in the sense of being separate, individual divine Intelligences. Three deities united in one council, participating in the one divine nature; having the same perfect knowledge, and perfect wisdom, that can only arise from perfect knowledge; ~~and perfect wisdom,~~ being alike in the attributes of holiness, justice, mercy, judgment; one in purpose and united in one will.

Let us consider the scriptures on these matters, first, as to the Trinity of *the* Godhead, in four separate incidents. The fact of the Trinity is made apparent: (1) At the baptism of Jesus. As Jesus, who is God the Son, came forth from his baptism at the hands of John, the baptizer, a manifestation of the presence of God, the Holy Ghost, was given in the sign of the dove, which rested upon Jesus; and at the same time the voice from heaven, the voice of God the Father, was heard saying: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:16–17). Here is a complete *and simultaneous* manifestation of the three distinct personages of the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (2) In the commission given to the apostles *by the Lord Jesus himself*, to teach all nations; “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go [ye] therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:18–19). There can be no question as to the distinctiveness of the three personages here named by Jesus. (3) In the vision of St. Stephen when the mob rushed upon him at the close of his arraignment of the Jews for the crucifixion of the Christ, “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked [up] stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God” (Acts 7:55–56).

Two of the three were visible, the other consciously present in the martyr. (4) In the apostolic benediction, viz., “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14).

This Godhead of three divine personages is *also* emphatically proclaimed in the Book of Mormon: speaking of those who must come to the judgment of God, it is written that they shall be “arraigned before the bar of Christ the Son, and God the Father, and the Holy Spirit, which is one Eternal God, to be judged according to their works” (Alma 11:44). Again in the instructions on baptism it is written: “After this manner shall ye baptize. . . . in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. . . . for [behold], verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one” (3 Ne. 11:25, 27). Equivalent statements repeatedly occur in this American volume of scripture. So also is there testimony to the same effect in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, a collection of revelations given in our own times (D&C 20:17–28). Also the statement of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, recorded in the same volume: “The Father hath [has] a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit” (D&C 130:22; see also 93:1–35).

Unity of the Godhead: The nature of it. Both the unity and the distinctiveness of these personages is apparent from these scriptures. The existence of God the Father, both Jesus and the apostles accepted as a reality. Jesus repeatedly declares the fact that God was his Father and frequently calls himself the Son of God and prays to the Father in that capacity:

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: . . . Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life (for the sheep). . . . This commandment have I received (from) [of] my Father . . . the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. . . . Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God. (John 10:15, 17–18, 25, 36)

All these sayings are recorded in St. John’s gospel. John also represents Jesus as saying in his prayer in Gethsemane:

Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. . . . And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. . . . Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me . . . that they may be one, as we are; . . . that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee. (John 17:1, 5, 11, 21)

Then after the resurrection Jesus said to Mary of Magdala: “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17). The separate and distinct existence of God the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost could not be more emphatically represented than in these scriptures.

The proof which set off the Father and the Son as separate and distinct personalities, also presents the Holy Ghost as a separate and distinct personality; for whether we contemplate these divine personages when the three are presented together, as at the baptism of Jesus, or in the vision of St. Stephen, or in the baptismal formula, or in the apostolic benediction—they are always presented in a manner that implies distinctiveness as persons, however closely they may be united in purpose and will. Jesus clearly ascribes to the Holy Ghost *as a distinct personality. He represents the Holy Ghost* as proceeding from the Father (John 15:26); as sent forth in the name of the Son (John 14:26); as abiding (John 14:16); as teaching, and as bearing witness (John 14:26; 15:26-27); as reproving the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8).

The apostles also referred to the Holy Ghost in much the same manner. St. Peter represents the Holy Ghost as speaking by the mouth of David concerning the treachery of Judas (Acts 1:16-17); he also represents Ananias as having lied to the Holy Ghost, and hence also he had lied to God (Acts 5:3). Also he represents the Holy Ghost as bearing witness with himself and his fellow apostle John, to the divinity of the Christ (Acts 5:29-32); also the Holy Ghost is represented as sending forth men to the ministry: “The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. . . . So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia” (Acts 13:2-4). The Holy Ghost is represented as forbidding Paul and Timothy preaching in Asia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6-8). After they were gone to Phrygia and the region of Galatia they were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach in Asia. After they were gone to Mysia they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit (the Holy Ghost) suffered them not (Acts 16:7-9). “The fruit of the Spirit (the Holy Ghost) is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” (Gal. 5:22-23); and as these things can only proceed from a being possessed of attributes that produce them, we must needs think of the Holy Ghost as being loving, merciful, patient, meek, temperate, as having judgment. All which, with the other things preceding here set forth of him, clearly establishes personality for the third person of the Godhead.

The Holy Ghost: Deity of. There remains to be considered the question, is the Holy Ghost God—Deity in his own right? The proof is in the fact that the Holy Ghost is an equal member of the Holy Trinity. Also in the fact that Jesus makes blasphemy against the Holy Ghost a greater sin than blasphemy against himself, for he said:

All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men . . . Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. (Matt. 12:31, 32; see also Mark 3:28-29)

This could not be unless the Holy Ghost were Deity, and in some peculiar way so related to men, that makes this sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost especially heinous. It may come from the fact that the Holy Ghost has especially the function of chief witness for divine truth in the Holy Trinity. And from the fact that he, the Holy Ghost, while a personage of spirit, ~~as the Christ was previous to his taking on a tabernacle of flesh and bones,~~ and remaining a spirit, that in some way he [the Holy Ghost] may more effectually make connection with man's spirit, after man's special preparation by acceptance of the gospel in baptism for the remission of his sins⁵—*and that he* [the man] may receive such a connection and infusion to his soul of the radiating power from the Holy Ghost that there is born into him an additional spiritual life, something added to his own spirit, that to sin up to the point of blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, would be to commit a spirit-murder more terrible than a physical, bodily murder; and hence the darker and deeper sin, the sin that may not be forgiven in this world or in the world to come.

The sum of the matter. So much for the distinctiveness *and the deity of each* of these divine beings as personages and as also constituting an organized unit, a body that is a divine council. It should be kept in mind that their One-ness consists in moral unity, not physical unity, or identity of substance, of essence *even*. In other words, while they are distinct and separate personages in the sense of being distinct ~~and~~ individuals, their unity consists in agreement of purpose, and unity of will and action for the accomplishment of certain definite ends pertaining to creation, conserving, and governing in the universe; and in bringing

⁵Cf. Acts 3:38-40 and St. John 14, 17. In the latter—"The Spirit of Truth"—identified with the Holy Ghost—"Whom the world"—the unbaptized—"cannot receive" etc.

peace and salvation and the possibility of eternal progress to men. An “everlasting covenant,” says our Prophet of the New Dispensation,

was made between three personages before the organization of this earth, and relates to *their* dispensation of things to men on the earth: these personages, according to Abraham’s record are called God the first, the Creator; God the second, the Redeemer; and God the third, the witness or Testator.⁶

These three united are the Godhead to which man owes his allegiance. This Godhead constitutes the creating, sustaining, redeeming, and witnessing power of the universe, the supreme God. In this Godhead, righteousness, and holiness, and truth and knowledge and wisdom and power and glory and justice and mercy and love—all that we do recognize or can recognize as belonging to the divine nature are incarnated in these personages in their perfection. This Godhead is the source of spiritual **light and power, and life.**

⁶Reported in Richards and Little, *Compendium*, 1898 ed., 289; 1925 ed., 272.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: esp. Roberts, *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*; Pearl of Great Price.

Creation: The Time and Manner of the Earth's Creation I

Causation. From what has heretofore been said, it will be remembered that we hold the universe to be self-existent and eternal. Duration, space, matter, force, mind—each infinite after its kind—are its prime and included factors. The universe is comprised of these.

Such a universe can have no first cause, since that would imply a time when there was no cause, and there has been and can be no such time. Causation is eternal, and in the eternal and infinite universe there has been operating always eternal cause. The cause which produces all action, all movements that produce events, changes; the creation of, or forming of world systems, and worlds within world systems; causing also the passing away of worlds and world systems, whenever they may have fulfilled some special purpose for which they were created, and hence are ready to pass away, to be reformed into more desirable worlds or world systems. For in a universe where intelligence united with goodness and power obtains and prevails, even changes which may have disintegrating or destructive aspects, can only be conceived as having a beneficent purpose in them, changing from a good to a better status; or, to be more exact, and to place the physical as well as the moral and spiritual notion into the betterment wrought by the apparently destructive changes—better say that the changes move from telestial to terrestrial, and from terrestrial to celestial orders of worlds.

Of the creation of our earth and its heavens—worlds with which our earth-revelations deal—it need only be said that they were formed

Concerning the references cited in this chapter that deal especially with evolution, Roberts advised: "This chapter involving as it does consideration of various theories of creation, including evolution, makes all the standard authorities on these subjects sources of reference." Nevertheless, he lists only two works by Darwin which he had found "helpful," and he cautions, "one needs to keep in mind that there have been many modifications of the theory of evolution since [Darwin's] day."

or fashioned from preexisting world-stuff which “in the beginning” (Gen. 1:1) was formless, unorganized, and darkness covered all its depths. Then God spake and “the Spirit of God” (Gen. 1:2) moved in the chaos, and in due time an orderly world arose from the chaos and became the habitat of man as we now know it.

Two things have mainly occupied the attention of intellectual men with respect of this creation: first, the time of it; second, the manner of it.

Time element in creation. As to the time element of creation for our earth a great variety of views have been held. The Bible story of creation was held to mean, by the theologians, that the creation was effected some six thousand years ago by fiat word of God, and within six days as measured by the rotation of the earth upon its axis—just six ordinary days! Then came the message derived from developed scientific knowledge which indicated that the earth was of much greater antiquity than this, extending from hundreds of thousands to millions of years since its beginning. Scientists pointed to the record found in the earth's crust for the evidence of its slow formation and its great antiquity. Fossil remains of its extinct forms of life in its various strata; its well defined glacial periods of scores of thousands of years ago; the submerged portions of present large land areas uplifted by slow process into great desert table lands and mountain ranges; and in recent years the accumulative evidence for the existence of man in the earth in a remote antiquity, amounting to scores and to even hundreds of thousands of years, has rapidly increased and is of sufficient clearness apparently to be generally accepted by the scientific world. All these discoveries and developments with their accepted implications have led to attempts at revision of the theological interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis. Some accept as a cue the casual statement of St. Peter, “that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Pet. 3:8), and the Psalmist's expression of nearly the same import (Ps. 90:4). They have held that the “day” of Genesis was after the Lord's method of computing time; which would make the “creation day” period of a thousand years of earth time. But even this is insufficient to meet the demands of the creation time periods of science.

Again, theologians have suggested that the “creation days” in Genesis are not even after the Lord's measurement of “days” of a thousand years of earth time, but the “creation days” of Genesis are periods of indefinite time, and may be understood as representing thousands, or even millions of years. Other interpreters call attention to the significant language of the first verse of Genesis, which says: “In the beginning

God created the heavens and the earth.” They point out that there is no indication in the revelation itself when “the beginning” was, holding that “the sacred writer in Genesis does not commit himself to any definite limits of time (at all), but simply speaks of the creation as taking place ‘in the beginning,’ and (holding that) this phrase is elastic enough to cover the modern scientific position.”¹ That is, as to the time period in which the earth was created.

Our own position with reference to the time element in creation is that while there is no definite time fixed by revelation as to the “beginning” of the creation of our earth and its heavens, yet the revelation does limit the time of creation to the beginning “when” God created our earth and its heavens; this “beginning” and not an absolute beginning of the universe, is the meaning of the first verse of Genesis. So that the rendering of Genesis 1:1 would be: “In the beginning ‘when’ God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was without form,” and so following. This does not fix any period in terms of years for the beginning of the creation of our world; but it does make it possible to accord to science whatever antiquity its demonstrations may require for the duration of the earth, and hence approximately—with very wide latitude—the “beginning of creation.” Of this more will be said later.

The manner of creation. As already stated, the theologians held creation to be by fiat word of God, quoting in support *of* the theory *of* the scripture: “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:6, 9). Against this fiat theory of creation, however, science has presented the view that the order and beauty of the world are not the result of one direct creative act, nor even of a series of directly creative acts; but it is the outcome of a gradual process continued through immense periods of time, from many lower forms and stages of life; and perhaps ultimately from one only life substance. There are, it is said, some eighty odd chemical elements known in the earth today, and it is now much more than a suggestion that these are the outcome of an inorganic evolution element, giving rise to element, going back and back to some primeval stuff from which they were all originally derived infinitely long ago;² and out of which has been differentiated all life forms that now inhabit the earth or that ever have lived upon it. This is the evolution theory of

¹Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, s.v. “The Creation Story and Science.”

²Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:4.

accounting for the existence of life forms in the earth. It is described by one of the master architects of the theory, Herbert Spencer, as follows:

Definition of evolution.

Evolution is an integration of matter and a concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.³

After reading this definition, we can appreciate what Will Durant (author of *The Story of Philosophy*, 1926) meant when he says that Spencer “made the intellect of Europe gasp for breath,” when the author of the “Synthetic Philosophy” gave out that definition of evolution; nor are we surprised when he tells us that “it required ten volumes and forty years for its explanation.” Durant himself asks the question, “what does this definition mean?” and follows it with an explanation that is nearly as difficult as Spencer’s own. We may here only give part of Durant’s answer; sufficient, however, we trust, to set forth the theory of evolution somewhat clearly, though only in headlines.

The primeval nebula (cosmic dust) is homogeneous—i.e., it consists of parts that are alike (with that simple stuff, nebula dust, evolution starts); but soon it is differentiated into gases and liquids and solids; the earth becomes here green with grass, there white with mountain-tops (snow-capped), or blue with the multitudinous sea; evolving life begets, out of a relatively homogeneous protoplasm (i.e., stuff relatively simple), the varied organs of nutrition, reproduction, locomotion, and perception; a single language fills whole continents with its multiplying dialects; a single science breeds a hundred, and the folk-lore of a nation flowers into a thousand forms of literary art; individuality grows, character stands out uniquely, and every race and people develops its peculiar genius. Integration and heterogeneity, aggregation of parts into ever larger wholes and differentiation of parts into ever more varied forms: these are the foci of the orbit of evolution. Whatever passes from diffusion to integration and unity, and from a homogeneous simplicity to a differentiated complexity . . . is in the flow of evolution; whatever is returning from integration to diffusion, and from complexity to simplicity . . . is caught in the ebb of dissolution.⁴

The gloomy outcome of evolution. Here perhaps is as suitable a place as any to set down the horribly dark future which the theory of evolution sets out as the future of the world:

³Spencer, *First Principles*. [Roberts appears to have amalgamated phrases found in the index under “evolution” to generate this definition.]

⁴Durant, *Story of Philosophy*, 399.

“Finally, and inescapably,” says Mr. Durant, commenting upon the theory of evolution as set forth by Spencer,

comes “Equilibration.” Every motion, being motion under resistance, must sooner or later come to an end; every rhythmic oscillation (unless externally reinforced) suffers some loss of rate and amplitude. The planets ride through a lesser orbit, or will ride, than once they rode; the sun will shine less warmly and brightly as the centuries pass away; the friction of the tides will retard the rotation of the earth. This globe, that throbs and murmurs with a million motions, and luxuriates into a million forms of riotously breeding life, will some day move more leisurely in its orbit and its parts; the blood will run cooler and more slowly in our dessicated veins; we shall not hurry any more; like dying races, we shall think of heaven in terms of rest and not of life; we shall dream of Nirvana. Gradually, and then rapidly, equilibration will become dissolution, the unhappy epilogue of evolution. Societies will disintegrate, masses will migrate, cities will fade into the dark hinterland of peasant life; no government will be strong enough to hold the loosened parts together; social order will cease to be even remembered. And in the individual too, integration will give way to disruption; and that coördination which is life will pass into that diffuse disorder which is death. The earth will be a chaotic theatre of decay, a gloomy drama of energy in irreversible degradation; and it will itself be resolved into the dust and nebula from which it came. The cycle of evolution and dissolution will be complete. The cycle will begin again, and endless times again; but always this will be the dénouement. *Memento mori* is written upon the face of life; and every birth is a prelude to decay and death.⁵

Such the gloom of evolution! What is the use of these repeated cycles of life and death? Though endless the repetition of such cycles of life, could one say that existence is better than non-existence?

⁵Durant, *Story of Philosophy*, 400–401.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Darwin, *Origin of Species*; Darwin, *Descent of Man*; Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*; Haeckel, *Evolution of Man*; Haeckel, *Life and Work*, 130, 114, 279, 310; Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, 54, 239, 243; Roberts, “Man’s Relationship to Deity,” in *Gospel*, 3rd. ed.; Spencer, *First Principles*; and Spencer, *Synthetic Philosophy*. For a discussion of theories about creation and evolution, see pages 644–50 below.

Creation: The Time and Manner of the Earth's Creation II

“Creation” and God. As in the case of the time period of creation, so in the “manner” of creation, we may not wholly accept either of the theories or any of the variations of them proposed. We start, of course, with God as the Creator of the earth and its heavens. They were created at his command, and by his power, and under the operation of laws of creation. All which, however, does not require us to believe that the creation of the earth and its heavens was made instantly, as by magic, or by any absolutely new process; nor that the things “created,” any more than the order, were new and for the first time produced. Both the things created and the order of their production must have been many times repeated in the multitudinous worlds of the universe, where creations in some manner have been going on eternally.

If, as we have presented the case in previous chapters, there are older worlds than ours in existence, inhabited by myriads of forms of life, vegetable and animal, such as live in the seas and fly in the air and roam over the plains and through the forests; and if, as we have set forth in previous chapters, the superior intelligences of older worlds have mastered the problems not only of interplanetary and intersolar system communication, but also of interplanetary transportation, indeed universal communication and transportation throughout the universe—then it is possible that some method of transportation may have been employed in conveying life in varied forms from other worlds to ours.

Earth life by migrations from other worlds. This theory of bringing life forms from outside our earth to ~~it~~ **the earth** is not without the support of scientific names of high standing. It is held by both Helmholtz^a

^aHermann Ludwig Ferdinand von Helmholtz (1821-94) was a versatile physiologist and theoretical physicist best known for his work in physiological optics, acoustics, and the conservation of force.

and Lord Kelvin,^b and others, in good scientific standing, viz., “that minute living creatures may have come to the earth from elsewhere, in the cracks of a meteorite or among cosmic dust.” As the author of the *Outline of Science* continues:

It must be remembered that seeds can survive prolonged exposure to very low temperatures; and spores of bacteria can survive high temperature; that seeds of ⟨planets⟩ [plants] and germs of animals in a state of “latent life” can survive prolonged drought and absence of oxygen. It is possible, according to Berthelot,^c that as long as there is no molecular disintegration vital activities may be suspended for a time, and may afterwards recommence when appropriate conditions are restored. Therefore, one should be slow to say that a long journey through space is impossible.^d The obvious limitation of Lord Kelvin’s theory ⟨just what is stated above⟩ is that it only shifts the problem of the origin of organisms (i.e., living creatures) from the earth to elsewhere.¹

All that need be said in answer to this alleged limitation of Lord Kelvin’s theory is, that in an eternal universe, where neither life nor life forms *may* have any absolute beginning, all life and many forms of life being equally eternal with the eternal universe, the supposed limitations named by Thompson^c have no existence, and consequently no problem of the origin of life or of forms of life, both being eternal.

The development of life forms. The transportation of a few forms of life, varieties from other worlds, would doubtless be sufficient from which to develop all our earth life forms; for it is certain that development of varied forms of life goes on in the vegetable and animal kingdoms of our world—a limited development, however, of life forms, each within the limits of its kind, so that from a comparatively few

^bWilliam Thomson (Baron Kelvin of Largs) (1824–1907) was an outstanding physical scientist best known for his role in initiating the theory of electromagnetic fields, and the development of the Kelvin scale of absolute temperature.

^cPierre Eugene Marcel Berthelot (1827–1907) was a distinguished organic and physical chemist best known for his work in synthesis of organic compounds, reaction velocity theory, and heats of reactions.

^dMost scientists today would suggest that the x-ray and ultraviolet radiation in space would be lethal to any unprotected organisms and thus make this theory untenable. However, a few scientists still consider it viable, most notably Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe, in *Evolution from Space* (London: Dent, 1981).

¹Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:61.

^jJ. Arthur Thomson (1861–1933) was a professor of Natural History at the University of Aberdeen. He is credited with being one of the first to popularize the harmonization of religion and science.

forms of life there may have arisen all the multitudinous forms that have inhabited the earth. This theory of development within certain group-forms, rather than by absolute mechanical or creative evolution starting with one primeval substance, or life “stuff”—the protoplasm of the scientists—may have been the process from which has been produced and differentiated all forms of life even up to production of the human race—meaning, as to the last, production from one primeval pair.

The difference here set forth in what we shall call “the development theory” and the theory of the generally accepted evolution of science consists in this: The development theory above outlined leaves room for the operation of the great propagative and “development law,” namely, that each great kingdom or subdivision of life named in Genesis 1 produces after its kind, whereas evolution in all its forms destroys that thought and holds that all the varied forms of life have been absolutely produced by evolutionary processes, and leaves no line of estoppage^f between ~~even~~ the kingdoms, ~~the classes~~ **orders, families, genera, classes**, or the species of vegetable and animal life forms.^g

Kinds of evolution. In the interest of clearness a further word as to various kinds of evolution is necessary. Three kinds are usually recognized: (1) Materialistic evolution. This denies everything but matter and motion in the evolutionary process. This I refer to as “mechanical evolution.” (2) Agnostic evolution. This “postulates an ‘unknown’ and ‘unknowable’ as the basis and explanation of the process.” This is the evolution basis (or lack of basis) of the Spencer, Huxley, and Fiske^h

^f*Estop* is an archaic word meaning to impede, stop up, or prohibit. Apparently Roberts coined the word estoppage in this context to mean gaps in the evolutionary process that are stopped up or uncrossable between taxa.

^gRoberts’s reasoning here is incongruent. While suggesting that life on earth developed from a “few forms” brought to earth from other worlds, he also seems to claim that because each form was to produce “after its kind,” there were many taxonomic levels which could not be bridged by further development of evolution, for example, “kingdoms, orders, families, genera, classes, or the species.” Such a position cannot account for the diversity of life on earth. Roberts’s thesis that life developed from only a “few forms” of life would require the occurrence of development between some taxonomic levels.

^hThese three men were the most prominent of Darwin’s early supporters. Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) postulated evolution many years before Darwin. His ideas influenced A. R. Wallace, who later helped Darwin develop his theory of Natural Selection. Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–95), perhaps the most vocal of Darwin’s proponents, is credited with coining the word “agnostic” to describe his lack of belief in the “revealed religion” of his day, especially as it explained the

school of evolutionists—the general school of evolutionists. (3) “Theistic evolution,” which assumes God or Mind in some way back of all working, with results along the unalterable line of natural law, “and by physical force exclusively”; but working, perhaps, towards some definite far-off, though unknown end, or event. This is sometimes regarded as purposeful evolution. Also it is referred to as “creative evolution” of which Henri Bergson¹ is perhaps the most prominent proponent.²

The great law of life. The development theory which I am setting forth as the Bible story of creation differs from both agnostic and creative or theistic evolution (mechanical or materialistic evolution is not considered at all) **is in** this: that both these forms of evolution start with an homogeneous substance which is differentiated into gases and liquids and solids (inorganic evolution), thence into life substance and simple forms of life; thence into more complex life forms, until there is produced by an ever differentiating process all the life forms known: whereas the development theory of this chapter and work recognizes and starts with the eternity of life—the life force; and the eternity of some life forms, and the possibilities of these forms, perhaps in embryonic status, or in their simplest forms (save as to man) are transplanted to newly created worlds there to be developed each to its highest possibilities, by propagation, and yet within and under the great law of life of Genesis 1, viz., each “after,” and within, “its kind” (Gen. 1:11-12, 21, 24-25).

*Bible creation: Progressive creation in Genesis.*³ The revelation of God on creation contained in Genesis 1-2 gives evidence of the existence of creation by propagative and development processes, which let us now consider.

creation of life on earth. In contrast, John Fiske (1842-1901) was a devout believer in God. A versatile lawyer, historian, and scientist, he is credited with presenting Darwin’s ideas in a light more palatable to Christians.

¹Henri Louis Bergson (1859-1941) was a prominent French philosopher. His most famous work, *L’Evolution Creatrice*, deals with the evolutionary theory and attributes the guiding force of evolution to an *élan vital* which has been viewed to mean both God and nature.

²See “Creative Evolution” by Henri Bergson; the French original is translated into English by Arthur Mitchell, Ph.D., and is published by Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1911.

³Compare creation account in [the] book of Moses and the book of Abraham; also in allusions to [it] in other revelations of the New Dispensation, Doctrine & Covenants passim: they will be found in agreement with the Bible.

To begin with there is in the whole chapter of first Genesis a succession of creative acts that shows the developing process:

First: The existence of chaos, material in chaotic state, void and with darkness brooding over it. Then the Spirit of God moves throughout the watery, vapory mass, and God speaks and says: Let there be light and there is light; and he divides the light from the darkness, and this was the work of the first creative day or period.

Second: And God said, let there be a firmament (i.e., division) in the midst of the waters which are under the firmament, from the waters which are above the firmament (necessarily expanse between) and the firmament was called heaven. This was the work of the second creative day or period.

Third: God also said, "Let the waters under the heaven (or firmament) be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so" (Gen. 1:9). The dry land was called earth, and the gathering together of the waters, sea. God also said in this period, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, (and) the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, . . . whose seed (is) [should be] in itself, . . . And the earth brought forth grass, (the) [every] herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed (was) [should be] in itself, after his kind" (Moses 2:11-12). And this was the third creative day or period.

Fourth: In the fourth creative period our earth was brought into such relationships or changed conditions *as* to other spheres that the great lights in the world system to which our earth belongs, **produced** our ordinary day and night ~~was produced~~. The light period being called day, and the darkness night (Gen. 1:14-19).

Fifth: In the fifth period God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life; and let the flying creatures that fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven appear. The living creatures of both the waters and the fowls of the air were to reproduce after their kind, and this "abundantly." And God in this fifth period made the beasts of the earth, after their kind; and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth on the earth, after its own kind; and God saw that it was good.

Sixth: Then came the sixth creative period in which man was created—that is, be it remembered, formed or fashioned. And in man's production there seems to have been something special or peculiar, for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). This is not said of any of the other creations; and the proposition further was that to man should be given dominion over all the rest of the creation; over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, the cattle, and

over all the earth. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Gen. 1:27-28). Every herb, vegetable and animal creation the Lord also gave unto man for his food. And God saw everything that he had made, “and, behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31). Thus closed the sixth creative period, followed by a seventh period, designated as a day of rest, the creation having been sufficiently completed to meet the purposes of God at that time.

Thus from chaos to the production of man, in an orderly unfolding development from lower to higher forms, from simple to constantly increasing complexity, but running throughout the whole course of such development is the iteration and reiteration that the forms of life are to produce each after his kind. When we arrive at the creation of man, undoubtedly the same creative law is followed—he is produced after his kind. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”; which is only equivalent to saying, after our kind. This “after his kind,” the law of creation, is iterated and reiterated nine times in this short chapter on creation! The emphasis must be important.⁴

Power of life in the earth, sea, and air: One other thing to be observed. The creation account says: “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth” (Gen. 1:11). “Let the earth bring forth!” As if a power was in the earth to produce life of varied forms. This in the second creative period. Let it be observed also that in this first period such mandate goes as to grasses, herbs, and fruit trees—the lower forms of life (i.e., vegetable life). Then in the fourth period, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the [moving] creature that hath life, and fowl that ⟨they⟩ may fly above the earth in the [open] firmament” (Gen. 1:20). As if power were in the sea to produce life, and in the air to produce the living creature. “And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the ⟨air⟩ [earth]” (Gen. 1:22). Turning again to the earth, in the thirty-fourth verse, after God had said in the eleventh verse, “Let the earth bring forth grass, etc.,” he now says, contemplating a larger earth life: Let the earth bring forth the living creature, the creeping thing, the lower forms of earth-animal life, and beasts of the earth, including cattle, higher forms of animal life, “after their kind.” This address to

⁴The treatment of the creation of man for earth and especially of Adam and the kind of being he was at his advent upon the earth, is considered in chapters 30, 31, and 33, below.

earth, and sea, and again to earth, would rather indicate that these had productive life powers of varied kinds within them.

Creative development sustained by some scientists. As already stated, such a theory as to origin of living creatures upon the earth is not without advocates of sufficient high standing to command respect. Under the heading of “Origin of Living Creatures Upon the Earth,” as a third answer to the question of how life originated, J. Arthur Thomson, author of the *Outline of Science* points out that some have held

that living creatures of a very simple sort may have emerged on the earth's surface from not-living material, e.g. from some semi-fluid carbon compounds activated by ferments. The tenability of this view is suggested by the ~~adjustments~~ **achievements** of the synthetic chemists, who are able artificially to build up substances such as oxalic acid, indigo, salicylic acid, caffeine, and grape-sugar. We do not know, indeed, what in Nature's laboratory would take the place of the clever synthetic chemists, but there seems to be a tendency to complexity. Corpuscles form atoms,^j atoms form molecules, small molecules large ones. . . . So far as we know of what goes on to-day, there is no evidence of spontaneous generation; organisms seem always to arise from pre-existing organisms of the same kind; where any suggestion of the contrary has been fancied, there have been flaws in the experimenting. But it is one thing to accept the verdict “omne vivum e vivo” (all life from life) as a fact, to which experiment has not yet discovered an exception and another thing to maintain that this must always have been true or must always remain true.⁵

This statement Mr. Thomson follows with the sympathetic paragraph which I here quote:

If the synthetic chemists should go on surpassing themselves, if substances like white of egg should be made artificially, and if we should get more light on possible steps by which simple living creatures may have arisen from not-living materials, this would not greatly affect our general outlook on life, though it would increase our appreciation of what is often libelled as “inert” matter. If the dust of the earth did naturally give rise very long ago to living creatures, if they are in a real sense born of her and of the sunshine, then the whole world becomes more continuous and more vital, and all the inorganic groaning and travailing becomes more intelligible.⁶

^jThe corpuscular theory of matter first became popular in the seventeenth century. Essentially it was the belief that all matter consists of tiny particles called corpuscles. Roberts uses the term here to refer to sub-atomic particles.

⁵Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:61-62.

⁶Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:62.

Let this be as it may as to the origin of life in the earth, **or at least as to some forms of it**, it need not affect our view here set forth ~~that~~ **as to** life, and especially **as to** the higher forms of life; and ~~again~~, especially **of** human forms of life, ~~may have been~~ **which beyond doubt were** transplanted from some of the older and more highly developed worlds. And from a few ~~such forms~~ **other** transported **forms of life** to the earth, there could be development of varied kinds of life yet adhering closely to the great law of creation, so constantly repeated—"each after his kind." Not necessarily rigidly limited to stereotyped individual forms, but developing the kinds from the subdivisions of vegetable and animal kingdoms into various species through development from primeval forms; and for man a divine origin after his kind, bearing the image of God, his Father.

The "terror" of anthropomorphism. Theologians, in their efforts to provide means of escape from a too rigid anthropomorphism, would fain interpret this "image" of God to mean, not the full length portrait or image of God, but a so-called "moral image." "The likeness to God," says one commentator, "lies in the mental and moral features of man's character, such as reason, personality, free will, the capacity for communion with God."⁷ But this is pure assumption on the part of the theologians—this limitation of the "image of God" to these mental and moral qualities. We have a right from the scripture record to the inclusion of the physical features as well as to the mental and moral qualities, and do not have to yield anything to the "terror of anthropomorphism," which is affected by the theologians and philosophers to maintain the conceptions of God as immaterial being, which their antecedents of bygone ages adopted from the pagan philosophies current two thousand years ago. It is no more dishonoring to God to think of him as having impressed his physical likeness upon man, than to have impressed upon him a mental and moral image. The highest development of spiritual manifestation in our earth is by a spirit in association with a body—in a word, with man. Where is spirituality more highly developed than in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ? And especially after his resurrection, when spirit and body had become indissolubly united, never again to be separated, not now separated, but still living in union, spirit and body united as it was on that sun-kissed hill in Galilee, when in that resurrected form he appeared to his disciples and stretching forth his arms, as if to embrace the heavens as well as the earth, he cried:

⁷Dummelow, *Commentary*, 5.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. . . . And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (Matt. 28:18-20)

That moment God, through the Christ, was most perfectly manifested unto man; and beyond that occasion there has been no superior spiritual manifestation, no higher type given of spirit life and form than in that well-attested incident in the life of the Christ. This the manifestation or revelation of God in the flesh: for such was Jesus Christ—God manifested in the flesh. Witness the scripture: “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Tim. 3:16). All in plain allusion to the Christ.

On this showing we may conclude that the highest development of the spiritual is in its connection with the physical, and always will be so in God's creation of man in his own image and in his own likeness, male and female. This is what God is working at in creation—as we shall see later—the bringing to pass the indissoluble union of spirit and element, in which union man can attain to his highest development and greatest joy.

And why should it be thought incredible that God should be in human form? Or derogatory to his dignity or nature? Of all life forms, man's unquestionably is *the* most excellent in all things; most beautiful; most convenient; most noble. Shakespeare did not overdraw the picture of man when he exclaimed of him: “How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a God!”⁸

The crowning glory of the “creation” also is he; begotten after his kind—a son of God!

⁸Shakespeare *Hamlet*, II, ii, 303-8.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Bergson, *Creative Evolution*; Duncan, *New Knowledge*; Headley, *Problems of Evolution*; Howison, *The Limits of Evolution*; Kaempffort, *Science-History of the Universe*, vols. 5, 7, and 10; Kinns, *Harmony of the Bible with Science*; and Roberts, “Man's Relationship to Deity,” in *Gospel*, 3d. ed.

Man: Preexistence of Spirits, Eternal Existence of Intelligences

Of the “creation” of man. It will be observed that the word “creation” in the side heading is enclosed in quotation marks. This is done advisedly, because it will be held in this work that there is something more to the origin of man than the word “creation” describes in its ordinary sense. It has already been noted (chapter 21) that the doctrines of “Creationism” and “Traduscianism” as describing the origin of man are not in harmony with the doctrine to be upheld in this writing. The doctrine of “Creationism” as applied to man is that each time a human being is begotten by parents, God creates “out of nothing” a soul for that body. “Traduscianism,” on the contrary, assigns the origin of both soul and body to generation by the earthly parents. The view to be maintained in this writing, however, is that the mind, the spirit of man, has a preexistence to his earth life; and that there is a taking-possession of the body by this preexistent spirit at birth.¹

¹The definite statement of the text as to the time of the spirit taking possession of the body is justified, as the writer believes, from the Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 1: “And it came to pass that he cried mightily unto the Lord . . . and behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying: Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign (i.e., of the Christ’s birth) be given, and on the morrow come I into the world” (3 Ne. 1:12-13). This the preexistent, personal, Spirit of the Christ speaking to the Nephite prophet the night previous to the Christ’s birth; and hence he had not yet entered into the infant body to be born of Mary; but “on the morrow”—the day of his birth—“come I into the world.” And as it was in the case of the Christ, undoubtedly it is as to all the spirits of men who take possession of the bodies provided for them—they take possession of them at the moment of birth—when they catch the breath of life, and begin a separate existence.

[The evaluation of the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve that reviewed the draft submitted in 1928 states: “The committee questions the advisability of stating any given time when the spirit unites with the body. This question has never been definitely settled although it has been asked of the First Presidency

The pre-earth existence of the Christ. St. John, in the colorful preface to his gospel, declares that in the beginning was the “Word” which was with God, “and that was God”—in him was life, “and the life was the light of men.” He declares this “Word” was made flesh, and dwelt among men, that they beheld his glory, even the glory of the only begotten of the Father, thus identifying this preexistent “Word,” that was God, with Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14). Under this scripture, the divisions and subdivisions of Christendom believe that in some way, not very clearly defined, however, the “Word” identified with Jesus Christ had a preexistence with ~~His Father~~ **God**. The Christ, however, spirit and body, as he went about his mission in his earth life, closely resembled man both in mental and physical qualities. He was warmed by the same fire, chilled by the same winter’s blast, subject to hunger and fatigue; he required the same food and rest. Preeminently, he was the man of sorrows, having affections, ties of friendship, experiencing pity, and at times angered by manifestations of injustice and hypocrisy; and finally was subject to death as all men are. The question arises, if the Christ resembled man in all these points, may not man resemble the Christ in the matter of a preexistence? That if the Christ, as a spirit personage, was “in the beginning” with the Father, may not the spirits of men have had such an existence also? It is written in scripture that “he that sanctifieth ⟨having in mind the Christ⟩ and they who are sanctified ⟨*men*⟩ are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them (~~men~~) brethren” (Heb. 2:11).

From the above considerations, it surely can be reasonably argued that if Christ’s spirit, preexisting as the “Word,” was “in the beginning with God,” may there not have been likewise a preexistence of the spirits of men from the beginning with God?

In further evidence of the preexistence of the Christ to his earth life, we have him in his Gethsemane prayer saying: “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with ⟨that same⟩ [the] glory which ⟨that⟩ I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). Again in Hebrews: “God, who . . . spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds”

from time to time. The record in the Book of Mormon where Nephi received the word that the Savior was to come into the world is not looked upon as a criterion by which we are to be governed.”

Reporting to President Rudger Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith explained: “The First Presidency have refused to give a definite answer to this question at any time. Therefore we feel that a definite statement should not be given.”]

(Heb. 1:1-2). From this it is clear that the Christ not only had a premortal life existence, but also that [his premortal] life was of such majesty that he was employed by the Father in the creation of “worlds”!

Often the Christ bewildered the Jews that entered into controversy with him as to his mission and himself. On one occasion he said to them: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am” (John 8:56-58). Which could only be true, of course, because the spirit of the Christ had a premortal life existence with God. This doctrine seems to have been too much for some of his disciples to accept, for on expounding it to them under the statement that he was the bread of life which came down from heaven, they turned away from him with the remark that this was “a[n] hard saying; who can hear it?” Whereupon the Christ, knowing their murmuring, said, “Does [Doth] this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?” (John 6:58-62).

From all these texts, it can only be concluded that the Christ had a preexistence in a glorified state with his Father before the world was; that under the Father’s direction he even created worlds, and hence was Creator—Father of heaven and earth.²

Men and Jesus of the same order of beings. The scriptures teach that Jesus Christ and men are of the same order of beings; that men are of the same race with Jesus, of the same nature and essence; that he is indeed our “elder brother.”

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth (the Christ) and they who are sanctified (men) are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. (Heb. 2:10-11)

Also the newly risen Christ said to Mary Magdala as she approached him on the resurrection morning: “Touch me not; for I [am] (have) not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; [and] to my God, and your God” (John 20:17). A sweeter statement of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of the Christ to men may not be found. Hence, while very far removed from us in that the Christ is perfect in all

²Alma 11:38-39: “Is the Son of God the very Eternal Father? And Amulek said . . . Yea, he is the very Eternal Father (Creator) of heaven and of earth, and all things that in them are.”

righteousness, and more highly developed in intellectual and spiritual powers than we, yet these differences are of degree, not of kind; so that what is revealed concerning Jesus the Christ may be of infinite helpfulness in throwing light upon the nature of man and the several estates he has occupied and will occupy hereafter.

The coeternity of Jesus Christ with God the Father is quite universally held to be set forth in the preface of St. John's gospel, which is so familiar that it need not be repeated here. Moreover, to those who accept the new dispensation of the gospel through the revelations of God to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the doctrine of John's preface comes with increased emphasis by reason of the proclaimed extension of the principle of the co-eternity of God the Father and Jesus Christ to men *also*; and by asserting also the fact that the intelligent entity in man, the mind, intelligence, was "not created or made, neither indeed can be" (D&C 93:29).

In the following we have the co-eternity of Jesus and of all men most emphatically stated: "I was in the beginning with the Father. . . . Ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is spirit (that is, that part of man that is spirit)" (D&C 93:21, 23). "Man"—that is, all men, the term is generic, includes the race—man "was [also] in the beginning with God" (D&C 93:29). And then mark what follows: "Intelligence"—the part that was with God in the beginning, the entity in man which cognizes truth, that perceives that which is, mind, say—"Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be" (D&C 93:29).

Jesus as the first born in the spirit life. Sure it is that God the Father is the Father of the spirits of men. "We," says Paul, "have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9). Also, [Jesus prays:] "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matt. 6:9; the Lord's Prayer); the relationship expressed cannot be meaningless.

According to this, then, there is a "Father of spirits." It follows, of course, that "spirits" have a father; they are begotten, not made. The difference being that the thing which is begotten partakes of the very nature of him who begets, while that which is made may not. It should be remarked that the term "spirits" in the above passage [Heb. 12:9] cannot refer to self-existent, unbegotten intelligences of the revelations, considered in the above [D&C 93], except as intelligences inhabiting spirit bodies, and certainly this relationship of fatherhood to spirits is not one brought about in connection with generation of

human life in this world. Paul makes a very sharp distinction between “fathers of our flesh” and the “Father of spirits” in the above. Fatherhood to spirits is manifestly a relationship established independent of man’s earth existence; and, of course, in an existence which preceded earth life, where the uncreated intelligences ~~are~~ *were* begotten spirits. Hence, the phrase, “shall we not be *in* subject ⟨?⟩ to the Father of spirits and live?”

Christ is referred to by the writer of the epistle to the Colossians as the “firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1:15), and the Revelator speaks of him as “the beginning of the creation of God” (Rev. 3:14). And in the revelation already quoted so often Jesus represents himself as being in the “beginning with the Father” and as “the Firstborn” (D&C 93:21).

The reference to Jesus as the “firstborn of every creature” cannot refer to his birth into earth life, for he was not the firstborn into this world; therefore, “firstborn” here referred to must have reference to the birth of his spirit before his earth life.

The reference to Jesus as the “beginning of the creation of God” cannot refer to his creation or generation in earth life, for manifestly he was not the beginning of the creations of God in this world. Therefore, he must have been the “beginning” of God’s creation (*begetting*) elsewhere, viz., in the spirit world, where he—an Intelligence from eternity—was begotten a spiritual personage, a son of God.

Jesus “Elder Brother” to men. The reference to Jesus as the “first-born”—and hence the justification for our calling him our “Elder Brother”—cannot refer to any relationship that he established in his earth life, since as to the flesh he is not our “Elder Brother,” any more than he is the “first-born” in the flesh. There were many born as to the flesh before he was, and older brothers to us in the flesh than he. The relationship of “Elder Brother” cannot have reference to that estate where all were self-existent, uncreated and unbegotten, eternal intelligences, for that estate admits of no such relation as “elder” or “younger.” For as to the succession in time—the fact on which “younger” or “elder” depends—the intelligences are equal, that is, equal as to their eternity. Therefore, since the relationship of “Elder Brother” was not established by any possible fact in that estate where all were self-existing intelligences, it must have been established in the spirit life where Jesus, with reference to the hosts of intelligences designed to our earth, was the “first-born spirit,” and by that fact became our “Elder Brother,” the “first-born of every creature,” “the beginning of the creations of God,” as pertaining to our order of existence.

Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh and the First Begotten of the dead. As to his earth life—his existence in it—Jesus bears two marked distinctions: first, he is the “Only Begotten of the Father” in the flesh; and, second, he is “the first begotten of the dead.” He is designated as the “only begotten of the Father” by St. John in the following passages: “And the Word ⟨the preexisting Christ of the preface to St. John’s gospel⟩ was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). Again: “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth ⟨on⟩ [in] him ⟨might⟩ [should] not perish. . . . but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:16, 18; see also 1 Jn. 4:9).

As to the second distinction, the “first begotten of the dead,” that is also ascribed to him by St. John in the Revelation, where he refers to Jesus as “the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead” (Rev. 1:5). And Paul in his discourse on the resurrection—speaking of the order of it—says, “But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1 Cor. 15:23).

Eternal intelligences. There is something deeper, however, to this matter of man’s origin than his preexistence to this earth life; a deeper truth to be found—there is the intelligence of spirits to be accounted for. In one of our modern revelations through the Prophet of the New Dispensation, Joseph Smith, it is said: “Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be” (D&C 93:29).

“Intelligence, or the light of truth”—evidently meaning by that the light by which truth is discerned, or cognized; and that intelligence which cognizes truth, is not made, nor can it be made, because it is eternal. Wonderful truth! Let us see what comes of it.

Theologians regard it as a very wonderful discovery that Christ, the second personage in the Trinity—the “Word” which was with God in the beginning, “and which was God,” was coeternal with the Father; though they had to leave it as among the unsolvable mysteries. In a modern revelation this same truth is stated, but in a somewhat different terminology, which may help to clarify it. The revelation represents the Christ as speaking:

And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn. . . . Ye ⟨meaning Joseph Smith and the Elders who were present with him when the revelation was received⟩ were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the Spirit of truth; . . . Man ⟨i.e., the race⟩ was also in

the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. (D&C 93:21, 23, 29)

This undoubtedly means that the intelligence of spirits—of spirit personages—is equally eternal with Christ and with God. Of the nature of intelligence in general and of individual intelligences as inhabiting the universe, we have already spoken in a previous chapter (ch. 10), and it is only necessary to emphasize here the existence of such an entity in every individual spirit. Let us recapitulate, for the importance of the truth is worthy of it.

First is affirmed the coeternity of the Christ and God, the Father—“in the beginning, before the world was.” Then the like coeternity of the spirits of men present when the revelation above quoted was given is affirmed. Afterwards the like coeternity of “man” used in the generic sense, meaning the race—is affirmed, followed by the declaration that “intelligence or the light of truth” (the power which cognizes truth), “was not created or made.” Then, of course, it follows that such intelligences are eternal, self-existing beings. It may be urged, however, that the word “intelligence” in the revelation quoted above is used in the singular, not in the plural form; and hence may refer to intelligence in general, en masse, as being uncreated and uncreatable, and not to the eternity of individual intelligences. But immediately preceding the words “intelligence . . . was not created or made,” is the declaration “man was in the beginning with God,” and the word “intelligence,” in the passage quoted, is governed as to its meaning by “man” in the sentence “man was also in the beginning with God.” And now, “intelligence” (i.e., in man), hence an individual intelligence—hence intelligent entities—were “not created or made neither indeed can be.” In other words, these intelligences are as eternal as God is, or as the Christ is, or the Holy Spirit. This becomes more apparent when we learn in a subsequent verse of the revelation, that “man is spirit,” that is, in the inner fact of him, in the power and glory of him, man is not so many pounds avoirdupois of bone, muscle, lime, phosphate, water and the like; but in the great fact of him, he is spirit—spirit substance and intelligence.³ So far as human or revealed knowledge can aid one to something of a

³“That is the more real part of a man in which his characteristics and his qualities are. All the facts and phenomena of life confirm the doctrine that the soul (spirit) is the real man. What makes the (qualities) [quality] of a man? What gives him character as good or bad, small or great, lovable or detestable? Do these qualities pertain to the body? Everyone knows that they do not. But they are qualities of the (mind) [man]. Then the real man is not the body, but is the living soul.” Warren, *World's Parliament of Religions* 1:480.

conclusion, there is no intelligence existing separate and apart from persons, from intelligent entities. Either intelligence exists as individual persons, or as proceeding from such persons as a power, or force, such as the Spirit of God when it “moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2)—But this Spirit of God is never separated from its source, any more than rays of light are separated from the luminous bodies whence they proceed. So that if any affirm a Universal Intelligence, or “Cosmic Mind,” or “Over-Soul,” as existing in the universe, it is a spirit, proceeding either from an individual intelligence, or from harmonized individual intelligences—as mind atmosphere proceeding from them—a projection of their mind—into the universe, as our sun and all the suns project light and warmth into the space-depths, so from harmonized intelligences proceeds that spirit force we recognize as the “Spirit of God,” extending God and all his powers throughout the immensity of space.

The book of Abraham on the eternity of intelligences. In further evidence of the eternal existence of individual intelligences, I quote from the book of Abraham, which is of equal authority with any portion of the Bible:

If two things exist, and there be one above the other, there shall be greater things above them. . . . If there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other, yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are gnolaum, or eternal. (Abr. 3:16-18)

Of words used interchangeably in the scriptures. Before making another quotation, in further proof of the eternity of each individual intelligence, I must needs make a brief detour and say something in regard to the use of words interchangeably. It is often the case that misconceptions arise through a careless use of words, and through using words interchangeably, without regard to shades of differences that attach to them; and this in the scriptures as in other writings. Indeed, this fault is more frequent in the scriptures perhaps than in any other writings; for the reason that for the most part, the scriptures were composed by men who did not aim at scientific exactness in the use of words. They were not in most cases equal to such precision in the use of language in the first place; and in the second place they depended more upon the general tenor of what they wrote for making truth apparent than upon technical precision in a choice of words; ideas, not exactness of expression, was the burden of their souls; thought, not its

dress. Hence in scripture a large dependence upon the general tenor of what is written to convey the truth is characteristic of the writers of it. Thus the expressions, “Kingdom of God,” “Kingdom of Heaven,” “the Whole Family in Heaven,” “The Church of Christ,” “The Church of God,” are often used interchangeably for the “Church of Christ,” when they are not always equivalents. So, too, are used the terms “spirit of God” and “Holy Ghost”; “Spirit of Christ,” and the “Holy Ghost”; “spirit” and “soul”; “intelligences” and “spirits,” and “angels.” I mention this now because I believe many of the differences of opinion and much of the confusion of ideas that exist arise out of our not recognizing, or our not remembering these facts.

And now, as to the quotation of which these remarks on the interchangeable use of words was deemed necessary before giving it.

Joseph Smith on the eternity of intelligences. The quotation is from a discourse by the Prophet of the New Dispensation, Joseph Smith, generally known as the “King Follett’s Sermon.” It was delivered at Nauvoo in April, 1844, a little more than two months before the Prophet’s martyrdom. It was taken down in longhand and published from the notes of those who wrote it down, Willard Richards, counselor to the Prophet; Wilford Woodruff, one of the Twelve Apostles; Thomas Bullock, the secretary of the Prophet; and William Clayton, also a secretary to the Prophet. It was not reported stenographically, and hence some verbal errors in the reporting may exist. For instance, in the sermon as printed several times in Church publications,⁴ the Prophet is represented as saying: “The intelligence which man possesses is co-equal with God himself.” There can be no question, but what this “co-equal” is an error. From the whole tenor of the discourse, the word used must have been “coeternal” with God, not “co-equal.”

With the explanation here set forth, we shall take the liberty of placing in brackets the right word, where a wrong one has clearly been used; and, in cases where “spirit” and “intelligence,” have been used interchangeably, we shall indicate that in the same manner. And now the excerpt from the King Follett Sermon:

The soul—the mind of man—the immortal spirit (intelligence).
Where did it come from? All learned men and doctors of divinity say

⁴The King Follett Sermon was published, at least a large section of it, in the *Times and Seasons* August 15, 1844, two months following the martyrdom of the Prophet; next it appeared in the *Journal of Discourses* 6:1-11; and on many various occasions since. The last publication of it was in the *Improvement Era* 12 (January 1909): 169-91, with references and footnotes by the present writer; now published as a pamphlet by the Magazine Printing Co., Salt Lake City, 1926.

that God created it in the beginning; but it is not so: the very idea lessens man in my estimation. I do not believe the doctrine; I know better. Hear it, all ye ends of the world; for God has told me so; and if you don't believe me, it will not make the truth without effect. . . . We say that God himself is a self-existent being. Who told you so? It is correct enough; but how did it get into your heads? Who told you that man did not exist in like manner upon the same principles? Man does exist upon the same principles. God made a tabernacle and put a spirit into it, and it became a living soul. How does it read in the Hebrew? It does not say in the Hebrew that God created the spirit of man. It says "God made man out of the earth and put into him Adam's spirit, and so became a living body."

The mind or the intelligence which man possesses is co-equal ⟨co-eternal⟩ with God himself. I know that my testimony is true. . . . I am dwelling on the immortality of the spirit ⟨intelligence⟩ of man. Is it logical to say that the intelligence of spirits is immortal, and yet that it ⟨i.e., the intelligence⟩ had a beginning? The intelligence of spirits had no beginning, neither will it have an end. That is good logic. That which has a beginning may have an end. There never was a time when there were no spirits ⟨intelligences⟩; for they are co-equal ⟨co-eternal⟩ with our Father in heaven. . . . Intelligence is eternal and exists upon a self-existent principle. It is a spirit ⟨intelligence⟩ from age to age, and there is no creation about it. . . . The first principles of a man ⟨his intelligence⟩ are self-existent with God.

The difference between "spirits" and "intelligences" as herein used is this: Intelligences are uncreated entities, some inhabiting spiritual bodies—bodies composed of fine spirit elements, others are intelligences unembodied in either spirit bodies or other kinds of bodies. They are uncreated; self-existent entities, necessarily self-conscious, and otherwise consciousness—they are conscious of the "me" and the "not me." They possess powers of comparison and discrimination without which the term "intelligence" would be a solecism. They discern between evil and good; between good and better; they possess will or freedom—within certain limits at least. The power, among other powers, to determine upon a given course of conduct as against any other course of conduct. The individual intelligence can think his own thoughts, act wisely or foolishly; do right or wrong. To accredit an intelligence with fewer or less important powers than these would be to deny him intelligence altogether.

Value of the doctrine of the eternity of intelligences. It may be asked, what value is this doctrine of the eternal existence of uncreated intelligences, regarding each man as possessed of something within him, and the chief thing about him, as an eternal entity? In what way

does it contribute to the better apprehension of that which is, the Truth? How better show the Way? How better lead to the Life? These considerations are really to underlie all our discussion of the general scheme of things in this earth of ours, and concerning the race of sentient and intelligent beings who inhabit it.

This conception of the eternity of the mind, the intelligence of man, affects in a very vital way the general scheme of things. As matters now stand the usually accepted "Christian doctrine" in the matter of man's origin is that God of his free will "created out of nothing" the spirit and body of man. That men are as he would have them, since in his act of creation he could have had them different had he so minded. Then why should he—being infinitely wise, and powerful, and good—for so the creeds represent him—why should he create by mere act of volition beings such as men are, not only capable of, but prone to moral evil? Which, under the theory of God creating man, spirit and body, absolutely, and "out of nothing" in the last analysis of things, in spite of all special pleadings to the contrary, leaves responsibility for moral evil in the world with God?

God's creative acts culminating thus, the next pertinent questions are: Then what of the decreed purpose of God to punish moral evil? And what of the much vaunted justice of God in that punishment? Wherein lies the responsibility of man if he was so created as to love evil and to follow it? Is it not revolting to reason, as it is shocking to piety, to think that God of his own free will created some men, not only inclined to wickedness, but desperately so inclined; while others, he of his own volition created with dispositions naturally inclined toward goodness? In like manner stands it with man in relation to his inclination to faith, and to disbelief; and yet, under the orthodox "Christian" belief all are included under one law for judgment, and that eternal judgment!

On the other hand, under the conception of the existence of independent, uncreated, self-existent intelligences, who by the inherent nature of them are of various degrees of intelligence and moral quality, differing from each other in many ways, yet alike in their eternity and their freedom—how stands it under this conception of things? Let us so far anticipate consideration of the purposes of God in the earth life of man as to suppose that God's purpose is the betterment of the condition of these intelligences, and as men to provide progress for them to higher levels of being, and power through change. Under this conception of things how would matters stand? There is the begetting of these intelligences, the begetting of spirits, the spirits of men, and finally bringing men forth as resurrected *immortal* personages of infinite

possibilities. At each change increased powers for development are added to intelligences; yet ever present through all the processes of betterment is the self-existent entity, the “intelligence” with the tremendous fact of its, or his—for always he is personal—consciousness, and moral freedom, and indestructibility. He has his choice of moving upward or downward in every estate he occupies; often defeating, for a time, at least, the benevolent purposes of God respecting him, through his own perverseness. He passes through dire experiences, suffers terribly, yet learns by what he suffers, so that his very suffering becomes a means to his improvement. He learns quickly or slowly according to the inherent nature of him, obedience to law. He learns that

that which is governed by law is also preserved by law and perfected and sanctified by the same. *⟨And⟩* That which breaketh [a] law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willeth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, or judgment. Therefore, [they] must remain filthy still. (D&C 88:34–35)

This conception of things relieves God of the responsibility for the nature and status of intelligences in all stages of their development; their inherent nature and their volition make them primarily what they are. This nature they may change, slowly, perhaps, yet change it they may. God has put them in the way of changing it by enlarging their intelligence through increase of knowledge and change of environment, ~~through change~~, through experiences. The only way God effects these self-existent beings is favorably; he creates not their inherent nature; he is not responsible for the use they make of their freedom to choose good or evil—their free moral agency; nor is he the author of their sufferings when they fall into sin; that arises out of the violation of law, and must be endured until its lessons are learned. But meantime, each for himself, intelligence, spirit, or man—the last all three combined is responsible for his own status—not God.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Roberts, “History of the ‘Mormon’ Church”; Roberts, *Joseph Smith the Prophet Teacher*; Roberts, *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 2:1–27 and throughout the course. Roberts stated: “This subject, being more especially a doctrine of the New Dispensation, does not admit of a wide range of references.” For a discussion about primal intelligences being clothed with spirits and bodies, see pages 606–8 below.

Purpose of God in the Earth Life of Man

We are now prepared to consider the purpose of God in the “creation” of man and in a broader way than in the allusion to it in the twenty-first chapter, where it was briefly considered merely to show the wrong and the inadequate conceptions entertained upon the subject in the current theology of the churches. Also we are to consider such purpose in the light of that fuller knowledge of the subject, which has been made of it through the revelations of God which have come to men in the New Dispensation. It has already been pointed out that there is no clear-cut knowledge to be found on the purpose of God in creation in any of the revelations in the Old Testament or in the New. The question therefore is, what new light has been thrown upon said purpose in the supplemental revelations of the New Dispensation. Here we are most happy in finding both clear-cut and adequate word of God upon the subject. In the Mosaic fragment before referred to in these pages comprising the book of Moses, we have this as word of God to Israel’s great prophet.

God’s work and glory.

(a) Testimony of Moses. “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and ⟨the⟩ eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

To appreciate the full value of that brief statement, we will suppose that from some catacomb or pyramid, or temple of Egypt, an

On the contents page introducing this chapter, Roberts recommended, among others, an article entitled “Immortality of Man,” from the *Improvement Era* (April 1907). He appended the following explanation: “This article was really a report of a committee appointed by the First Presidency to answer a number of questions that had been submitted to them on the nature of man’s immortality. The committee was Elder Francis M. Lyman of the Twelve Apostles, and Elder B. H. Roberts of the First Council of the Seventy. The report was submitted to the First Presidency and a number of the Twelve. An editorial note in the *Era* above

imperishable parchment had been found, which undeniably was a lost fragment of the writings of Moses, and was the word of God to him, so that this could be regarded *by* Jew and Christian alike, as a veritable utterance of God. What value would Jew and Christian assign to it, especially in view of the fact that there is no such adequate utterance in any reputed revelation in the Old Testament or in the New, on the purpose of God with reference to the creation of man? Would it not be hailed as a pearl beyond price? A flash from the inner fact of things, driving back the mysteries and *the* blackness from the horizon of man's vision as to why he is here in this God's world? It is the purpose of God "to bring to pass the immortality and <the> eternal life of man"—as man, of course. As immortal man! Immortal as the Christ was and is after his resurrection from the dead, spirit and body indissolubly united; one "soul"; for in the light of our new knowledge, "the spirit and the body <is> [are] the soul of man. And the resurrection <of the body> [from the dead] is the redemption of the soul" (D&C 88:15-16). To this first completed "soul" (**The Christ**) had been given all power in heaven and in earth, and he began the radiation of that "all power," by giving commission to his apostles—his officially accredited witnesses for the whole truth of the gospel scheme of things, with an injunction that they were to teach all nations and administer ~~its~~ *the gospel* ordinances of salvation to them. *As with the Christ* so shall it be with men in varying degrees as to the glory and power of the immortal existence ~~as~~ we are assured will come ~~unto~~ them.

But let us not outrun the development of our theme. Let us confine ourselves for the moment to this thought: "This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

(b) Testimony of the Book of Mormon. This utterance from the Mosaic fragment of revelation is not the only word, nor the completed word that has come to the world through the revelation of God in the New Dispensation. Another word is found, and an additional purpose given—to the one already above set forth—viz., in the American volume of scripture, the Book of Mormon, there one of the old prophets of the ancient American race is represented as saying: "All things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might

referred to, makes the following statement: 'Elder Roberts submitted the following paper to the First Presidency and a number of the Twelve Apostles (seven were present) none of whom found anything objectionable in it or contrary to the revealed word of God, and therefore favored its publication.' Editors."

have joy” (2 Ne. 2:24–25). “Adam fell that men might be”; that is, that men might have existence as men; and the design in bringing about the existence of man through Adam’s fall is ultimately that he might have joy, exist in a sphere or realm of joy, a world and state of joy. A world where joy shall obtain and persist and go on and on! Not for dole and sorrow is God bringing man into an existence that is to be immortal—deathless. But for joy; ~~not happiness but~~ something greater than happiness—Joy! of which more later, when we shall contemplate it, and revel in it; ~~when we after we~~ get into the reader’s mind the fullness of this unfolding truth of the purpose of God in the creation of man.

(c) *Testimony of the Prophet of the New Dispensation.* We have brought into this consideration a word from Moses, God’s masterful, prince-like prophet, who knew his God “face to face.” We have brought a word from Lehi, the faithful prophet of another branch of the House of Israel, which dwelt in America—the Book of Mormon passage. We have yet another word, and a deeper reason given on the same theme, and this time direct from God to the Prophet of the New Dispensation. Let us hear him. Jesus, the Christ is speaking to the Prophet.

The larger view of man’s life.

I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn. . . . Ye *<the Prophet and the brethren with him when the revelation was given>* were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is spirit. . . . Man *<the race—all men>* was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. All truth is independent in that sphere in which God hath placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence *<i.e. no place where these conditions do not obtain>*. Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light. And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation. For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy; And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy. The elements are the tabernacle of God; yea, man is the tabernacle of God, even temples; and whatsoever temple is defiled, God shall destroy that temple. The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words, light and truth. (D&C 93:21, 23, 29–36)

[This is] a prose-poem, on a profoundly spiritual subject, the most exalted [which] man can contemplate: *the purpose of man’s earth life*. Had the Prophet of the New Dispensation left no other word to the world than that word, he would have been a prophet, a seer; one

who sees, and sees truly; and teaches God's truth, for that prose-poem is true. Let us contemplate it, let us give it exposition step by step as it unfolds to our thought.

Exposition of the larger view of man's life. First, Jesus who gives the revelation, is declared to be in the beginning with God, co-eternal with God; that part of him which matters most, intelligence; the intelligent entity; which was not created, and was not made; but which is eternal, as all intelligences are. The "Thing," the "Entity" which starts out on its career of progress, not each of the same quality or degree, but various; not all as the "Word," who is the Christ, was; but whether of low or of high degree, nevertheless equal in this one thing, their eternity;¹ and they are what they are in virtue of what their varied intelligence itself is. Not being of the same capacity, they will go forward swiftly, or slowly, or stand still, as they choose. Some **intelligences as spirits**[†] will rebel against the order of things in the universe as did Lucifer and his following, but they will not prevail against the order of the universe, that shall stand secure, because there will always be enough, and enough of sufficient power, to hold things in their course of progress, and to the attainment of the higher things, the best things. But these rebellious ones may if they so choose persist in their rebellion against the higher intelligences—even against God and the orderly universe; but they must endure the consequences. So much for the initial thought of the passage, and now the next step.

"I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn." Is not that "Firstborn" incompatible with the idea of the eternity of the Christ-Intelligence? Who from the beginning was with God, and was God? Why

¹In proof of this I quote what the Lord said to Abraham:

The Lord said unto me. . . . If two things exist, and there be one above the other, there shall be greater things above. . . . Now, if there be two things, one above the other, and the moon be above the earth, then it may be that a planet or a star may exist above it. . . . As, also, if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other, yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are *gnolaum*, or eternal. (Abr. 3:15-18)

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve commented:

Intelligence and Spirit as used in this chapter are confusing terms. The thought may be gathered that "Intelligence"—that eternal entity which was not created, may, and some times does, rebel against truth and God. We do not so understand it. Those who rebelled in the world of spirits were *begotten* spirits, who, if they had remained faithful, were prepared

“Firstborn”? It can be no other than this: That mighty, self-existent, Intelligence, which was the “Word,” and was in the beginning with God, the Father, was begotten a spirit; and in the order of our earth, and the **spirit** intelligences connected and associated with it, was the “firstborn” of the spirits ~~of that sub-division of the universe~~—the “firstborn” of many brethren;² and ~~he~~ **the Christ** illustrates what takes place with all intelligent entities of the divine human species. Intelligences are begotten spirits, and these spirits **no doubt** are more definite personalities, **and of** greater tangibility, and possessed of higher powers than many suppose them to be. It is written in Hebrews that God had revealed himself to men through the Son, “who was the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person . . . by whom also he made the worlds” (Heb. 1:2-3).^a This making of worlds, was previous to the earth life of the Christ, and hence was a work accomplished when he was a spirit **personage**, in which spirit life he was the “Firstborn.”

to come into this mortal world. The revelation which speaks of intelligence says: “Man was in the beginning with God.” (When was this beginning?) Then this thought follows: “Intelligence, or the *light of truth*, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.” Again we are taught that “light and truth”—intelligence—“forsaketh that evil one.” This being true, and treating intelligence as an entity, then that entity cannot rebel against light and truth, for it would rebel against itself.

Handwritten notes by Roberts, found on his copy of the committee’s report in response to these points, read: **Miss.apprehension here what is Intel? That which perceives truth Intel. within a Sp[irit] or Intel & Sp. in body the Sp. I Int. Clarify. Of no substance or importance this objection.** The handwritten changes made on the typescript by Roberts appear to address this problem. Reporting to President Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith explained: “In the opinion of the committee the intention is that these intelligences after they become *spirits* may rebel, as Lucifer did. Can this be clarified to say this? We do not have any revelation stating that intelligences have power to rebel.”

²Rom. 8:29 where Jesus the Son of God is referred to as “the firstborn among many brethren.” Again in Col. 1:15 it is written, speaking of the Christ, “who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.” In Heb. 1:6 “And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”

^aRoberts inserted a sheet of paper into his copy of the Bible commenting on Hebrews 1 and listing the attributes of Jesus found there. “The creations shall wax old and pass away [but] Jesus shall remain.” Roberts refers to 1 Tim. 3:16; John 1:1-14; Col. 1:12, 19; 2:9; and the title page of the Book of Mormon as proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ and notes that “Jesus the Christ fulfills all these conditions and we may not doubt the Deity of Jesus.” In the margin to verse 8, Roberts notes that God the Father addresses Jesus as God; he points to Numbers 12:6-8 as “a fine collection of instances of the divers manners of rev[elation]”; and he quotes from the King Follett Discourse, giving “Joseph Smith’s view of God. 1844.”

Moriancumer's vision of the Christ in his spirit body.

Fortunately too, we have a very great message on this point from a revelation in the Book of Mormon, where the preexistent Spirit of the Christ appeared to an ancient prophet among the Jaredite people. This prophet was Moriancumer, ***the brother of Jared***. He besought the Lord, according to the Book of Mormon account of the vision, to make luminous certain stones which were to give light to the barges in which the people of Moriancumer were to cross the seas from the “Old World” to the “New.” And as the hand of ~~God~~ ***the Spirit-Christ*** was outstretched to touch the stones, the vision of Moriancumer was ***so*** quickened that he beheld the finger of the Lord, and fell down before Him stricken in fear, and said: “I knew not that *the Lord had flesh and blood . . .* ⟨for the finger⟩ was as the finger of a man, *like* unto flesh and blood. . . . And the Lord said unto him: Because of thy faith thou hast seen that *I shall take upon me flesh and blood.* ⟨Not that he was then flesh and blood.⟩” (cf. Ether 3:6–9; italics added). And then was given to this prophet a full view of the Lord, as later ***such a view*** was given unto Moses and other ~~members~~ ***leaders*** of the House of Israel.³ And the Lord said:

Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh. (Ether 3:16; [italics added])

Not in flesh and blood, then, did Moriancumer behold the Lord, but in the body of the Lord's spirit, or the ~~spiritual~~ ***spirit body***; the spirit body begotten of the Father, inhabited by the intelligent entity, the “Word” that was with God in the beginning, and from all eternity, and “that was God,” and “that was ⟨***finally***⟩ made flesh,” and “dwelt among men.”[†]

Now to resume our comment in the more direct line: “Ye were also in the beginning with the Father,” continued the Christ, speaking to the Prophet Joseph Smith and the brethren who were with him—***when the revelation was received***—“Ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit” (D&C 93:23). And, of course, as the spirit nature of the Christ was, so too was their nature: intelligences, begotten spirits, and capable of immense activities and great achievements.

³See vision of Moses, Aaron & ~~70~~ ***Seventy*** of the Elders, Ex. 34:9–11.

[†]On this point, the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve commented: “The use of the expression ‘Spirit-body of Christ,’ and ‘The Word,’ is not made clear to us, and we are left to wonder if these terms apply to the ‘Intelligence’ or to the begotten spirit of Jesus Christ.” On this, Roberts wrote the following note: ***Id. Clarify***. The changes Roberts made on the typescript appear to be in response to this comment.

The essential qualities of intelligences. Connected with this eternal existence of intelligences is the agency, or moral freedom of them; which carries with it the condemnation of man when disobedient to righteous laws. “Because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them,” as intelligences, “and they receive not the light. And every man whose spirit ~~(i.e., intelligence)~~ receiveth not the light is under condemnation. For man is spirit” (intelligence within a spirit body) (D&C 93:31–33); and this “spirit,” is native to the “light of truth”; that is, it has natural affinity for that light of truth. Even as flame leaps towards flame and blends with it, so truth proclaimed and striking the hearing spirit of man, finds entrance there, and understanding; unless ~~man~~ **he** by perverseness holds back the will to believe, and with that holding back comes condemnation because he receives not the light which comes to his understanding—**his** intelligence.

The completed thought on the purpose of God in man’s earth life. Again: “For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, ~~(inseparately)~~ [inseparably] connected, receive a fullness of joy” (D&C 93:33).

Here our circle completes itself. Moses told us, that the purpose of God was to bring to pass the immortality and the eternal life of man; the Nephite prophet told us that Adam fell that man might be, or exist as man; and that men are that they might have joy. And now, in this prose-poem of our Prophet of the New Dispensation, comes out this same truth under new form—“Man is spirit,” ***he has the native power to cognize truth***; “the elements are eternal, and spirit and element inseparably connected receive a fullness of joy, and when separated man cannot receive a fullness of joy.” And that is what God is working at through this earth life ~~for~~ ***of*** man. Man shall come to that immortality of which Moses speaks, shall come to that inseparable connection between elements and spirit—which shall be wrought ultimately through the resurrection from the dead, of which the Christ is the type, ***and the power***. And through that indissoluble union of spirit and element **thus wrought** an immortal man shall be brought into being, with full equipment for that advancement over God’s great highway of progress universewide, and long, and deep, and high; and running through all the ages that know no limitations. This the purpose of God in the earth life of man—man’s eternal progress, and in that, and growing out of it, man’s everlasting joy.

And this “joy”—what is it? What is meant by this—“Man is that he might have joy?” Have we here the reappearance of the old Epicurean doctrine, “Pleasure is the supreme good, and chief end of life?” No, verily! Nor any form of ancient or modern Hedonism⁴ whatsoever. For mark, in the first place, the different words “joy” and “pleasure.” They are not synonymous. The first does not necessarily arise from the second. Joy may arise from quite another source than “pleasure” even from pain, when the endurance of pain is to eventuate in the achievement of some good: such as the travail of a mother in bringing forth her offspring; the weariness and pain and danger of toil by a father, to secure comforts for loved ones. Moreover, whatever apologists may say, it is very clear that the “pleasure” of the Epicurean philosophy, hailed as “the supreme good and chief end of life,” was to arise from agreeable sensations, or whatever gratified the senses, and hence was, in the last analysis of it—in its roots and branches—in its theory and in its practice—“sensualism.” It was to result in physical ease and comfort, and mental inactivity—other than a conscious, self-complacence—being regarded as “the supreme good and chief end of life.” We judge this to be the net result of this philosophy since these are the very conditions in which Epicureans describe even the gods to exist; and surely men could not hope for more “pleasure,” or greater “happiness” than that possessed by their gods. Cicero even charges that the sensualism of Epicurus was so gross that he represents him as blaming his brother, Timocrates, “‘because that brother would not allow that everything which had any reference to a happy life was to be measured by the belly’; nor has he,” continues Cicero, “said this once only, but often.”⁵

⁴Hedonism:

the doctrine of certain Greek philosophers . . . ; in ethics, gross self-interest. Hedonism is the form of eudemonism that regards pleasure (including avoidance of pain) as the only conceivable object in life, and teaches that as between the lower pleasures of sense and the higher enjoyments of reason, or satisfied self-respect, there is no difference except in the degree, duration, and hedonic value of the experience, there being, in strictness, no such thing as ethical or moral value. (*Standard Dictionary*, New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1895.)

⁵In Cicero’s description of the Epicurean conception of the gods, he says:

That which is truly happy cannot be burdened with any labor itself, nor can it impose any labor on another, nor can it be influenced by resentment or favor, because things which are liable to such failings must be weak and frail. . . . Their life [i.e., of the gods] is most happy and the most abounding with all kinds of blessings which can be conceived. They do

This is not the “joy,” it is needless to say, contemplated in our text. Nor is the “joy” there contemplated the “joy” of mere innocence—mere innocence! Which, say what you will of it, is but a negative sort of virtue: a virtue that is colorless, never quite sure of itself, always more or less uncertain, because untried. Such a virtue—if mere absence of vice may be called virtue—would be unproductive of that “joy,” the attainment of which is set forth in the context of the Book of Mormon passage above quoted, as the purpose of man’s existence. It is written, “They \langle Adam and Eve \rangle would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin” (2 Ne. 2:23). From which it appears that the “joy” contemplated herein is to arise from something more than mere innocence, which is impliedly unproductive of “joy.” The “joy” contemplated herein is to arise out of a man’s knowledge of evil, of sin; through knowing misery, sorrow, pain, and suffering; through seeing good and evil locked in awful conflict; through a consciousness of having chosen in that conflict the better part, the good (which will include the true and the beautiful); and not only in having chosen it, but in having wedded it by eternal compact; made it his by right of conquest over evil. It is the “joy” that will arise from a consciousness of having “fought the good fight,” of having “kept the faith.” It will arise from a consciousness of moral, spiritual, and physical strength; of strength gained in conflict. The strength that comes from experience; from having sounded the depths of the soul; from experiencing all the emotions of which mind is susceptible; from testing all the qualities and strength of the intellect. A “joy” that will come to man from a contemplation of the universe, and a consciousness that he is an heir to all that is, a joint heir with Jesus Christ and God the Father; from knowing that he is an essential part of all that is. It is a “joy” that will be born of the consciousness of existence itself, that will revel in existence, in thoughts of realization of existence’s limitless possibilities. A “joy” born of the consciousness of the power of eternal increase. A “joy” arising from association with the intelligences of innumerable heavens, the gods of all eternities. A “joy” born of a consciousness of being, intelligence, of faith, knowledge, light, truth, mercy, *justice*, love, glory, dominion, wisdom, power; all feelings, affections, emotions, passions; all heights and all depths.

nothing. They are embarrassed with no business; nor do they perform any work. They rejoice in the possession of their own wisdom and virtue. They are satisfied that they shall ever enjoy the fulness of eternal pleasure. . . . Nothing can be happy that is not at ease. (Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, “Nature of the Gods,” 266–68)

“Men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25); and that “joy” is based upon and contemplates all that is here set down.

The truth in respect to man. Here, then, stands the truth so far as it may be gathered from God’s revelations and the nature of things ***respecting man***: There is in man an eternal, uncreated, self-existing entity, call it “intelligence,” “mind,” “spirit,” “soul”—**for these terms are often used interchangeably in the scriptures—but call it what you will, so long as you recognize it, and regard its nature as in the main, intelligent and as eternal.**† There came a time when in the progress of things (which is only another way of saying in “the nature of things”), an earth career, or earth existence, because of the things it has to teach, was necessary to the enlargement, to the advancement of the “intelligences”; hence an earth is prepared; and One, ~~as we have seen~~, sufficiently advanced and able, by the nature of him, ~~and~~ to bring to pass the necessary event, **and** the spirit in which he proposed to work, **found satisfactory**—is chosen to act as Redeemer to the race.

As to the second part of the great truth—“men are that they might have joy”—viewed in the light of the “intelligence” ~~or “spirit”~~ in man being an eternal, uncreated, self-existing entity, **and** remembering what ~~I have~~ **has** already **been** said as to the nature of this “joy,” which it is the purpose of earth existence to secure; remembering also from what this joy is to arise—from the highest possible development—the highest conceivable enlargement of physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual powers—**remembering all this**, what other conceivable purpose for existence in earth life could there be for eternal intelligences than this attainment of “joy” arising from progress? Man’s existence for the “manifestation ~~alone~~ of God’s glory,” as taught by the creeds of men, is not equal to it. That view represents man as but a thing created, and God as selfish and vain of glory. True, the Book of Mormon idea of the purpose of man’s existence—that he might have joy—is accompanied by a manifestation of God’s glory; for with the progress of intelligences there must be an ever-widening manifestation of the glory of God. It is written that “the glory of God is intelligence”; and it must follow, as the day follows night, that with the enlargement, with the progress of intelligences, there must ever be a constantly increasing splendor in the manifestation of the glory of God. But in our doctrine, the manifestation of that glory **is may be said to be**

†The committee of the Quorum of Twelve remarked: “The use of ‘Mind, spirit, and soul’ appears confusing to us.” Roberts appears to have modified his text in response to the committee’s concern.

incidental. The primary purpose is not in that manifestation but *in* the “joy” arising from the progress of intelligences. And yet that fact adds to the glory of God, since it represents God as seeking the enlargement and “joy” of kindred intelligences to himself though more lowly, rather than the mere selfish manifestation of his own personal glory. “This is my work and my glory,” saith the Lord, “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39); and therein is God’s “joy.” A “joy” that comes from the progress of others. Not the immortality of the “spirit” of man, mark you, for that immortality is already existent; but to bring to pass the immortality of the spirit and body in a united status, and which together constitutes “man,” the “soul,” the completed man; for “the spirit and the body are the soul of man”; and “the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul” (D&C 88:15–16)—the whole man. And the noble purpose of all this is that man might have joy; that joy which, in the last analysis of things, should be even as God’s joy, and God’s glory, namely, the bringing to pass the progress, enlargement and joy of others.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Smith, “King Follett Discourse”; Roberts, “History of the ‘Mormon’ Church”; Roberts, “Immortality of Man”; Roberts, *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 2:1–27 and 4:1–23; 2 Ne. 2:1–30; D&C 93; Moses, esp. ch. 1; Abraham, esp. ch. 3. On the contrast between Roberts’s ideas concerning the purpose of life and those of traditional Jewish and Christian thinkers, see pages 608–10 below.

A Review of Part I

We have now before us the treatment of themes it was my purpose to consider under the first division of this work—the Truth.

What man knows of truth. We began by a brief treatise of what truth is, finding that “truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24). We went in search of what knowledge, in a general way, man possesses. We began with man’s knowledge of himself, and his knowledge of other selfs and things. Moving from man’s childhood knowledge of things immediately about him, we extended our account of his knowledge outward to his country, to other countries, and finally to the whole world he inhabits. Thence we turned to what knowledge he has acquired of the solar system to which his earth belongs. Here a diversion was made to the consideration of the ideas of the existences of space, time, matter, force, mind, and the reign of law. We reached knowledge of these important things both by inductions and by deductions, and by arriving at “necessary truths” concerning them: viz., by becoming conscious of the inability of the mind to conceive the contrary of the conclusions made.

Thence we sought knowledge concerning the solar system; something concerning the planets and their satellites of which it consists; the immense distances within it, and the mass and greatness of its respective planets, and of the sun, the center of the system. Thence we glanced at the sidereal system, our galaxy, the immensity of it, composed as it is of hundreds of millions of suns, one billion at least; and yet, great as it is, not comprising all the universes that exist, if we may be permitted to use words that once would have been fiercely paradoxical, but now accepted quite understandingly; for our galaxy is but one out of many others, faintly discernible by man’s improved scientific instruments to be in existence; and how many galaxies exist in boundless space is a matter of conjecture merely—but it is quite apparent that they may extend to infinity.

Large questions. Then came the question, do these suns other than our own that make up our galaxy, and other galaxies, have groups of planets revolving about them, as our sun has? No positive answer could be made to that question from human knowledge. It was here that we adopted the principle of “reasoning from what we know” to possibility, to probability, and likelihood. Thus knowing that our own sun has his retinue of planets moving in their respective orbits about him, it is possible, nay, probable that the other suns also have their planetary systems. There exists no known reason why it should not be so; for the forces that produced planets for the orb of our own system would most likely produce planets to other similar suns.

Then came the further question: are other planets of our own solar system, and the planetary systems of other suns inhabited by sentient intelligences? We know that our own is, and again, “reasoning from what we know,” it seems probable that other planets of our solar system and the planets of like systems throughout the universe would be inhabited by sentient intelligences. It seems unreasonable to think that our little speck of an earth in our own solar system and in the universe should be the only one so inhabited; and what a waste of creative energy there must have been if these billions of worlds are tenantless of intelligent and joyous inhabitants!

Then the question: may not many of these worlds in other planetary systems be ~~immensely~~ *vastly* older than our own? And since time is often a factor in development, may not the inhabitants of these older worlds be superior intelligences, and more highly developed than those of our own world inhabitants? With superior community life, and higher stages of civilization in their worlds than exists in ours?

Nature of universe intelligences. Further we asked: may not these superior intelligences be possessed of altruistic sentiments and impulses, which would lead them to have interests in other worlds than their own and the inhabitants thereof? Again applying the principle of “reasoning from what we know,” we found that superior intelligences in our own earth possessed such altruistic sentiments; and that they were led to seek the development and general welfare through up-lift of undeveloped peoples, leading even to self-sacrifice and the elimination of selfish interests in order to attain the welfare of the undeveloped, or the reformation of the fallen. Knowing this, it led us to the conclusion that the superior intelligences of more highly developed worlds might be led to do something akin to this by means of communicating knowledge to the less developed worlds, to draw them into higher stages of development, to the increase of their well-being and joy.

Interplanetary communication. The question of interplanetary communication, however, came into consideration as a possible barrier to such communications. But investigation of man's progressive mastery over the difficulties of communication and transportation over the earth he inhabits, his triumph over distances between islands and continents, and the establishment of all but instant communication over the whole earth, led to the conclusion that interplanetary communication and visitation by the intelligences of other worlds might have been so mastered as to form no insuperable obstacle to communication and visitation to the earth. Hence the possibility of interplanetary communication and visitation might be regarded as the ground of possible revelation.

Reign of law. The order of the universe, the evident existence of a reign of law throughout, was considered as evidence of intelligence presiding within the universe and in some way conserving and governing therein. Evidently an orderly universe proclaims the reign of mind over matter—enthroning somehow intelligence as in control of the universe.

This it was concluded might have given rise to those traditions about God which the fathers from the earliest ages communicated to succeeding generations. And this in turn inspired spiritual souls to seek after God, until at least they supposed they had found him, and reported as from him their findings—their revelations of him. From this point began a brief review of those reports of the great teachers to their respective peoples on what they had found regarding God, the universe, life and the meaning and intent of it.

The world's great religions: Reports of seekers after God. Briefly we considered the Babylonian-Assyrian religion; the religion of the Egyptians; also of the Persians, the Medes and Phoenicians; of the Greek and the Roman; and the religions of Northern Europe. Also the Mohammedan religion; the religions of India—Brahmanism and Buddhism; and the religions of China—Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Finally we came to the Hebrew revelation and religion.

In all this, of course, there could be only a cursory review; and yet, as before stated, some sort of a review of all these religions was necessary to the completion of our theme, and in order to get before the reader the reports of the seekers after God.

The Hebrew-Christian revelation. Of the reports on God delivered to the world, that which came through the prophets of the Hebrew

race and its proper supplement found in the Christian development of two thousand years ago, we judged to be of sufficient importance to call for special consideration. From that revelation considered, both from the Old Testament and the New, we discovered the revelation of God in the person and character of Jesus of Nazareth, who through his life and resurrection to immortality became God's revelation of himself—God incarnate—a complete manifestation of Deity, of the Godhead bodily.

Thence we traced in history the misapprehension and final rejection or misunderstanding of this revelation through one of the divine intelligences sent from another world, a son of God, to enlighten the inhabitants of our world as to God, to redeem and to sanctify earth's inhabitants.

Also we considered the misapprehension of men concerning the creation of the world; how even those who believed the revelation supposed the worlds to have been created out of nothing. Likewise, briefly, we examined the misapprehension of men concerning the origin of man and the purpose of God in his creation.

Revelation: Modern. At this point we took up the consideration of revelation, especially with reference to modern revelation, the reasonable expectation that the modern world may have that the spirit of revelation would function in these modern days as in ancient times; and the modern world's need of revelation for guidance; and the important fact that the revelations given to our earth from the beginning are local; that they pertain to our earth and its heavens—its associated worlds and world systems, and their inhabitants, past and present and those yet to be. All of which is made known from a fragment of scripture brought to light in the New Dispensation by revelation to its Prophet Joseph, and called the book of Moses. The book of Moses is followed by another fragment of scripture, also brought forth in the New Dispensation and by the same Prophet, known as the book of Abraham, containing knowledge which God revealed to the Hebrew patriarch in Egypt; knowledge concerning the earth and its heavens. In outline may be discerned an Abrahamic system of that part of the universe to which our earth and solar system belong—a section of the universe. The book of Abraham, like the book of Moses, is but a fragment, and our Prophet has given a translation of but part of it. Even so, it is of highest importance to our knowledge as to what the ancients knew concerning the universe, God, man and the preexistent spirits of men, their rank and station in the spirit world, and God's purpose with reference to the creation of the earth and of man's life upon it. These fragments of

ancient revelation contribute enlightening facts to the whole realm of thought relating to the earth and the heavens; to creation and to God; to man and his relationship to God; to time and to eternity; to the dramatic whole of existences. This enlightenment supplies the keys of the universe.

God and the Godhead. Next was taken up the theme of God and the Godhead, under the conception of our revelations being local—pertaining to our earth and its heavens; of God and the spirit of God—the everywhere-present Deity; of the Holy Ghost; and the essential unity of God in all incarnations—the participations in the one Divine Nature.

Of creation and the purpose of God in man's earth life. Creation was our next theme, the time and manner of the earth's creation. A discussion of causation—first or eternal cause? The Bible story of creation. Then the creation of man—the various theories of his origin and finally the purpose of God in man's creation, and the possibilities that may come with a life everlasting: immortality, eternal youth, and the way of progress—progress in the knowledge of the truth.

Such the road we have traversed. Such the milestones we have marked along the journey so far. The background of our theme is inlaid, but our task is but half finished. We must follow through. There lies before us yet, the Way, the Life.

A decorative border with a repeating floral and scrollwork pattern surrounds the central text.

PART II

The Way

“I am the way . . . no man cometh
unto the Father, but by me.”

Jesus (John 14:6)

The Way of Eternal Life— The Everlasting Gospel

Having now as background the knowledge that may be had of the universe, somewhat of its nature, extent, and grandeur; some knowledge of its inhabitants and the controlling power of harmonized, divine intelligences within it; some knowledge of the origin of man and his nature; likewise, some knowledge of the purpose of God in relation to man's earth life; we are prepared to consider the way to, and the way of, that eternal life.

Sources of authority. We again take occasion to remind the reader that we shall discuss this part of our treatise in the light of all the knowledge that is to be had from all the revelations of God given in all ages, in all dispensations of the gospel, and from among all people who have received any dispensation of the word of God in relation to this subject. That will at least include all that is to be found in the Old Testament and the New; the fragments of the writings from Moses^a as revealed to Joseph Smith, known as the book of Moses; and the fragments from the writings of Abraham, known as book of Abraham; both of which fragments are found in the Pearl of Great Price. Also we shall appeal to the Book of Mormon, which contains the revelations of God to the ancient inhabitants of America; and also the revelations given directly of God to Joseph Smith, the Prophet of this New Dispensation of the gospel, which revelations received by him are collected and published in the Doctrine and Covenants. All these books are accepted

^aRoberts's use of the word "fragments" in connection with the book of Moses should not be construed to refer to an actual written document from which Joseph Smith translated the book, but rather to affirm that Joseph restored, by inspiration, a portion of the ancient writing of Moses. Roberts discusses Joseph Smith's Inspired Version of the book of Genesis in his *Comprehensive History of the Church* 1:238-39.

as scripture by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹ All these scriptures will be freely quoted in what we have to say in revelation to the way in which God has designed to bring to pass his purposes with reference to man in his earth life and his eternal life; and all this, without further explanation for using as authoritative reference works, these ancient and modern revelations of God. To the writer, these scriptures are all of equal authority, all of them dependable sources of knowledge. Also we remind the reader again that we shall depend upon the reasonableness, the beauty, the order, the exactness, and the wholeness of God's planned way to bring to pass the immortality and the eternal life of man, to carry conviction of its truth to the mind of the reader, rather than an appeal to any special texts, however apropos to the subject they may be.

Let it be our first concern, then, to present a larger view of this way than is ordinarily entertained, keeping in mind, however, that such revelations as our prophets and seers have received are limited in their application to our earth and its heavens, and that they concern intelligences, spirits, angels, men—the human race—that pertain to our earth and its heavens.

The one and only gospel: This everlasting. Already we have quoted the scripture in the letter of Paul to Titus, giving out the fact that St. Paul lived “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Titus 1:2). This at once declares the existence of God's plan for the eternal life of man before the world began, so that we may say that God's plan of the way for man's eternal life is older than the earth. This “plan of eternal life,” or way, is referred to in other scriptures as the “everlasting gospel.” St. John so speaks of it, in describing the coming of a new dispensation of that gospel subsequent to his own day, and as coming forth in “the hour of his ⟨God's⟩ judgment.” Therefore in the last days he said:

I saw another angel fly⟨ing⟩ in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach [un]to them that dwell ⟨upon⟩ [on] the earth. . . . Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come. (Rev. 14:6-7)

The only use we make of this quotation here is to show that the gospel is referred to as the “everlasting gospel,” the plan of eternal life which God promised before the world began. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the blood of the Christ is referred to as “the blood of the everlasting

¹For a treatise on these several books, the reader or student may consult Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology*, first year.

covenant” (Heb. 13:20). In Revelation, Jesus is spoken of as “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8). Also a war in heaven is spoken of, where “Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (the devil); and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their (peace) [place] found any more in heaven” (Rev. 12:7-8).^b Undoubtedly this “war in heaven,” was Lucifer’s rebellion in the spirit world, before the earth life of man began, and had some relationship to man’s earth life and to the purposes of God in regard to that life; all which will have further consideration later on. Enough, perhaps, is set forth here to establish the great antiquity of “the everlasting gospel,” God’s planned way for man’s eternal life.

Let us now get the important fact established that there exists but one way for the bringing to pass of that eternal life plan of God, in other words, but one gospel; and that there has been, and never can be, but ~~one gospel~~, one way. So sure was St. Paul of this, that in writing the church at Galatia, where certain schisms and divisions appeared, that he reproved them by saying sarcastically:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we [have] preach[ed] unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (Gal. 1:6-9)

And to the schismatic factions at Corinth he wrote, reproving them for saying, as these factions did say, we are of Paul, we are of Christ; and then came this thundering question, “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Cor. 1:13). All this makes it clear that there is but one gospel and ever shall be but one, and that, “the everlasting gospel,” God’s one plan for man’s salvation, God’s promise of eternal life to be wrought out in all ages by various dispensations of that one gospel plan.

Dispensation: The meaning of. This brings us to the necessity of defining a dispensation. The word in the revelations of God is used in its ordinary meaning of “giving out,” as dispensing food to the hungry, clothing to the needy, or dispensing just judgments to violators of the law; giving out. So as to the gospel, giving out knowledge of its truths

^bThe reading, “neither was there peace found” was probably a transcriptional error.

by revelation from God; **revealing it in whole or in subdivisions or part of it**, by bestowing through the administration of angels, or otherwise divine authority upon men, the priesthood, by which man may be authorized to teach and preach in the authority of God, or administer in its ordinances, baptisms[†] for the remission for sins, or the laying on of hands for reception of the Holy Ghost, or consecrate the emblems of the holy sacrament, which represent the crucified body and the shed blood of the Christ for the redemption of man. These are the outgivings comprising knowledge of gospel truth, and outgivings of authority to administer to man the ordinances of that gospel. All the while, however, let it be held in mind, that there is but the one gospel and these dispensations are but acts of God, directly or indirectly giving out knowledge and authority with reference to that one gospel.

Sometimes also a dispensation marks off an epoch in the continuous stream of God's providence towards man; as the Adamic dispensation, meaning by that, all the dispensations of God's truth, which may take place during Adam's life time, or with extension beyond Adam's life, so long as there is unbroken succession as *to* those things instituted during his life time. The Noachian dispensation or the dispensation of God's truth and authority to Noah and succeeding prophets until some developing event required a still further dispensing of some part of the one gospel, as in the matter of the dispensation which called Abraham and set him apart to bring to pass some special purpose of God; the Mosaic dispensation; and the Christian dispensation, comprising that wonderful era made glorious by the personal ministry of the Christ, the offering of the supreme sacrifice which was to redeem and save a world, the very heart of the whole gospel scheme. And beyond that is mentioned another dispensation—a dispensation of the fullness of times spoken of by the apostle Paul in Ephesians, in which it is promised that God will “gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him” (Eph. 1:10); indicating that there will be a dispensation of dispensations, a dispensation of the fullness of all times; and of all dispensations, both in heaven and in earth, a dispensation which will include all that has gone before, and which figuratively may be **represented as ~~the gathering together of~~ all the streams of earth ~~and emptying~~ flowing** them into the ocean, to be held by that ocean in one great union of all the river systems and all the seven seas. So with the dispensation of the

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve objected to the term *baptisms*: “Baptisms for the remission of sins.’ We question the plural.” Reporting to President Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith explained: “We have but one baptism.”

fullness of times, as all rivers to the ocean trend, so all dispensations come into and are included in this one last and completed dispensation, in which all things both in heaven and in earth shall be gathered together in one, even in Christ. Such the meaning of a dispensation of the gospel; and such the meaning *also* of the dispensation of the fullness of times, the dispensation to which we now have come, and in which we labor for the achievement of God's great purpose in all the labor and travail of our earth and its heavens, and all the human race that have been or shall be associated with our earth and its heavens, and with all the intelligences and the angels and spirits that have or shall belong to it, all entering into this ~~one~~ dispensation^c which unites and completes all dispensations.

The war in heaven. The "war in heaven" described by St. John in his book of Revelation, and briefly referred to above, requires more detailed consideration. I give St. John's account of it in full:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. (Rev. 12:7-11)

There is liable to be confusion arising from St. John's description of this "war in heaven" on account of connecting it with persecuting earth-powers to which the "Dragon" of "the war in heaven"—the Devil and Satan—gives his power, and wrath, and vindictiveness—in efforts made to destroy the church of God. This dragon, or Satan being the underlying force and inspiration of those earthly powers which persecuted the saints, and chiefly, in John's time, the persecuting Roman Emperors. The "war in heaven," however, in reality took place in heaven before the advent of man on the earth; and it was doubtless on that occasion to which Jesus referred when he said to the triumphantly returning seventy from their mission, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall

^cRoberts was one of the earliest in the latter-day Church to describe what is meant by the term dispensation. For more on this topic, see the introduction to volume one of his *Comprehensive History of the Church*.

from heaven” (Luke 10:18). The whole circumstance of this rebellion, as before stated, took place before man’s advent to the earth, and among the preexistent spirits of the spirit world.

One naturally wonders why there should be rebellion and war in heaven, and what it could be all about. Satan—as we shall see—was with his angels overwhelmed; and all were cast out into the earth for seeking to overthrow the plans of God. It is significant that in an earlier verse of the chapter from which we quoted John’s account of the “war in heaven,” that the great Dragon drew after him “the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth,” doubtless meaning the number of those who in the “war in heaven” fought on the Dragon’s side (Rev. 12:4).

Again: Why this “war in heaven,” and what was it all about? The book of Revelation supplies no definite answer to that question, nor is there any enlightenment in the Old Testament or the New. By revelation in modern days, however, in this New Dispensation of the gospel in which all things are being gathered together in Christ, important additions of knowledge are brought to light concerning this great event. In the fragment, the book of Abraham, it is said that the Lord revealed to Abraham the existence of the intelligences that were organized before the world was. Meaning, doubtless, the intelligences which had been begotten spirits, therefore he beheld in his vision these pre-existent spirits destined for habitancy on the earth.

And among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto [me] ⟨Abraham⟩: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born. (Abr. 3:22-23)

The great, noble, and good. In addition to the fact of preexistence so clearly stated here, there are two other facts that deserve emphasis, viz., (1) that certain spirits, at least are chosen before they are born, and their earth missions assigned to them; (2) the other fact that is to be emphasized is that the basic reason for the selection of these special spirits for leadership in their projected earth life and missions is that they are “great” souls, that they are “noble” souls, and that they “are good”; and does not this make up the sum of all virtues that enter into leadership? They are great, they are noble, they are good! Under these generalizations may be assembled all the virtues; and these, God decreed, should be his “rulers,” more especially chosen, doubtless, as his representatives in the earth as prophets, seers,

teachers, inspired of God. Abraham was one of them, and doubtless a type of the class whom God would use for the unfolding of his truth and his purposes in the earth.

The plan proposed. We resume our quotation from the book of Abraham:

And there stood one among them (the great, noble, and good spirits) that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell; And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever. (Abr. 3:24-26)

It will be seen that the purpose of the creation of the proposed earth is that these spirits which existed before the world was, which the Lord revealed to Abraham, and among whom Abraham was, is that the spirits might be “added upon” if they kept their first estate, which was their preexistent spirit life, and those who did keep their earth life, these will have added upon them glory forever and forever—in other words, will be put in the way of eternal progress. This God’s covenant with these spirits, which established “the hope of eternal life” referred to by St. Paul when he said, that he lived in such hope of eternal life, “which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Titus 1:2).

The Savior chosen. To resume again our quotation:

And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered [and said]: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first. And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him. (Abr. 3:27-28)

“Whom shall I send?” Why it was necessary to send any one, does not appear in the book of Abraham, but from other revelations we learn both the significance of the question and the answer to it. First from the book of Moses, where the Lord in revealing unto Moses the things pertaining to our earth and its heaven and concerning his purposes with reference to man’s life on the earth, is given an account of Satan and his rebellion and the “war in heaven” that is illuminating; for early in his career as a prophet, Moses had come in

contact with Lucifer, and had successfully resisted him and his temptations; and then God said:

That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of ⟨my⟩ [mine] Only Begotten, is the same which was ⟨in⟩ [from] the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor. But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever. Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast ⟨out⟩ [down]; And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice. (Moses 4:1–4)

The controversy in heaven, then, and Lucifer's ultimate rebellion concerned the plan, "the way," in which should be carried out the purposes of God with reference to the earth life of man, and what was to be attained through it; that is, the manner in which the hosts of spirits existing before the world was should receive those additions to their spirit life that would put them in the way of being "added upon"; increase of intelligence and power and glory without limitation: how they should be put in the way of eternal progress; and how, in some way, there would be a redemption for them from the complications that might arise in carrying out that scheme of things; and hence, one must needs ~~come~~ **be chosen** as a Redeemer. That bright spirit, a son of the morning, called "Lucifer," because of his high intelligence—"light bearer,"^d proposed to save all men—spirits when incarnate in human bodies—irrespective of what they might do. "Behold," said he, "here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor" (Moses 4:1). Also Lucifer's proposal would strike down the agency of man, and save him on compulsion—not one should be lost.^e "Give me," however, "thy glory," is the spirit in which he spake. And then the Beloved Son, chosen from the beginning—determined upon of God—spake! Listen to him (and contrast his spirit with the

^dThe Latin name Lucifer means "Light Bearer." It is a translation of the Hebrew *hylel*, which connotes "shining one." The phrase *hylel ben shachar*, which first appears in Isaiah 14:12, has been variously translated as "shining one, son of dawn," "morning star," or "Lucifer, son of morning."

^eSee Moses 4:3.

spirit of Lucifer): “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). The answer to Lucifer was not obscure. Already it was known that the Father had decreed that those who kept not their first and second estates should not have glory in the same kingdom with those who kept those estates. That was the will of the Father, and therefore the Christ’s answer: “Father, thy will be done; and the glory be thine forever”; and with this he offered himself as the Redeemer. The agency of man in this offer was preserved, and likewise the glory of God.

And this was the One, the preexistent spirit of the Christ, who in earth life shall be known as Jesus of Nazareth, “Immanuel,”—“God with us.” He was chosen to be the Redeemer of men. And because Lucifer and his scheme of salvation for man was rejected, he rebelled against God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, chosen to be the Redeemer. But Lucifer and the hosts which followed him were overwhelmed, and were cast out of heaven, and took up their abode on earth, there to resist and defeat, if possible, the designs of God in bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man—as man; as spirits, united with earth elements, that they might have power to receive a fullness of joy, and which, as we have already seen, they could not receive without forming this inseparable connection with material elements.

More light on “the war in heaven.” There still remain other enlightening utterances about this “war in heaven,” and these given by direct revelation from God to the Prophet of the New Dispensation:

And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil—for, behold, the devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency (the “third part of the stars of heaven” of St. John’s Revelation (12:4)); And they were thrust down, and thus came the devil and his angels; And, behold, there is a place prepared for them from the beginning, which place is hell. And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet—Wherefore, it came to pass that the devil tempted Adam, and he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the devil, because he yielded unto temptation. (D&C 29:36–40)

In this quotation we see repeated some of the former elements entering into the rebellion of Lucifer, with the added item that one-third of the hosts of heaven followed Lucifer, because of their agency,

because they were free, even as spirits, to accept or reject the things proposed of God, subject, of course, to consequences.

One other, and the final quotation on this head, and from the same source of authority—a revelation of God given to the Prophet of the New Dispensation. It occurs in the noted vision given to the Prophet in February 1832, in which is set forth, as nowhere else, both the past and the future of preexistent spirits; of spirits in earth life, and the glory it is possible for them to attain through obedience to the gospel. In that part of the revelation which accounts for Lucifer's rebellion, and the "war in heaven," the Prophet says:

And this we saw also, and bear record, that an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God, who rebelled against the Only Begotten Son whom the Father loved and who was in the bosom of the Father, was thrust down from the presence of God and the Son, And was called Perdition, for the heavens wept over him—he was Lucifer, a son of the morning. And we beheld, and lo, he is fallen! is fallen, even a son of the morning! And while we were yet in the Spirit, the Lord commanded us that we should write the vision; for we beheld Satan, that old serpent, even the devil, who rebelled against God, and sought to take the kingdom of our God and his Christ—Wherefore, he maketh war with the saints of God, and encompasseth them round about. (D&C 76:25-29)

Then follows the statement as to the condition of those whom he overcomes by his wiles, but upon which, at this point, it is not pertinent to our developing theme to say more.

What God's plan of man's eternal life includes. We now have before us, from divine authoritative sources, the reason of Lucifer's rebellion and the war in heaven. By the development of the reasons for that war, we have come to know the solemn covenant of God with the preexistent spirits of men, the promise to give to them eternal life—life everlasting—immortality; and under circumstances that would make for their eternal progression—to make it possible for those who keep both their first and their second estates to have glory added upon their heads forever and ever; and this through acceptance of and obedience to the one and only gospel. This gospel will include the Fall of Adam, to bring about the broken harmonies in which man must learn his lessons in good and evil, in joy and sorrow, in hope and disappointment, in sickness and in health, in life and death: learning to appreciate the sweet by tasting the bitter, having wisdom with the passing years by the lessons that things in conflict and opposition have to teach. It will include his spiritual death—separation from God; for

man's spiritual life depends upon his sustained union with God; that union broken, spiritual death results.² It will include reunion with God, the rebirth of the spirit into fellowship with God; it will include resurrection from the dead; a reunion of the spirit with such elements of the body as may be necessary for its everlasting garment. All this to get the equipment—the indissoluble union of spirit and element in one sole being, eternal, deathless; with God's highway opening at each soul's feet for the journey of progress up through the heights of being in an endless and inexhaustible universe of progress.

Such the plan of god for the advancement of intelligences. First, through their habitancy of a spirit body; second, habitancy of a human mortal body, by birth into this earth life; third, habitancy of an immortal body, by a greater birth, resurrection from the dead into a deathless life. Such the plan which the wisdom of God has devised for bringing to pass “the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39)—the everlasting joy of man.

A supposed purpose of “the world's author” by a philosopher: The late Mr. Wm. James, in his *Pragmatism*,^f has a very wonderful passage bearing upon the whole thought of this chapter, and so pregnant with

²The statement scarcely needs the support of argument. Spiritual life means relation to and participation in all the higher and better things—the good, the true, the beautiful, the pure, the refined, the noble, the courageous, the unselfish, the merciful; united with truth, justice, knowledge, wisdom, power, intelligence. The heart of all this—the very center and circumference of it, and the life for it, is and must be God; and to so deport ones self that he is thrown out of harmony with all this, severed from fellowship with God by separation from him who is the life of all this volume of higher and better things, this body of soul-quality, this ocean of righteousness—is death indeed—spiritual death; death as real as physical death—the separation of spirit and body. Following is an inspired statement of the spiritual death:

Wherefore, it came to pass that the devil tempted Adam, and he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the devil, because he yielded unto temptation. Wherefore, I, the Lord God, caused that he should be cast out from the Garden of Eden, from my presence, because of his transgression, wherein he became spiritually dead, which is the first death, even that same death which is the last death, which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say: Depart, ye cursed. (D&C 29:40–41; cf. 2 Ne. 9:10–12)

^fWilliam James (1842–1910) was a devoutly religious philosopher and psychologist. He was the pioneer of physiological psychology and a leader in the philosophical movement of pragmatism.

suggestion relative to our theme, so supported by philosophical thought and analysis of human nature, both strong and weak, that one marvels at so close a parallel of our doctrine, given to the Church of the Latter-day Saints—*in large part*—in the very early years of her existence. The following is the passage from Mr. James:

Suppose that the world's author put the case to you before creation, saying: "I am going to make a world not certain to be saved, a world the perfection of which shall be conditional merely, the condition being that each several agent does its own 'level best.' I offer you the chance of taking part in such a world. Its safety, you see, is unwarranted. It is a real adventure, with real danger, yet it may win through. It is a social scheme of co-operative work genuinely to be done. Will you join the procession? Will you trust yourself and trust the other agents enough to face the risk?"

Should you in all seriousness, if participation in such a world were proposed to you, feel bound to reject it as not safe enough? Would you say that, rather than be part and parcel of so fundamentally pluralistic and irrational a universe, you preferred to relapse into the slumber of nonentity from which you had been momentarily aroused by the tempter's voice?³

Of course if you are normally constituted you would do nothing of the sort. There is a healthy-minded buoyancy in most of us which such a universe would exactly fit. We would therefore accept the offer—"Top! *und Schlag auf Schlag!*" It would be just like the world we practically live in; and loyalty to our old nurse Nature would forbid us to say no. The world proposed would seem 'rational' to us in the most living way.

Most of us, I say, would therefore welcome the proposition to add our *fiat* to the *fiat* of the creator. Yet perhaps some would not; for there are morbid minds in every human collection, and to them the prospect of a universe with only a fighting chance of safety would probably make no appeal. There are moments of discouragement in us all, when we are sick of self and tired of vainly striving. Our own life breaks down, and we fall into the attitude of the prodigal son. We mistrust the chances of things. We want a universe where we can just give up, fall on our father's neck, and be absorbed into the absolute life as a drop of water melts into the river or the sea.

The peace and rest, the security desiderated at such moments is security against the bewildering accidents of so much finite experience. Nirvana means safety from this everlasting round of adventures

³Of course, this proposition of relapsing into "nonentity" is no part of our (*Latter-day Saint*) scheme or thought, since the actual proposition of our revelations was made to intelligences alike uncreated and uncreatable, and alike indestructible; so that while in the exercise of their freedom these intelligences might decline participation in the scheme of things proposed, they could not sink back into nonentities, they would merely remain status quo.

of which the world of sense consists. The hindoo and the buddhist, for this is essentially their attitude, are simply afraid, afraid of more experience, afraid of life.

. . . I find myself willing to take the universe to be really dangerous and adventurous, without therefore backing out and crying 'no play.' I am willing to think that the prodigal-son attitude, open to us as it is in many vicissitudes, is not the right and final attitude towards the whole of life. I am willing that there should be real losses and real losers, and no total preservation of all that is. I can believe in the ideal as an ultimate, not as an origin, and as an extract, not the whole. When the cup is poured off, the dregs are left behind for ever, but the possibility of what is poured off is sweet enough to accept.

As a matter of fact countless human imaginations live in this moralistic and epic kind of a universe, and find its disseminated and strung-along successes sufficient for their rational needs. There is a finely translated epigram in the Greek anthology which admirably expresses this state of mind, this acceptance of loss as unatoned for, even though the lost element might be one's self:

A shipwrecked sailor, buried on this coast,
Bids you set sail.
Full many a gallant bark, when we were lost,
Weathered the gale.

. . . It is then perfectly possible to accept sincerely a drastic kind of a universe from which the element of 'seriousness' is not to be expelled. Whoso does so is, it seems to me, a genuine pragmatist. He is willing to live on a scheme of uncertified possibilities which he trusts; willing to pay with his own person, if need be, for the realization of the ideals which he frames.⁴

A startling parallel. Such [is] the voice of a modern, and, without disparagement of others, we may venture to say, one of our foremost American philosophers. In this statement, as we said in introducing it, Professor James puts the case of the proposed earth existence of man in a close parallel to that set forth in the early revelations to the Church of the Latter-day Saints—so closely a parallel that it is startling. The proposition put to intelligences before the earth was made, in each case; and earth life full of adventure and danger, safety not guaranteed in each case; the counter plan proposed that would guarantee safety rejected; and yet the existence of some "morbid minds" among the spirits—found "in every human collection," to whom "the prospect of a universe with only a fighting chance" made no appeal, and accordingly their rejection of it; in both cases enough heroic souls to accept the adventurous proposition of a scheme of things involving real losses.

⁴James, *Pragmatism*, 290-92, 296-98.

We may thank God that the Christ in the great council prevailed, as also he prevailed in the war of the rebellion in heaven, which followed upon that council's decision. The Christ's spirit stood for freedom of man in that great controversy. He stood for a serious earth life for intelligences, in which, though there would be some losses, many losses in fact, yet also there would be great gain and glory. Gain, however, that could not be obtained but through great strivings; the exercise of all the great virtues, of trust and patience, endurance and courage, wisdom and temperance, together with faith and hope and charity. Thank God, we say, that Jesus the Christ, in the preexistence stood for all those things which make earth life worthwhile, and existence itself endurable—for the moral freedom of man.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: James, *Pluralistic Universe*; Roberts, "History of the 'Mormon' Church"; Smith, *History of the Church* 3:385-92; D&C 29; 76; 84; 88; Moses; Abraham.

The Earth Life of Man Opened

The two creation stories of Genesis. The next task before us is to open the earth life of man. To get him from the preexistent spirit estate in to the commencement of the human race life. This requires a back reference to the creation story as we have it in Genesis. So far as we have considered that story of creation we confined ourselves to the first chapter of Genesis, and that chapter treats creation as a developing unbroken series of events from chaotic material without form and void to the creation of man and woman in the image of God—begotten after their kind.

The first. The creation story in Genesis first chapter is complete, and worthily grand; without flaw or blemish, poetical, and sublime;¹ but when we take up the second chapter of Genesis, we are puzzled by having on our hands seemingly, another account of creation, different in form, and rather puzzling to the Bible theologians as well as to the laymen Bible readers. Such is the difference between the creation account in the first chapter of Genesis and the second, that modern Bible scholarship comes to the conclusion that the story of creation in the second chapter must be altogether from a different source than the account in the first chapter; and holds that there is a serious cleavage that gives reason for the belief that they must have come from separate documents.²

¹The story of this creation in the first chapter of Genesis, should include the first three verses of the second chapter. And the second chapter properly should begin at the present fourth verse of that chapter if the sense and spirit of the creation story is to be regarded. [Genesis 2:3-4 is also where modern textual critics of the Bible divide the two creation accounts. These critics usually ascribe the different accounts to two different authors or redactors of the text. Roberts's explanation for the two accounts is more in harmony with that revealed in the books of Moses and Abraham.]

²Smyth, *How God Inspired the Bible*, 196-97. Also Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 8.

The second. In the second account of the creation, the whole story seems to be reversed from that which is given in the first: “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth,” says the second account,

when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. (Gen. 2:4-5)

We naturally wonder what has become of the grasses, herbs and trees, spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis? What of the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field? What of man, male and female, of whose creation we read in the first chapter ⟨?⟩ and what of the commandment to “multiply, and replenish the earth?” (Gen. 1:28). Is it not strange that after reading of the creation of man in the first chapter, that we should be told in the second that “there was not a man to till the ground”? (Gen. 2:5).

Proceeding with this second account of the creation, the Bible says:

But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. . . . And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. . . . And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam ⟨the name he had given to the man he had created⟩ to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. (Gen. 2:6-10, 15, 19)

What is especially difficult in this second account of the creation, as before remarked, is that it seems to reverse the order of creation as given in the first chapter. The first account commences with the formation of the earth from chaotic matter; and then records the various steps of progress in succinct and, one would think, natural order up to completion; the last in the order of creation being man. The second account begins with the creation of man, the planting of a garden, as the beginning of vegetable and tree life; and there God places the man

to keep it. Then comes the creation of the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.

A key to the mystery. There is one significant remark in this second story of the creation in Genesis which may prove to be a key that will unlock the seeming mystery of this difference in the account of the creation without accepting the conclusion adopted by modern criticism, which is that these two creation stories come from different sources, and most likely from distinct documents. This significant remark referred to is:

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth . . . in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, *And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew:* for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was not a man to till the ground.* But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. . . . And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden. (Gen. 2:4-8; italics added)

Let it be remembered that this passage is in Genesis 2, though the italics in the quotation are mine. This passage standing alone, it is conceded, does not solve the mystery, something more is required; and in our ~~Mosaic fragment of a revelation—~~The book of Moses—the necessary increase of light is given.

After giving an account of the creation, much as it stands in the first chapter of Genesis, the revelation in this ~~fragment~~ **book** proceeds, **in its second [sic] chapter, to say:**

And now, behold, I say unto you, [that] these are the generations of the heaven and of the earth, when they were created, in the day that I, the Lord God, made the heaven and the earth, And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ground; for in heaven created I them; and there was not yet *flesh* upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air; But I, the Lord God, spake, and there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also; nevertheless, all things were before created; but spiritually were they created and made according to my word. (Moses 3:4-7; italics added)

Spiritual and temporal creations. Still another word from modern revelation is given upon this subject of the two creations, the spiritual and the physical, called in the revelation, however, the “spiritual and the temporal”; and now the passage:

And as the words have gone forth out of my mouth even so shall they be fulfilled, that the first shall be last, and that the last shall be first in all things whatsoever I have created by the word of my power, which is the power of my Spirit. For by the power of my Spirit created I them; yea, all things both spiritual and temporal—First⟨ly⟩ spiritual, secondly temporal, which is the beginning of my work; and again, first temporal, and secondly spiritual, which is the last of my work—Speaking unto you that you may naturally understand; but unto myself my works have no end, neither beginning. (D&C 29:30-33)

Progressive movement in spiritual and temporal creations.

An important thought arises out of this statement in addition to the confirmation of the word from the book of Moses passage, that things were created spiritually before they were created temporally (i.e. physically). We are given the idea of a process, a movement in creation, which suggests from lower to higher, and from higher to still higher: first from an imperfect spiritual state, to a union with the temporal—the birth of man into earth life. Thence from the imperfect temporal (imperfect because the life is mortal) to the higher spiritual status—spirit being indissolubly united to its physical counter-part, the physical body, by the resurrection from the dead—raised to spiritual life—to the “immortality” God designed for man from the beginning through this process—from spiritual-temporal; to temporal-spiritual; the completion or perfection of God’s work.

The place of man in the second creation story—in Genesis: It appears from the second creation story that man is the first creation instead of the last; that he is not only the first man, but the “first flesh” upon the earth also;[†] and then comes the act of creation of woman, the

[†]Raising one of its main objections to *The Truth, the Way, the Life*, the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve wrote the following observations to Elder Roberts: “The place of man in the order of creation is questioned, as it is taught in this chapter. The expression, ‘the first flesh upon the earth also,’ is not interpreted by members of the committee as you have expressed it here. We feel that the arguments as given contradict the accounts given in all our scriptures, and more especially in the temple ceremonies. As we understand it the term, ‘first flesh also,’ does not have reference to Adam as being the first living creature of the creation on the earth, but that he, through the ‘fall’ became the first ‘flesh,’ or mortal soul. The term ‘flesh’ in reference to mortal existence is of common usage. We find it so used

planting of the garden, the placing of man in it, the creation of animal life, the fish of the sea, and fowls of the air. The question is, how can these things be; and how can the second story be made to harmonize with the first? In the second creation story man seems to get his earth-heritage in a barren state, as if some besom of destruction had swept the earth; and it must be newly fitted up as a proper abode for him from desert barrenness to a fruitful habitat.

The second creation story an incident in the earth's creative phases. This "second creation story" may be regarded as one of a developing series of phases through which the planet earth is passing in its course towards a final celestial state of being. For example: had our revelations pertaining to the earth begun with Noah instead of Adam, and at the close of the cataclysm of the flood, when all animal life had been destroyed, except that which was especially preserved in the ark with Noah, we could clearly understand the procession of

in the scriptures. Adam having partaken of the fruit became mortal and subject to death, which was not the condition until that time. We are taught in the Temple as well as in the scriptures that man was the last creation placed upon the earth, before death was introduced. Adam was the first to partake of the change and to become subject to the flesh. This is the view expressed by President Joseph F. Smith and President Anthon H. Lund. Following are examples bearing out this thought: 'They shall wander in the flesh, and perish' (1 Ne. 19:14). 'And now, if I do err, even did they err of old; not that I would excuse myself because of other men, but because of the weakness which is in me, according to the flesh, I would excuse myself' (1 Ne. 19:6). 'And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh' (Dan. 2:11). 'That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God' (1 Pet. 4:2). 'No man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit of God' (D&C 67:11)."

In a handwritten comment, Roberts noted the following: **Objections to be overcome in chs 30 and 35 in T.W.L. before approval by Committee: that work represents (1) Pre-Adamic occupancy of the Earth. Our revelations localized to this Earth & its heavens: I further localize those revelations to an Adamic Dispensation ~~when~~ which may be ~~in~~ but an Epoch ~~in what may~~ be a long series of Epochs on the ~~the nature~~ the Earth the nature of which are unknown but suitable doubtless to the Pre-Adamic conditions. Doubtless also this Adamic Dispensation may have some specific purpose in itself to be worked out and different from those that have preceded it. (2) Adam came to the Earth a translated being; hence subject to death; hence not as a man Immortal. 1914 - 1832 = 82**

Reporting to President Rudger Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith explained: "This entire chapter is questioned by the brethren. It pertains to man's place in the creation. It is not in harmony with the revelations, especially the ceremonies of the Temple, which were given by the Prophet by revelation."

events leading out from Noah and his family into a world development under the commandment which God gave to Noah and his sons, when he said to them: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish (refill) the earth” (Gen. 9:1); and then reviewing with the family of Noah the covenant of mastery over all things in the earth, even as he had covenanted with Adam.

May it not be that some such condition as this which we have supposed in the case of Noah, really happened in regard to the “beginning” of things with Adam? And that what is recorded in the second creation story is merely an account of the preparation of the earth for the occupancy of it by Adam; and the account also of his advent upon the earth with Eve his wife? That is to say, previous to the advent of Adam upon the earth, some destructive cataclysm, a universal glacial period or an excessive heat period left the earth empty and desolate, and it *became* the mission of Adam to “replenish” the earth with inhabitants.²

That there were pre-Adamite races in the earth; and that man’s habitancy of it is of greater antiquity than the period which begins with Adam, is quite generally accepted by the scientific world, and for them, admits of no doubt;³ but if the account of things through the Bible revelations begins with Adam, as merely the opening of a dispensation of God’s providence with the human race on the earth, **since that time**, then matters take on a form much more understandable, and makes possible the solving of many problems.

Reality of spiritual creation. In using the phraseology of “spiritual creation,” and “temporal” and “natural” creation in the foregoing quotations and comments upon them, their use must not be thought to imply that the spiritual creation was not a real creation. It was doubtless as tangible and actual as the creation on which we walk; but in the process of creation it appears that there are two parts, first a spiritual creation and second a temporal or natural one, what in our modern phraseology would be called the physical creation.

Though we may not **fully** understand the nature of this spiritual creation, yet to learn that the first account of the creation in the Bible, is of a spiritual creation, and the second of a natural one, gives some relief from the apparent contradiction from the fact that it removes all appearance of inconsistency or contradiction between the two accounts. For since they are descriptions of two different things instead of a conflicting

²The Hebrew word *male* translated as “replenish” in the KJV simply means “to fill” and does not demand an interpretation of “refill” or “replenish.”

³This subject is considered somewhat at length in the chapter following this.

account of one thing, there is nothing in the law of consistency requiring the account in the first chapter of Genesis—the account of spiritual creation—**but what** could be safely accepted as the announcement of the general plan of the creation of worlds not only of our own planet but of all worlds; and in it will be found ample scope for the belief that the earth came into existence, as our scientists generally insist, by the accretion of nebulous matter; that it took millions of years for the concentration and solidification of that matter, granting as long periods as geologists may demand for the formation of earth's crust followed by the changes which were wrought during the six great periods named in Genesis; beginning with the production of light, the dividing of the water, the appearing of land, then vegetation, animals, man.⁴

The temporal or physical creation of our planet, however, and of all planets, would doubtless correspond to the spiritual creation of it. The spiritual creation standing in the same relationship to the natural or physical creation, as the well devised plan of the architect—the mind creation of his building—does to the material erection of a building, so that the account given of the spiritual creation of our earth may as well be regarded as the account of the natural or physical creation of it.

But this conclusion would leave all the difficulties between the two accounts of the creation in the Bible untouched unless we accept the second creation story as describing an incident, and one of many, that ~~have~~ **has** happened in the long history of our planet; and in this case regard the second creation story of Genesis as the account of preparing the earth for the advent of Adam, and Eve, his wife, on their mission to bring forth the human race upon earth as already suggested.

As this theory of creation affects man. Let us contemplate the foregoing conception of creation as it affects man:

First—according to what has already been set forth—there is the self-existent, intelligent entity^b—and intelligence is not created or made, be it remembered, neither indeed can it be. This entity is begotten

⁴The order of creation in the second account of creation in Genesis, it will be remembered, is somewhat reversed: 1. man; 2. vegetation; 3. animals; 4. woman; **instead of from lower forms of life to higher—from simple to more complex as given in Gen. 1.**

^bRoberts was one of the first to teach that the term *intelligence*, as used in D&C 93:29, refers to individual intelligent entities which with progression become spirits. The Church has no official position on the nature of pre-spirit intelligence. In contrast to Roberts's ideas, there are many who feel that the term *intelligence* does not refer to entities, but rather to intelligent matter in general from which individual spirits are begotten.

spirit—an intelligent entity united to a spirit-body, in some way begotten of God, and by some method of self-sundering, near or remote—but sufficiently direct and near to impart something of the divine nature to the spirit which is to become man, and near enough to establish fatherhood of God to it.

This fulfills the “firstly spiritual” of the revelation. This spiritual personage is begotten a man, in earth life and fulfills the “secondly temporal” of the revelation.

This man, so created or begotten, exists on the earth for a time to learn the lessons which earth life amid broken harmonies has to teach; and in that earth life appears the beginning of the second creative movement as the “again firstly temporal” of the revelation.

After a time the man dies; then again after a time, the man undergoes what might with some justification be called a greater birth. He undergoes resurrection from the dead, the spirit and body which were separated at death, and by death, are reunited by the resurrection from death; the spirit and the body become truly “soul” (also “sole”) spirit and body inseparably connected—deathless. This second creative movement fulfills the requirement of the “secondly spiritual,” which is the last of God’s work—that is, the last of God’s creative acts with reference to man as a “soul,” the indissoluble union of a spirit with earth elements. God has attained his purpose in bringing about the immortality of man.

This as our principle is applied to man, clearly sets forth this double action movement in creation, in bringing to pass the completed creation of man, and just how that created movement takes place from “spiritual” to “temporal”; and then from “temporal” to “spiritual”; which, however, is seen to be both temporal and spiritual united, or the union of what we usually call material element with spirit, which when perfectly and indissolubly united, is the highest attainment in creation.

Of lesser forms than human life. How the creation of lesser forms of life are affected by creation first spiritually and then temporally, is not so definitely indicated in the revelations of God; and we are under the necessity of confessing that we do not know of anything that is directly and fully revealed concerning the matter, and so must needs let it pass without an attempted exposition; accepting it, however, on the word of God, as being true, that “all things” are created spiritually before they are created temporally, or take on a material body.

Regarding references for this chapter, Roberts explained: “The subject matter of this chapter stands so apart that it is difficult to find authorities to which the student may be directed for corroborative material. It is therefore urged that special attention be paid to the scriptures and other works cited in the body of the text.”

An Adamic Dispensation

Further localization of revelation. We have already seen that the revelations of God given through Moses pertain to our earth and the heavens with which it is connected, and have noted the effect of that localization of revelations to our earth and its heavens. Now it is proposed to consider a still further localization of our revelations to an Adamic Dispensation in the world's history. We begin then with Adam, and the procession of events from his time; which, with reference to the whole period of the earth's existence, may be set down as comparatively recent, and even very recent times, within historic time in fact, if we accept the Bible account of the commencement of things *as historic*. This would admit of a very long period of time beyond the advent of Adam, to the absolute beginning of the physical existences of the earth, during which time pre-Adamite races, less developed than he, may have existed.[†] They may have lived and died through various long ages through

For this chapter, the recommended readings include “the standard works on anthropology.”

[†]On this chapter, the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve wrote as follows: “This entire chapter deals with the question of ‘pre-Adamites.’ This doctrine is not taught by the Church; it is not sustained in the scriptures. It can only be treated as an hypothesis, and the result will be uncertain, confusing, for after all is said it is speculation leading to endless controversy. We are aware that one of the brethren (Orson Hyde) in an early day advocated this teaching, however we feel that the brethren of the general authorities cannot be too careful, and should not present as doctrine that which is not sustained in the standards of the Church. It appears to us that all which has been revealed is contrary to this teaching, especially that given in the Temple.” Roberts handwrote the following response: **? Not so presented. Was approved also by Pres. Young. R wh[ich] see m[anu]s[cript].** Reporting to President Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith stated: “This entire chapter is out of harmony with the teachings of the authorities of the Church. The doctrine of pre-Adamites has never been accepted by the Church and is viewed by the brethren as being in conflict with the revelations of the Lord. This is so with the Temple ceremonies. References in other chapters to these two thoughts—the place of man in creation and pre-Adamites, should be eliminated.”

which the earth passed, of which we have no information supplied by revelation concerning them; but who have provided all the fossil and other evidences of man's existence in the earth discovered by the researches of science, and which so disturb the Bible account of things when an attempt is made to stretch the Bible account to cover all the **possible human life** events that have happened in all periods of time since the physical or temporal existence of the earth began.

The antiquity of man in the earth. ~~The science view.~~ Let us briefly consider some of the evidences ~~Science gives~~ of man's greater antiquity in the earth than the Bible account warrants. Of course we shall not be able to go deeply into the subject, and can only present the conclusions at which scientific investigators have arrived.

(a) *The **once** "orthodox Christian" view of creation.* In the first place, let us present the once orthodox conception of the date of creation as fixed by an interpretation of the Mosaic account of creation. The most definite statement on this head, and one that is very frequently referred to in controversial writings on the subject, is the interpretation of the Mosaic account by Dr. John Lightfoot, said to be a profound biblical scholar. He was vice chancellor of Cambridge University in 1654. As a result of careful searching of scripture, Dr. Lightfoot was led to declare that "heaven and earth, center and circumference, were made in the same instant of time, and clouds full of water and man was created by the Trinity on the 26th of October, 4004 B.C., at 9 o'clock in the morning."

Of course, this represents the definiteness of extreme methods of interpretation followed by Bible students of Dr. Lightfoot's days. It is now recognized that even the accepted dates of creation and other Bible events by the chronologers, Ussher, Hales, and the Jewish reckoning, are to be regarded approximately only. Since the computations made by those chronologers, the researches of Oriental scholars are bringing forth other evidence bearing upon the subject. While these researches are confirming the historical character of Abraham, and other Hebrew patriarchs as quite definite, in their extensive excavations on the sites of ancient cities, they are tracing back a more remote period for the history of Near Eastern peoples. The Babylonian tablets discovered in these researches give the world a message out of the past which antedates that of Christ up to about 5,500 to 6,000 years instead of 4,004;^a adding more than a thousand years to the Bible

^aThe Babylonian tablets to which Roberts refers are probably the earliest Sumerian inscriptions, now dated at about 2500 B.C. Using archaeological, stratigraphic, and carbon-14 dating, archaeologists now think that this civilization began about 4500 B.C.

account of creation, as interpreted by Dr. Lightfoot and others of the orthodox school.¹

Origin of the earth as viewed by science.^b In contrast to this (supposed) Bible view of creation, I place in contrast the scientific view. This begins with part of the generally accepted nebulae hypothesis; that is that our solar system, to extend the brief statement no further, was brought into existence by some great sun, many millions of year ago, passing so near to our sun that it whipped from the gravitational grip of the sun large masses of the sun's substances and set them whirling separately into space.²

In time these whirling, fiery masses took their respective places in orbits around the sun according to the minor planets of our system.

In reference to our own planet, to again limit our consideration to that which more nearly concerns our inquiry, in time—and how long is unknown³—the fiery mass that was finally to constitute our earth began condensing until the mass was covered over by a thin rocky

¹Lull, "Antiquity of Man," 1-2.

^bRoberts added this section to the final typescript by inserting four typed pages, numbered 3/2-3/5.

²New planets are very rare. They come into being as the result of the close approach of two stars, and stars are so sparsely scattered in space that it is an inconceivably rare event for one to pass near to a neighbour, yet exact mathematical analysis shews that planets cannot be born except when two stars pass within about three diameters of one another. As we know how the stars are scattered in space, we can estimate fairly closely how often two stars will approach within this distance of one another. The calculation shews that even after a star lived its life of millions of millions of years, the chance is still about a hundred thousand to one against its being a sun surrounded by planets. (Jeans, *The Universe Around Us*, 320-21). [Roberts's description of the Nebulae Hypothesis is somewhat different from the traditional theory proposed by Pierre Simon de Laplace, which did not require a collision or close passing of stars, but rather a condensing of the sun's atmosphere into rings that eventually coalesced into planets. Neither Roberts's nor Laplace's version of the Nebular Hypothesis enjoys wide acceptance today.]

³The lapses of time of recent geological estimates concerning the age of the earth and life upon it is stated by Sir James Jeans in his recent work (1929) *The Universe Around Us*, 13, is given in tabulated form as follows:

Age of the earth.....	About 2,000,000,000 of years
Age of life on the earth	300,000,000 of years
Age of man on the earth	300,000 of years

More recent estimates of these ages are as follows:

Age of the earth.....	4,700,000,000
Age of life on the earth	2,000,000,000 (advent of blue green algae)
Age of man on the earth	200,000 (<i>Homo sapiens neanderthalensis</i>)

coating: this thickened sufficiently to confine the heat beneath the encrustation, while the hydrogen and oxygen united to form vapors about it. These became condensed and, descending on all sides of the earth, completely enveloped it with water, something as a universal ocean would do. Also in time an atmosphere gathered about it.

Ages upon ages passed, and the Laurentian, the Cambrian, and the Silurian rocks were gradually formed under the water. Then, intermittently, came great upheavals of the earth's crust, the foldings of it into mountain chains, carrying with them even to the summits of mountains remains of marine animal life which had lived at the bottom of seas.⁴ Then land upheavals rising above the water divided them and formed separate oceans and seas; meantime gradual subsidences of some parts of the earth's crust and the elevation of other parts gave form to the land areas, to continents and islands. Low forms of plant life appeared—mosses, ferns, grasses, flowering plants, shrubbery and trees began to appear. The dense vapors which had shrouded the earth

The age of man on earth varies depending on how one defines man. Modern science places the advent of modern man, *Homo sapiens*, about 34,000 years ago.

As an indication of the great age of the earth's crust, the following note from J. W. Draper's *Conflict Between Religion and Science*, gives substantial, and irresistible evidence of its immense age:

The coal-bearing strata in Wales, by their gradual submergence, have attained a thickness of 12,000 feet; in Nova Scotia of 14,570 feet. So slow and so steady was this submergence, that erect trees stand one above another on successive levels; seventeen such repetitions may be counted in a thickness of 4,515 ft. The age of the trees is proved by their size, some being 4 ft. in diameter. Round them, as they gradually went down with the subsiding soil, calamites grew, at one level after another. In the Sydney coal-field fifty-nine fossil forests occur in superposition. (Draper, *Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 190-1). [Draft 3 reads "calamities" for "calamites."]

⁴"Marine shells, found on mountain-tops far in the interior of continents, were regarded by theological writers as an indisputable illustration of the Deluge [in the days of Noah]," says Draper.

But when, as geological studies became more exact, it was proved that in the crust of the earth vast fresh-water formations are repeatedly interrelated with vast marine ones, like the leaves of a book, it became evident that no single cataclysm was sufficient to account for such results; that the same region, through gradual variations of its level and changes in its topographical surroundings, had sometimes been dry land, sometimes covered with fresh and sometimes with sea water. It became evident also that, for the completion of these changes, tens of thousands of years were required. (Draper, *Conflict between Religion and Science*, 191)

in these ages began to disappear, and the sun shone on the earth's surface to quicken and enlarge life in sea, earth, and air; these thrived in all their varied forms, and ultimately man came and began his wonderful career.

This is not a chapter on geology, even in outline, much less a work on that subject; so that I am not concerned in tracing, even in tabulated form, the several periods and strata of the earth's formation from first to last; I only wish to mention enough of these to make intelligible the scientific conceptions of the antiquity of man in the earth; so I pass by the primary and secondary parts of geological formations in the text books and other words on the subject. But in the Tertiary and Quaternary periods we have the epochs where the emergence of man, or near man, occurs; and therefore these are in the geological period of immense import, and to our own subject. These geological periods include what are called the Eocene and Oligocene times or epochs in which arise the higher mammals of the ancient species; the Miocene and Pliocene times in which man emerges; and finally, preceding recent times, is the Pleistocene epoch, which is identical with the last great Ice Age. These epochs in geological formations correspond with the following periods of time.

The Miocene, within the Tertiary period, to 900,000 years ago;

Pliocene, within the Quaternary period, to 500,000 years ago;

Pleistocene or last great Ice Age in which ancient artcrafts of man with his remains are found and ranging from 400,000 years down to twenty or thirty thousand years ago, which marked the retreat of the great glaciers from the present northern temperate zones. So that within the Tertiary and Quaternary geological periods, within which it is claimed that fossil remains of man and his artcrafts and weapons are found, there is room for a very great antiquity for man, and certainly a pre-Adamite period of human existences.^c

(b) *The science view on the antiquity of man in the earth.* Meantime science submits its deductions on the subject of the antiquity of man in the earth. These come from a number of sources, among them through the fixing of time by the discovery made through the artcrafts which man has used in various periods of time. For instance, there is the age of iron and steel, our own age, in which man uses these

^cRoberts gives no reference for the periods, epochs, dates, and events he cites here. Most of his information is not in harmony with current scientific thought. For example, currently the beginning of the Miocene epoch is placed at 22-26 million years ago, while the beginnings of Pliocene and Pleistocene are placed at 5-7 and 1.8-2.5 million years ago respectively. Man (*Homo sapiens*) is thought to have emerged during the Pleistocene.

materials in manufactures and building. This was preceded by the age of bronze, and that by the stone age. This last named age is divided into three periods: first the Neolithic or “new stone age.” This was preceded by the Paleolithic, or the “older stone age”; and this again by the Eolithic. This third period is supposed to be the very oldest period in which man began the use of anything like implements in his ways of life. There is some doubt if the so-called “stone implements” of this age were “purposeful manufactures” at all. Some hold that such implements as were used were merely nature-shaped stones, as were more convenient than others for various uses; and it was these rude nature-shaped implements that suggested the purposeful manufactures of the Paleolithic or old stone age. The crude implement manufactures of this period merged into the more artistically prepared and the greater variety of implements of the new stone age, or Neolithic period. The antiquity of man in the earth is attested first by the undoubted existence and use of these implements, and the slow development of their form and multiplied uses, coupled with calculations based on the glacial periods that are known to have overwhelmed portions of the earth’s surface and under which drifts these artifacts of early man have been found, **and** to scientists justify the conclusion that man has lived upon the earth very many thousands of years longer than the interpretations given of the Mosaic account of creation by the orthodox chronologers. The conclusion based upon these **even limited** facts carry back the antiquity of man from 25,000 to 30,000 years in his occupancy of the earth, and hence tend to establish the probability of pre-Adamite races [in] the earth.^d

The rock record.^c How do we know when the various classes of animals and plants were established on the earth **asks the author of the *Outline of Science***. “How do we know the order of their appearance and the succession of their advances?” The answer is: by reading the rock record. In the course of time the crust of the earth has been elevated into continents and depressed into ocean troughs, and the surface of the land has been buckled up into mountain ranges and folded in gentler hills and valleys. The high places of the land have been weathered by air and water in many forms, and the results of the

^dThe dates Roberts cites here for the occupancy of man on earth are much more recent than those he cited earlier in the text. Whether this is due to a change in his opinion or a difference in how his sources are defining “man” is uncertain.

^cThis paragraph was originally a footnote; Roberts left the instruction: “Printer: make into body of text. Not note.” “The rock record” is a phrase taken from Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:88.

weathering have been borne away by rivers and seas, to be laid down again elsewhere as deposits which eventually formed sandstones, mudstones, and similar sedimentary rocks. . . . When the sediments were accumulating age after age, it naturally came about that remains of the plants and animals living at the time were buried, and these formed the fossils by the aid of which it is possible to read the story of the past. By careful piecing together of evidence, the geologist is able to determine the order in which the different sedimentary rocks were laid down, and thus to say, for instance, that the Devonian period was the time of the origin of amphibians. In other cases the geologist utilizes the fossils in his attempt to work out the order of the strata when these have been much disarranged. For the simpler fossil forms of any type must be older than those that are more complex. There is no vicious circle here, for the general succession of strata is clear, and it is quite certain that there were fishes before there were amphibians (from amphibia, one of the classes of vertebrates, a marsh frog is of the type); and amphibians before there were reptiles, and reptiles before there were birds and mammals. In certain cases, e.g., of fossil horses and elephants, the actual historical succession has been clearly worked out.⁵

Running parallel with this line of evidence and confirming it is the evidence that comes from the discovery of human remains in various old earth strata which represent geological formations of hundreds of thousands of years ago. It is held that human remains have been found in the Pliocene strata of the earth's surface, preceding the Pleistocene strata ~~of the earth, surface,~~ and corresponding with the earlier glacial periods, and immediately preceding the present surface formation. The Pliocene strata corresponds to terms of years to about 500,000 years ago; and it follows that if human remains are found in that strata then man lived upon the earth that long ago.^{6,f}

I give the following abbreviated account of these various discoveries of human remains in these strata with the corresponding time period in years:

Alleged Evidence of man's antiquity in the earth. (a) *The Java Man.* The finds in relation to this so-called man consist of a small top

⁵Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:88.

⁶Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:92, 162-63, and illustrated plates.

^fIn referring to human remains from the Pliocene epoch, Roberts cannot mean members of the species *Homo sapiens*, but rather what current anthropologists would call pre-hominids, such as *Ramapithecus*, or possibly early hominids like *Australopithecus* or *Homo habilis*.

of the skull (skull cap), a thigh bone, and two back teeth. There is some dispute among authorities as to whether these remains are really of man or some pre-human ape-man; others hold that they are relics of a primitive man, but off the main line of "the ascent of man." Sir Arthur Keith holds this creature was "a being, human in nature; human in gait; human in all its parts, save its brain." In scientific phraseology they call him Pithecanthropus. He is supposed to have been about 5'7" in height, somewhat less than the average height of man today. The skull cap indicates low-cut forehead, beetling brows and a brain capacity of about two-thirds of the modern man. The remains were found by Dr. E. Dubois, a Dutch army surgeon at Trinell, central Java, 1894. The Java man is supposed to have lived from four hundred thousand to five hundred thousand years ago.^g

(b) *The Heidelberg Man*. The remains of this fossil are a lower jawbone, and its teeth. It was discovered in Heidelberg in 1907 by Dr. Schoetensack. With the relic were bones of various mammals long since extinct in Europe, such as the elephant, rhinoceros, bison, and lion. There were also some crude flint implements with these finds. "But the teeth are human teeth," says Professor Thomson, author of the *Outline of Science*; "but" he adds, "the relic is of a primitive type, off the main line of human ascent." The reconstructed man from this jawbone receives the scientific name of Homo-Heidelbergensis. The age of this fossil is claimed to be three hundred thousand years.^h

(c) *The Neanderthal Man*.ⁱ The fossils of this man were recovered from the Neanderthal ravine near Dusseldorf, Germany, 1856. According to some authorities the Neanderthal man was living in Europe a quarter of a million years ago. He was the "cave man" of that period. It is claimed he used fire, buried his dead reverently, and furnished them with an outfit for a long journey. [He] had a big brain, great beetling ape-like eyebrows. Professor Huxley was of the opinion that "the Neanderthal man represents a distinct species off the main line of ascent."^j

(d) *The Piltdown Man, or "Dawn Man."* The remains of this man consist of two pieces of skull bone, a small piece of jawbone, and a canine tooth. Found in Sussex, England, 1912. It is thought by some that

^gJava Man is currently classified as a member of the species *Homo erectus*, now dated in the Middle Pleistocene, at about 500,000 years ago.

^hHeidelberg Man is currently classified as a member of the species *Homo erectus*, dated in the Middle Pleistocene.

ⁱRoberts consistently wrote "Meanderthal Man."

^jNeanderthal Man is currently classified as *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*, a species now dated from the Upper Pleistocene.

the two little bits—jawbone and canine tooth—may not belong to the skull at all. The conclusion is that the skull indicates a large brain, a high forehead without the beetling eyebrows. The time period of these fossil remains date from one hundred thousand to five hundred thousand years ago.^k

(e) *The Cro-Magnon Man*. This is the cave man, or race we hear so much about, existing between the third and fourth ice ages of the earth, extending back from thirty to fifty thousand years ago. The evidence for the existence of such a race is much more satisfactory than the fossil remains of the other periods, and it is held by scientists quite generally, that this man approaches more nearly the modern man than any of the other supposed races.⁷

[*A Catholic cardinal's comment on this class of evidence.*¹ On the remains of the Piltdown, or Dawn Man, we have a recent interesting comment made by Cardinal O'Connell, American Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. The remains of the Dawn Man are in the American Museum of Natural History, New York, in the hall of the "Age of Man." "In that hall," said the Cardinal, "the popular feature arranged by Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn is an exhibition of what might be justly termed the grotesque gullibility of so-called scientists. There is the Piltdown Man; two bits of skull-bone, a very small piece of jaw-bone, and a canine tooth. All these bones were found in different places in a sandpit of Sussex, and at long intervals."

"Now for the scientific process out of these scraps of bone which you could conceal in the hollow of your hand, by pure, unproven assumption, is constructed an ape-man and labeled Ecanthropus, or the 'Dawn Man,' out of the pure imagination, and false assumption, not backed by a single spark of evidence, science produces a purely fake skeleton and bids the world to come to the Natural History Museum for educational instruction!"⁸

~~*The author's comment.*~~ Of course, there seems to be telling affect in the sarcastic comment of the Roman Cardinal on these bits of **alleged** fossil human remains; but notwithstanding these sarcasms,

^kIn the 1950s, the bones that were called Piltdown Man were revealed to be planted fakes. This fraud had deceived even the best of the scientific community for a number of decades.

⁷Thomson, *Outline of Science* 1:155-80; and Lull, "Antiquity of Man," 31-35. [Cro-magnon is now considered to belong to the same species as modern man, *Homo sapiens*.]

¹Roberts marked the next three paragraphs "out," "page out."

⁸From synopsis of speech of Cardinal O'Connell, New York World, February 1, 1926 [quote not found].

comparative structural anatomy has to its credit some very wonderful achievements, and one must not attempt to settle the whole controversy on one item of evidence. All the fossil discoveries must be considered, not only those from the Pliocene and Pleistocene strata of the earth's crust, but with them **there** must be accounted ~~for~~ the human remains found in the various glacial periods of scores and hundreds of thousands of years ago, together with the written historical evidences, which are pushing back the line of man's antiquity in the earth far beyond the 4004 years B.C. of the supposed Bible account of creation. The stone ages of man alone gives greater antiquity to man than the Bible account of creation, and establish, one may feel very safe in saying, evidences of pre-Adamite races in the earth, and justifies the assumption we are about to test out, that so far as the revelations of God to the human race is concerned, they relate to the advent of man to the earth in very recent times to begin a dispensation of human life for the attainment of some special purpose with reference to the earth life of man—of ~~the~~ ***man as we know him, in the*** Adamic dispensation merely.]]

If it shall be urged that this conception of things with reference to the earth and its inhabitants only pushes back the problem of human origin to an earlier date, and by no means settles the question of human origins, we shall concede that such is the case, and answer that it is not our purpose to deal with these pre-Adamite conditions and questions, but only to account for man's origin as we know man now, and with special reference to the purpose of God in this present Adamic dispensation, leaving the disposal of the beginning and the end of pre-Adamite races to still further revealed knowledge from God, or to future knowledge ascertained by the researches of man.^m

^mDraft 1 of this chapter 31 ended here. The material that follows was added later and is evidently what Roberts referred to in his letter to James E. Talmage, March 18, 1932:

I am sending you the chapter from "The Truth, The Way, and The Life" agreed upon in our conversation. I am sending it to you in the same form it passed into the hands of the Committee of the Twelve, but since its return I have added a few pages more of evidence in relation to the Antiquity of Man that was contained in the chapter as they read it. The spirit and facts of the chapter, however, are in no way changed, but the evidence has been a little increased.

I shall appreciate it, if after you have read it you will return same. I do not wish to have it copied by anyone.

Further consideration of the word “replenish.” Attention has already been called (in the preceding chapter) to the use of the word “replenish” in connection with the commandment to Adam to be fruitful and “replenish” the earth. The derivation of the word “replenish” comes from the Latin *replenir*; *re-*, again; and *plenus*—full (Standard Dictionary); hence in all the leading dictionaries the primary meaning of “replenish” is given “to fill again as something that has been emptied.”ⁿ In the intransitive sense the primary meaning is also “to fill again and to recover former fullness.” It should be noted however, that there are secondary definitions which render the word “to finish, perfect”; “to fill by occupying,” etc. And these do not necessarily include the meaning “to regain a state of former development,” but if the Bible use of the word be considered as used in the case of Noah and his sons (as already suggested) to whom God said, as well as to Adam, “multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 9:1), we shall find “to fill again” or “refill” most nearly the mission given to Noah and his sons, *viz*: to again fill the earth with inhabitants; and this same word used in the commission to Adam, “to replenish the earth” in the event of some cataclysm having swept away pre-Adamite races, may have the same significance as when **the word was** said to Noah.

In this connection it is interesting to note that one of the original apostles of the New Dispensation, a contemporary of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and President Brigham Young, ventured to advance the doctrine of a pre-Adamite race and the above interpretation of “replenish.” Also his doctrine was publicly approved by President Brigham Young when the discourse was delivered. This was at the General Conference of the Church on the 6th of October, 1854, at which Orson Hyde, the apostle referred to, had been appointed to deliver a special lecture from which I quote the following:

I will go back to the beginning, and notice the commandment that was given to our first parents in the garden of Eden. The Lord said unto them, “multiply and replenish the earth.” I will digress here for a moment from the thread of the subject, and bring an idea that may perhaps have a bearing upon it.

The earth, you will remember, was void and empty (having in mind the description of the earth in Genesis 2), until our first parents began at the garden of Eden. What does the term replenish mean? This word is derived from the Latin; “*re*” and “*plenus*”; “*re*” denotes repetition, iteration; and “*plenus*” signifies full, complete; then the meaning of the word replenish is, to refill, recomplete. If I were to go into a merchant’s store, and find he had got a new stock of goods,

ⁿOn the Hebrew from which “replenish” is translated, see page 294 above.

I should say—"you have *replenished* your stock, that is, filled up your establishment, for it looks as it did before." "Now go forth," says the Lord, "and replenish the earth"; for it was covered with gloomy clouds of darkness, excluded from the light of heaven, and darkness brooded upon the face of the deep. *The world was peopled before the days of Adam, as much so as it was before the days of Noah. It was said that Noah became the father of a new world*, but it was the same old world still, and will continue to be, though it may pass through many changes.

When God said, Go forth and replenish the earth; it was to replenish the inhabitants of the human species, and make it as it was before.⁹

At the close of Elder Hyde's discourse, President Brigham Young arose and said:

*I do not wish to eradicate any items from the lecture Elder Hyde has given us this evening, but simply to give you my views, in a few words, on the portion touching Bishops and Deacons [on the matter of their being married men]. . . . We have had a splendid address from brother Hyde, for which I am grateful. . . . I say to the congregation, treasure up in your hearts what you have heard to-night, and at other times.*¹⁰

Evidences of man's antiquity in the earth. Of course we can not here go into extensive treatment of the subject outlined, the volume of evidence; and the extent of the argument are too great for that in these chapters; but it is possible to give citations and conclusions of those who have treated the subject at length.

Sir James Lyell.^o Among those who recognized in the discoveries that were being made midway of the nineteenth century that man was not only contemporary with long extinct animals of past geological epochs, but that he had already developed, ~~at that time~~, ***in those epochs*** into a stage of culture above pure savagery—was Sir James Lyell M.A., F.R.S., the celebrated and all but father of the science of modern geology. In his earlier works on geology Sir James long opposed the idea of the great antiquity of man in the earth, but in 1863 he published the first edition of his *Geological Evidence of the Antiquity of Man*; "and the fact," remarks Andrew D. White, author of the two volumes of *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology*, 1896, "that he had so long opposed the new ideas gave force to the

⁹*Journal of Discourses* 2:79; italics added.

¹⁰*Journal of Discourses* 2:88, 90; italics added.

^oThe man Roberts refers to as Sir "James" Lyell is actually Sir "Charles" Lyell (1797-1875).

clear and conclusive argument which led him to renounce his early scientific beliefs.”¹¹ Continuing, our author, White, says:

Research among the evidences of man’s existence in the early Quaternary, and possibly in the Tertiary period (hundreds of thousands of years ago),^p was now pressed forward along the whole line. . . . These investigations went on vigorously in all parts of France and spread rapidly to other countries. The explorations which Dupont began in 1864, in the caves of Belgium, gave to the museum at Brussels eighty thousand flint implements, forty thousand bones of animals of the Quaternary period, and a number of human skulls and bones found mingled with these remains. From Germany, Italy, Spain, America, India and Egypt, similar results were reported.¹²

Andrew D. White.^q White devotes three chapters of his great work to this subject under the title “From Genesis to Geology,” “The Antiquity of Man, Egyptology and Assyriology”; and “The Antiquity of Man and Prehistoric Archaeology.”¹³ In his concluding pages of chapter 7, he says:

Human bones had been found under such circumstances as early as 1835 at Cannstadt near Stuttgart, and in 1856 in the Neanderthal near Düsseldorf; but in more recent searches they had been discovered in a multitude of places, especially in Germany, France, Belgium, England, the Caucasus, Africa, and North and South America. Comparison of these bones showed that even in that remote Quaternary period (several hundred thousand years ago), there were great differences of race, and here again came in an argument for the yet earlier existence of man on the earth; for long previous periods must have been required to develop such racial differences. Considerations of this kind gave a new impulse to the belief that man’s existence might even date back into the Tertiary period (a half a million years ago).^r The evidence for this earlier origin of man was ably summed up, not only by its brilliant advocate, Mortillet, but by a former opponent, one of the most conservative of modern anthropologists, Quatrefages; and the conclusion arrived at by both was, that man did really exist in the Tertiary period. The acceptance of this conclusion was also seen in

¹¹See White, *Warfare of Science with Theology* 1:275. In a footnote on this page White cites the works of eleven writers on various phases of this subject, research workers and scientists all, who support the theory of man’s great antiquity in the earth.

^pQuaternary is our most recent period, now thought to have begun about 1.8 to 2.5 million years ago.

¹²See White, *Warfare of Science with Theology* 1:275–76.

^qAndrew D. White (1832–1918), the founder of Cornell University, was a professor of history and English literature.

¹³These chapters are in vol. 1, chs. 5–7, where he cites many authorities. In this last pages of chapter 7, he cites more than a score of scientific works on the subject.

^rThe tertiary is now thought to have begun about 65 million years ago.

the more recent work of Alfred Russel Wallace, who, though very cautious and conservative, placed the origin of man not only in the Tertiary period; but in an earlier stage of it than most had dared assign—even in the Miocene.

. . . Of attempts to make an exact chronological statement throwing light on the length of the various prehistoric periods, the most notable have been those by M. Morlot, on the accumulated strata of the Lake of Geneva; by Gilliéron, on the silt of Lake Neufchâtel; by Horner, in the delta deposits of Egypt; and by Riddle, in the delta of the Mississippi. . . . The period of man's past life upon our planet, which has been fixed by the universal church (he refers *here* to the Roman Catholic Church), "always, everywhere, and by all," is thus perfectly proved to be insignificant compared with those vast geological epochs during which man is now known to have existed.¹⁴

Dr. John W. Draper. In his work on *Conflict Between Religion and Science*, 1875, John W. Draper, M.D. LL.D., author of the *Intellectual Development of Europe*, also has an important *and* exhaustive chapter on "The Age of the Earth and the Antiquity of Man." In his closing pages of that chapter he says:

So far as investigations have gone, they indisputably refer the existence of man to a date remote from us by many hundreds of thousands of years. . . .

We are thus carried back immeasurably beyond the six thousand of Patristic chronology. It is difficult to assign a shorter date for the last glaciation (~~period~~) of Europe than a quarter of a million of years, and human existence antedates that. But not only is it this grand fact that confronts us, we have to admit also a primitive animalized state, and a slow, a gradual development.¹⁵

Dr. Richard Swann Lull. A more recent authority, Richard Swann Lull, Professor of Vertebrate Paleontology, Yale University, 1921–22, in a Lecture Symposium published by the Yale University Press (1923), says

¹⁴White, *Warfare of Science with Theology* 1:281–83. As to the evidence of man in the Tertiary period, see works already cited, especially Quatrefages, Cartailhac, and Mortillet. For an admirable summary, see Laing, *Human Origins*, chapter 8. See also, for a summing up of the evidence in favour of man in the Tertiary period, Quatrefages, *Histoire Generale des Races Humaines*, in the *Bibliothèque Ethnologique*, Paris, 1887, chapter 4. As to the earlier view, see Vogt, *Lectures on Man*; refutation of Sir J. W. Dawson's attempt to make the old and new Stone periods coincide, see H. W. Haynes, in chapter 6, of the *History of America*, edited by Justin Winsor. For development of various important points in the relation of anthropology to the human occupancy of our planet, see Topinard, *Anthropology*, London, 1890, chapter 9. **Omit reading of [these works].**

¹⁵Draper, *Conflict between Religion and Science*, 199.

in his discussion about the Piltdown or Dawn Man and the geological structure in which he was found that

the British authorities, Lewis Abbott and J. Reid Moir, both refer the older gravels to the Pliocene, but the more widely accepted belief is that the Piltdown Man is Lower Pleistocene, of Second or Third Interglacial time, so that in terms of years his age (i.e. of the Piltdown Man) is from 200, 000 to 300,000 years.

In the concluding paragraphs of Professor Lull's lecture he says,

All of our evidence points to central Asia as the birthplace of mankind, and to the Miocene (period), 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 years ago the time of his origin. . . .

The antiquity of man has thus been made known by *direct* evidence in the form of human relics, the greatest age of which can hardly be less than half a million years. *Corroborative* evidence lies in the great variation, not alone between the several species of prehistoric man, but also among the many races of *Homo sapiens* himself, of which Gregory recognizes twenty-six, with a number of sub-races. And that the major divisions are very old is attested by ancient murals and other documents of the Egyptians and other oriental peoples.¹⁶

Later Utterances: Sir Arthur Keith. Still later utterances by scientists of prominence in current periodicals abundantly sustain these authorities I have been quoting. For instance in the Magazine Section of the *New York Times*, for October 12, 1930, Sir Arthur Keith, the eminent anthropologist and world distinguished scholar, describes what he considers to be "one of the greatest triumphs that has ever been accomplished by patient, exact archeological inquiry," in the discovery that about 20,000 years ago in Europe a race of white, non-primitive Cro-Magnon man—displaced an earlier and inferior type, the Neanderthal man; and then at length discusses the question, "Whence did Cro-Magnon man come?" And this at some length. I may only quote briefly:

We have grown up with the belief that Europe has always been the home of white men: we never knew until recently that what has happened in North America and Australia during recent times—the replacement of one race by another—also occurred in the continent of Europe some 20,000 years ago, according to our present mode of reasoning prehistoric time. . . . At the present day the white man is replacing the Aborigines of Australia. What is our evidence for asserting that some 20,000 years earlier a similar replacement occurred in Europe—a primitive type of white man, men of the Cro-Magnon type, migrating into Europe, colonizing it and ultimately taking complete

¹⁶Lull, "Antiquity of Man," 22, 38; italics in original.

possession of the continent? . . . We infer the date of the colonization from its relationship to the last Ice Age. We know that Neanderthal Man lived in Europe before the last Ice Age set in; we have found his fossil remains and his culture under its oldest deposits. Then there came an interlude—a temperate interval—in the Ice Age. It was in this interlude that the Cro-Magnon appeared in Europe and in which the Neanderthals either died out or were exterminated. So far we have found no evidence of cross-breeding, but it may have occurred. Then after the temperate interlude which saw the arrival of the Cro-Magnons, arctic conditions returned and continued until the dawn of the modern climate of Europe. By painstaking investigations the geologists of Scandinavia have been able to calculate approximately the number of centuries which have elapsed since arctic conditions came to an end in Europe. Their estimate is 12,000 years. . . . We estimate that at least 8,000 years must be added to the 12,000 to give the date of the glacial interlude which saw the first arrival of the forerunners of the modern inhabitants of Europe. The date of their arrival may very well be much earlier; it cannot be later.

He then presents the claims made by those who regard the migration of the Cro-Magnon people as coming from Africa. The advocates of this idea, Sir Arthur claims, can produce irrefutable evidence that the Sahara—the whole of North Africa—was then inhabited by man, for in deposits which have been laid down by those ancient rivers and streams, man's stone implements have been found.

English geologists, (Messrs. Sandford and Arkell), working for the government of Egypt, have proved (1929) that in the lower valley of the Nile there are deposits which contain the same succession of stone implements as occur in the valleys of the Seine and of the Thames. In the valleys of tributary streams issuing from the Libyan Desert, the same deposits are found with the same succession of implements.

In these early times the basin of the Fayum, which lies to the southwest of Cairo, was filled by the water of the Nile. In the beaches of this old lake Messrs. Sandford and Arkell found evidence that the desiccation of North Africa and of the Sahara began to set in during the period of Aurignacian culture—the period at which Cro-Magnon people appear in Europe (20,000 years ago). In Tunis and Algiers, French archaeologists have discovered and examined many of the workshops of Aurignacian man.

On the strength of this evidence the Pro-African school of anthropologists assume that it was the flaming sword of drought which compelled the Cro-Magnon people to emigrate from the Sahara and seek a new home in Europe.

Sir Arthur Keith himself, however, finds the Asiatic origin of the Cro-Magnon race most convincing, which he argues at length, but assigns about the same period of time for the Cro-Magnon advent into Europe.

What I have been seeking to show is that they (i.e. these Cro-Magnon migrations) are but repetitions of migratory movements which are as old as the evolution of human races. The Australians of today are but repeating what their ancestors did in Europe 20,000 years ago.

And after lengthy argument he says:

The seizure of Europe by pioneer bands of white settlers was a slow process; it probably extended over several thousands of years; there were migrations. The European pioneers made a clean sweep in their new country; the original natives, Neanderthal men, disappeared from Europe just as completely as the native race did from Tasmania in the nineteenth century.¹⁷

Sir James Jeans. In the November 23, number of *The Times* (1930), is another exhaustive argument on the age of the earth in which it is stated by Wm L. Laurence, who discusses the question, that

Sir James Jeans, dealing with this same subject in *The Universe Around Us*, published in 1929, gives the age of the earth as 2,000,000,000 years; the age of life on the earth as 300,000,000 years; and the age of man on earth as 300,000 years. The first of these figures would seem to have been corroborated now by the latest findings of Professor Kovarik.¹⁸

Sir Arthur Keith again: Evidence in South Africa. In the *Times*, Magazine Section of November 23, Sir Arthur Keith again made an important contribution to the subject of man's antiquity on the earth. This time under the title of "Supermen—of the Dim Past and Future." This article was based upon recent discoveries in South Africa led by one J. B. Botha, a farmer at Boskop in the Transvaal. Many discoveries of the remains of ancient man went on until finally representatives of the British Association for the Advancement of Science visited South Africa in 1929. "Another important addition was made to our knowledge of these large-brained inhabitants of South Africa," says Sir Arthur Keith.

Local archaeologists had been busy searching caves and river deposits in Cape Colony, the Transvaal and Rhodesia for traces of ancient man and were able to demonstrate to their visitors that there was strange parallelism between ancient South Africa and ancient Europe. In both of these widely separated parts of the world men had lived and had shaped stone tools for hundreds of thousands of years—ever since the beginning of the last geological age—the pleistocene period of the earth's history.

¹⁷*New York Times*, Magazine Section, October 12, 1930.

¹⁸*New York Times*, November 23, 1930.

In South Africa, as in Europe, one method of shaping stone tools, after having been in fashion for a long time, was succeeded by another method of “culture.” The strange thing was that although the South African stone cultures were never at any time identical with the European, yet there were many resemblances not only between individual cultures but in the sequence with which these cultures followed one another. Cave art flourished both in Europe and in South Africa. South Africa was even more rich than Europe in its rock and cave paintings. The British visitors were also surprised to learn that the rock paintings and rock engravings which were known to be the oldest were also the finest from an artistic point of view. As time went on, the hand of the South African artist lost its cunning.

Sir Arthur Keith also gives an account of the recent discoveries of a fossilized skeleton of a man at what is called Skildegat cave of which he gives the following account:

The floor of the cave was nearly 100 feet wide; they ran sections across it and had, by the Autumn of 1929, dug down to a depth of fourteen feet, passing through five distinct strata, every one of them rich in traces of humanity—hearths, implements, and burials. Above the fifth stratum and at a depth of nine feet they came across an ancient grave containing a complete skeleton. The bones were fossilized: the strata over the skeleton were intact. Now the stone tools of the stratum in which the skeleton lay were all of a kind which have been named “Still Bay”—because it was in a deposit at Still Bay, 200 miles to the east of Fish Hoek, that this culture was first discovered. A beautiful stone lance-head of the Still Bay type lay under the skeleton; all the evidence pointed to the fact that the Still Bay culture was the handiwork of the kind of man found in the Skildegat cave. It was the first time a human skeleton had been found in South Africa amid the tools which in life the man had fabricated and used.

Now the Still Bay culture of South Africa has its parallel in Europe; it is known as the Solutrean, and prevailed toward the end of the last ice age—having an antiquity of at least 15,000 years. There is every reason to suppose that the Still Bay culture of South Africa is just as ancient as the Solutrean of Europe. The skeleton found in the Skildegat cave is that of a man who inhabited South Africa some 15,000 years ago, or perhaps more. The man whose skeleton Messrs. Peers discovered has been named the Fish Hoek Man.¹⁹

H. S. Harrison, President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. In the *New York Times* of November 30, 1930, there is an article by H. S. Harrison, President of the Anthropological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in which he says:

¹⁹*New York Times*, Magazine Section, November 23, 1930.

There is less inclination than there was to regard all known fossil human or humanoid forms as being ancestral types to modern man, and they are now welcomed as distant collaterals, rather than as forefathers. Neanderthal man of the Mousterian epoch, Heidelberg man of a rather earlier period, and the still more remote men or ape-men of Piltdown in England, of Java, and of Peking, are placed in different genera or species, as the case may be, from *Homo Sapiens*; to this are assigned all existing men, and all those who have lived since the end of Mousterian times, say 20,000 years ago.²⁰

The Peking Man. In December 1929, scientists reported the discovery of one skull and several skeletons found in the stone quarries at Chow Outien, 30 miles from Peking, China. The skull was unearthed by Chinese geologists who claimed it belonged to a species of the famous Peking Man, the *Sinanthropus Pekinensis*, said to be associated with the period of the Piltdown skull and the Java ape-man. The dispatch making the announcement said, that “while the scientists who knew of the discoveries were sworn to secrecy, it was understood here (Peking), that they regarded them as perhaps the greatest human finds ever made.” The discoveries were made in the same limestone quarries where a very primitive type of men was found in 1928. The location of the more recently discovered skeletons was said to have convinced the discoverers that the ancient home of a distinctive type of primitive man had been discovered. “It was understood,” so the dispatch continued,

that the scientists believed with the various skeletons as well as the complete skull, they have material enough to reconstruct the entire drama of the life of the prehistoric colony or at least to sketch a portrait of man as he existed in the region of Peiping (near Peking) more than a million years ago. In addition to the human skull and skeletons, the fossil skull of a rhinoceros has been found in the quarry. Also there were uncovered heaps of bones believed to be those of other animals. Many of the bones were clearly broken as if by human hands, possibly, the scientists believe, by hungry men, seeking marrow as food.⁵

Dr. J. G. Anderson. Dr. J. G. Anderson, Swedish adviser to the Chinese Geological Survey and others continued searching eagerly for the heads of the headless skeletons found. The first trace of the Peking Man was discovered [in] 1920 by Dr. A. Zedansky, a Russian, who found a tooth near the site where the latest recoveries have been reported.

²⁰*New York Times*, November 30, 1930.

⁵Peking Man is now classified as *Homo erectus* and is dated from the Middle Pleistocene.

Dr. Davidson Black. Dr. Davidson Black, an American at Peiping [Peking] Union Medical College, placed the Peking Man on a stage of development between the modern human and more ancient human or semi-human creatures. The time estimate of a million years ago as the period in which the Peking Man inhabited the district was based on recent advances in geology, whereby the age of the earth and that of its living creatures is calculated at far higher figures than it was a few years ago; by that scale, the Peking Man is believed to include the Neanderthal Man and to be about contemporaneous with the Heidelberg Man of Europe.

Such the dispatch concerning the discovery of December 15, 1929, to the press of America. On July 30, 1930, a second dispatch was received from Peking, announcing the discovery of still another human skull in the same vicinity, in which it was announced that Dr. Davidson Black had been lent to the survey by the Rockefeller Foundation to devote his entire time to the first skull of the Peking Man. He announced the decision in this second dispatch that the first find was a female skull and the second a male skull, and goes on with a lengthy statement of the new discovery. There came at the same time a cable from London to the *New York Times* in which Professor G. Elliot Smith—one of the foremost geological authorities of England, and connected with the University of London, who declared the discovery of a second skull of the Peking race of antiquity was of great importance as dealing with the fossil remains of extinct types of living creatures.

Still later, namely, December 14, 1930, a dispatch from New Haven, Connecticut to the *New York Times*, giving an account of Professor G. Elliot Smith of the University of London, delivering a lecture at Yale University on the Peking man, who in the meantime had visited Peking to participate in the discoveries, made at that distinct point, said, “that instead of one Peking man there were now available parts of the skulls of ten individuals, and that at least one is the skull of a female.”

“It is certain,” Professor Smith said, “that the prehistoric man of 500,000 years ago (the age assigned to these Peking finds), could speak.”

The skull of the Peking Man he said bridges the gap between the Pithecanthropus Erectus and the Piltdown Man which had been considered heretofore two distinct types and representative of two entirely separate eras in the development of man. The skulls which have been found in China disclose a relationship between the two types.

Of course such statements as these from leading scientists could be multiplied almost indefinitely, but surely sufficient is here set forth to show that the unbroken thread of researches made concerning the

antiquity of man, establishes so far as such researches and human knowledge can establish anything, the great antiquity of the human race on the earth; and certainly that man's life on the earth goes further back than any time fixed by the Bible sources of information; which, at best, as to the advent of Adam and his race, goes no further back than from 6,000 to 8,000 years, and the lesser date is the one usually accepted by orthodoxy. In references made to the existence of man in the earth in our modern revelation, say in Section 1:24 of the Doctrine and Covenants, no earlier existence for man is given than the Bible revelation;[†] and sure it is that the archeological evidences for man's existence even if all the claims of a great antiquity may not be allowed, still go far beyond anything that is set down in our sacred chronology, ancient or modern; and therefore far beyond Adam's period; which forces the recognition of the existence of pre-Adamite races, if there is to be any ~~reconciliation~~ **adjustment** between man's discoveries and the records of scripture; and therefore I am urging the recognition of the advent of Adam to the earth as merely the introduction of an Adamic dispensation of man's existence, all of which will tend to account for all the facts forced upon our attention, and give reasonable standing for what has been revealed with what man by his searching has found out.

There is no other way to account for the stone ages, old and new, than to say that they began in a culture far beyond the period of Adam's advent. The facts of revelation contained in the Bible and our modern revelation which accepts and coalesces with them, do not fit in with the facts of man's evident prolonged existence before the Adamic period **on any other basis**. Here is a fine opportunity for the development of a great truth.

A mighty stride forward in truth was made when it became known that the revelation given to Moses had reference not to the whole, vast universe, but to just this earth on which man lived and to its immediate heavens associated with it (see Moses 1:35); and now with the evidence of life and death on the earth so indisputably evident, including the pre-Adamite life and death of man, in various stages of a successive race-life, why not recognize that truth, and see that which is inevitable, that in the advent of Adam the time had come for the achievement of some special purpose in relation to man—some spiritual relationship—that brought about the introduction of the Adamic dispensation? Otherwise the whole volume of facts as they are disclosed

[†]It is unclear how D&C 1:24 pertains to the subject at hand.

are thrown into confusion; and the revealed truths themselves for most men rendered doubtful, being out of harmony with the facts ascertained as to man's antiquity.

Moreover, by giving this interpretation to Bible facts and the evident truths science has discovered, we shall be doing just now not only a service to our own church, especially to the youth of it, but a service to all Christendom, and to humanity in general, in that we shall make it possible to all Christendom and the world to see a way to harmony between the Bible facts of revelation and the truths revealed by science, which is but the facts discovered by human research placed in orderly array.

On the other hand, to limit and insist upon the whole of life and death to this side of Adam's advent to the earth, some six or eight thousand years ago, as proposed by some, is to fly in the face of the facts so indisputably brought to light by the researcher of science in modern times, and this as set forth by men of the highest type in the intellectual and moral world; not inferior men, or men of sensual and devilish temperament, but men who must be accounted as among the noblest and most self-sacrificing of the sons of men—of the type whence must come the noblest sons of God, since the glory of God is intelligence; and that too the glory of man. These searchers after truth are of that class. To pay attention to, and give reasonable credence to their research and findings is to link the Church of God with the highest increase of human thought and effort. On that side lies development, on the other lies contraction. It is on the former side that research work is going on, and will continue to go on, future investigation and discoveries will continue on that side, nothing will retard them, and nothing will develop on the other side. One leads to narrow sectarianism, the other keeps the open spirit of a world movement *with* which our New Dispensation began. As between them, which is to be our choice?

Addendum

[Draft 2 of chapter 31, pages 43-49, contains the following additional material. One can safely conclude that when Roberts presented his ideas to the Quorum of the Twelve on January 7, 1931, he read the draft of chapter 31 together with the preceding sections and this conclusion. Counting the cover sheet, these total fifty pages:]

[[Well, here is my presentation of the evidence for the antiquity of man and of life and death in the earth previous to Adam. Do not, I pray you, regard it as all the evidence in hand. From my own files of accumulated evidence I could supply several more such papers as this here

submitted. I have said nothing of the frequently reported discoveries of a great antiquity of animal life and death unearthed in the bed of the old sea that once occupied our own Great Basin of this Rocky Mountain plateau ~~region~~ and which ante-date any antiquity that can possibly be assigned to Adam, although I have preserved in my files some of these reported discoveries of ancient life and death in this region.

You Brethren will have observed also perhaps that I have not followed any pin-picking method of argument in dealing with the excerpts from Elder Smith's discourse presented here, but rather have depended upon great, sweeping cumulative, and to me, overwhelming evidences of man's ancient existence in the earth, his life and death in the world through such great periods of time that the facts pertaining to his advent upon the earth **at the time of Adam** ~~at~~ the utmost of the claims made for his coming—~~from six to eight thousand years ago~~ cannot by any process whatsoever of technical interpretation of words or passages of scripture be made to stretch over and explain the facts of the antiquity of man in the earth. If the evidence submitted proves the fact that races of men existed in the earth long ages ago, fifteen or twenty thousand years ago, to say nothing of the longer time of hundreds of thousands of years ago, ~~that in those long ages ago~~ **when** these men lived and died, then *amen* to the claim that all this existence with its life and its death have been wrought within the period of Adam's advent to earth, and his fall, and his life and death. ~~upon it, some six or eight thousand years ago: and so far as I know no greater antiquity than this or can be claimed for the advent of Adam upon the earth and his life and death upon it, on the basis of revelation ancient or modern.~~

The argument based on the interpretation of scripture. Of course there is the statement of scripture quoted and emphasized by Elder Smith, **to be accounted for**, that Adam is the "ancient of days" (Dan. 7:9), "the first man of all men" (Moses 1:34) upon the earth; that if "Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen" and there would have been no death, for "all things which were created must have remained in the same state . . . forever" and have "had no end" (2 Ne. 2:22); also that God when he had finished the creation pronounced it "good" and the inference is drawn that it could not have been "good" if death existed in the created world; "nor was there any death upon the earth," Elder Smith assures us, in terms as strong as type can be made to say it; and of course we are reminded that these are things said by our scriptures and must be true. But they may be reconciled with the facts of death upon the earth in ages previous to Adam—as the discoveries of men undoubtedly prove—if Adam's advent is understood as describing the introduction of a special dispensation on the earth to accomplish some particular purpose of God in the development of man such as bringing ~~man~~ **him** into special spiritual relationship with ~~him~~, **the Lord**, and men **into special relationships** with one another. Then it is not difficult to see a reasonable understanding

of these passages of scripture relied upon by Elder Smith to sustain his views. For example, to take the very strongest scriptures he quotes, Adam is called by the Lord “the first man of All men” upon the earth; and called by the Prophet of the New Dispensation, “The Ancient of Days, or in other words “the first and oldest of all.” All right, but let it stand as applying to Adam with reference to his particular dispensation and his mission to the earth, and all the difficulties of interpretation disappear, and all the facts are accounted for, as follows: Adam was the first man of all men upon the earth—in *his dispensation*. The first and oldest of all—of his time **or period; ~~the ancient of days~~**; and had he not transgressed he would not have fallen, nor would he have died and all things must have remained in the same state in which they were *after the earth was prepared for Adam* and his race; and they must have remained forever and had no end; **had it been possible for him to have maintained the status quo, this life, previous to his fall!—But, of course, it was not possible. But** What fact of scripture referred to by Elder Smith is not accounted for and harmonized by this suggestion and interpretation? If it is not accepted, then it remains for those advocating Elder Smith’s theory of all life and death in the earth having occurred since Adam’s advent, to give such interpretation as will accord with the stern proven facts of life and death, ages and ages before Adam appears on the scene.

One other item I wish to present that is mentioned in the excerpt made from Elder Smith’s discourse that is not brought out in the discussion I have presented here on the Antiquity of Man in the earth; and really does not specifically enter into that subject, nor is it my purpose to discuss the matter at length on this occasion. I mention it now merely to bring it into the record of this case that it may receive consideration and not be lost sight of, for it is very important, and should receive more attention than I am attempting to give it here.

It is in relation to Adam, and the physical status of him at his advent upon the earth. I quote from the excerpt of Elder Smith’s discourse read at the commencement of ~~my~~ **this** paper.

“By revelation we are well informed that Adam was not subject to death when he was placed in the garden of Eden, nor was there any death upon the earth.” Then:

“He ⟨Adam⟩ did not come here a resurrected being to die again for we are taught most clearly that those who pass through the resurrection receive eternal life, and can die no more. It is sufficient for us to know, until the Lord reveals more about it, that Adam was not subject to death, but had the power through transgressing the law, to become subject to death, and to cause the same curse ⟨?⟩ to come upon the earth and all life upon it. For this earth once pronounced good, was *cursed* after the fall. It is passing through its mortal probation as well as the life which is upon it, and will eventually receive the resurrection and a place of exaltation which is decreed in the heavens for it.”

I am very glad to observe that Elder Smith in opening this subject says, speaking of Adam ~~in the above~~—“He did not come here ~~to the earth~~ a *resurrected being to die* again for we are taught most clearly that those who pass through the resurrection receive eternal life, and can die no more.” I am pleased I say, that Elder Smith makes this declaration that “Adam was not a resurrected being,” for it makes it possible for me to add, *then he was not an immortal being, for the only way to the status of immortality sometimes referred to as “eternal life,” is through mortality and the resurrection from death to immortality. The resurrected Christ is the true type and ensample of an immortal man, deathless; he can die no more!*

But Elder Smith says, in the above, “Adam was not subject to death”; Then he was immortal.—Quoting again: “But (he) had the power, through the transgression of the law, to become subject to death, and to cause the same *curse to come upon it* **to come upon the earth and all life upon it.**” Well, if Adam *could* die, as he did, then he was after all *subject to death*. No matter what means, I repeat, if he *could* die, by any means whatsoever, then he was subject to death; he was not immortal; and the proof that he was subject to death is in the fact that ~~Adam~~ **he** did die. It does not help matters to say “but (he, Adam) had the power through transgressing the law, to become subject to death”; for if he had that power, he was subject to death, and he did die. In the face of that stern fact it is useless and illogical to say Adam “was not subject to death.”

Let us recapitulate: “Adam was not a resurrected being,” we are assured. Then he was not an immortal being, for the only way to bring about immortality to men is through mortality, and the **resurrected from the dead.**

But Adam was not a resurrected being, yet, according to Elder Smith, when he came to earth though not a resurrected being, “he was not subject to death”!

But by transgression of law Adam brought death upon himself and upon all life in the earth:!
Therefore, after all, he *was* subject to death ~~for he died~~: **he brought it upon himself, and he did die!**

It seems to me that before you put a straight line of consistency through all this, we shall have to understand Adam to be of a different order of men, that is, in a different stage of development, than *not* a resurrected being, yet not subject to death; and yet dying!

Let it be remembered that there is no such thing as conditional immortality. Men are ~~either~~ **mortal or translated**, or immortal, **if for if** they die ~~for any cause~~ **no matter from what cause**; they are mortal; for they are subject to death. **Translated men are those in whom death is (?) but are still subject to death.** If they are immortal then they are not subject to death, **They cannot**; they are like the Christ, in that respect, spirit and element are inseparably connected in them (D&C 93); **which is what God is aiming at through man’s earth life**; and they cannot die under

any condition, they truly are not subject to death. The prophet Alma of the Book of Mormon describes the status; speaking of **the** resurrection from the temporal death of the human body he says:

The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; and we shall be brought to stand before God. . . . I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, *never to be divided*; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption. (Alma 11:43, 45; italics added)

Of the earth being “good” before death entered it. Elder Smith argues that this earth when created was pronounced “good”; and as necessary to that “good,” there was no death upon it. This his language: “The Lord pronounced the earth *good*, when it was finished. Every thing upon its face was called *good*. There was no death in the earth before the fall of Adam.” Then later: “This earth once pronounced *good*, was *cursed* after the fall.” And all this because death came upon it. But was the death of Adam and **of** all life on the earth a curse? But the earth was pronounced “good” before death came upon it? Yea, and more than that, it was pronounced, “*very good*” (Gen. 1:31); ~~and~~ **But** it was “good,” not so much ~~that~~ **because** no death was upon it, but because it was put in the way of becoming better, even best; for it was put in the way of becoming through death, a celestial world, the habitat of immortal, resurrected men. I have never understood that death was to be considered a *curse* no matter what words God had to use in his revelation to meet the understanding of man in marking off the changes to take place in the experiences of men in their progress through the world—through death and sorrow to immortality an everlasting joy, which ~~for~~ ~~man~~ God has designed in his purposes for man; and one may not—looking at the matter in **large**—refer to any of the means to the accomplishment of this as “a curse,” unless one is prepared to pronounce God’s program for man in the earth a curse. That I am sure none of us is prepared to do, or has the desire to do.]]

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: “The standard works on anthropology”; Genesis; Moses; and Abraham.

CHAPTER XXXII

LIFE STATUS OF ADAM AND EVE AT THEIR EARTH ADVENT

Scripture Reading Lesson

Analysis

- I. The coming of Adam.
- II. The "Royal Planters" - Adam and Eve.
- III. The kind of beings Adam and Eve were when brought to earth.
- IV. Translation and translated beings.
- V. Translation of Enoch and his city.
- VI. The prophet of the New Dispensation on translated beings.
- VII. Immortality means deathless; Testimony of the Book of Mormon.
- VIII. The process of becoming immortal.

References

- "Key to Theology", Parley P. Pratt (5th Ed., 1883, chapter VI)
- "Science and Immortality", by Sir Oliver Lodge, F. R. S. 1908, Section 3, chapters 8, and 9.
- "Journal of Discourses" Vol. I p.50, April 1852.
- Discourse of the prophet Joseph Smith on Priesthood, "History of the Church" Vol. IV. p. 207 *et sq.* Ditto p. 425.
- Book of Mormon passim - especially Mosiah 18; Alma 11. Also Alma chapter 40.

Life Status of Adam and Eve at Their Earth Advent

The coming of Adam. The outcome of reflections inspired by the last two chapters would lead us to the acceptance of all that has preceded from the days of Adam as an Adamic dispensation of the things of God with reference to the earth and its inhabitants; and not an entire and complete record of all the happenings upon the earth from the beginning of its first physical creation.

Let us consider how this works out in the long course of the earth's existence. Some cataclysm, some excessive heat period or some overwhelming glacial calamity emptied the earth of all its forms of life—including the human or near-human life. And perhaps in preparation of a better order of things; then come to pass conditions under which the desolated earth may be replenished with life, vegetable and animal life, in sea, and air, and earth. When this is so, the intelligences of some more highly developed world conclude to bring this to pass, and one from among their number, physically and in every way fitted to fulfill such a mission, is brought to the earth and with him his spouse, whose mission together it will be to “replenish” the earth, as it was in the case of Noah after the cataclysm of the flood. A man is **created brought**, and a woman; a garden is planted in a desolate earth, and many forms of life are brought to the earth, and take on existence and spread until the whole earth is abundantly supplied with life in all its varied forms; and human life begins as set forth in the revelations of God in the Bible—especially as recorded in the second chapter of Genesis.

The “royal planters”—Adam and Eve. As for the man and his spouse, Adam and Eve, in the account of their origin that is given under the symbols of procreation. Man created from the dust of the earth, and a human preexistent spirit infused into him. Woman produced truly of man, so also man was produced of man and woman; but symbols of the

phallic generation of woman are used in the account of her creation. The body of man is created from the dust of the earth, and so with woman, and that is true today through the process of generation, and the slowly gathered material from the earth integrating through food and the digestion of it, and growth to the attainment of the appointed height and frame of man. So indeed it was with reference to Adam and Eve, generated in the same way (under nature's law), as men and women are generated today, but upon another world than this we inhabit and where they grew to the state of physical and spiritual development, which fitted them for the mission assigned to them on this earth. Let it be remembered that they came out of an eternal universe, where this process of creation from spiritual to temporal (**material or physical**), and from temporal up to a higher spiritual, has been going on eternally; without beginning, and will continue without end, going on in one everlasting present. For the God-mind all distinctions of time as to past and present and future, so stand that they live and work in the eternal "*now*." So there is nothing mysterious—only as all existence is mysterious—in the matter of Adam and Eve being created by act of generation, the process here suggested, and then, when they had attained suitable development to receive this mission appointment to open a dispensation with reference to the purposes of God on the earth, they came to plant their race in a desolate earth,[†] and to become Patriarch and ~~Mother~~ **Matriarch** to earth's future teeming millions in that dispensation they were honored to begin.

The kind of beings Adam and Eve were when brought to earth.

Further consideration is necessary as to Adam and Eve, an inquiry into their degree of development in the process of life, when they came to the earth; that is to say, had they attained unto resurrection in some former world, or had they in the process of life that has been already described in these pages halted somewhat this side of resurrection and immortality? This is mentioned here because it has been suggested that when Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a

[†]On the statement "They came to plant their race in a desolate earth," the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve remarked: "This is questioned by the committee. According to the revelations bearing on the question, the earth was fully prepared for Adam and pronounced 'good,' before he was placed upon it, and was full of life and beauty." Reporting to President Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith explained: "Reference to the destruction of the pre-Adamites is objected on the grounds previously stated." Reporting to President Clawson, George Albert Smith explained also: "It does not harmonize with the Temple ceremonies."

“celestial body”; and *that* would mean an immortal body—he would be a resurrected personage.^a This is sustained by a subsequent explanation of the theory here referred to as follows: “When Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, their bodies became mortal from its effects, and therefore their offspring were mortal.”¹ It would appear from this conception of things pertaining to Adam’s status in life that he came to the earth with a “celestial body,” that is, an immortal body, and then became mortal by partaking of the forbidden fruit, and this in order that he might beget children that would be mortal, in order to accomplish the purpose of God with reference to man’s earth life, that he might have his experiences in broken harmonies, ending in death—separation of spirit and body, to be followed by resurrection and an immortal life, as set forth in previous pages. But there is an inconsistent thing in such a conception of Adam’s status in life when brought to the garden of Eden. Immortality means “exempt from liability to die”; “imperishable”; “undying”; “lasting forever”; “having unlimited or eternal existence”; it means death-less! To say that a person is “immortal,” and then claim that by eating forbidden fruit or anything else, he can become subject to death is a solecism, a rank misunderstanding of terms. *If a person is immortal then he can not die under any circumstances.* If one supposed to be immortal should die, you have conclusive evidence that he was not immortal.[†]

Translation and translated beings. There is nothing in the scriptures, or any utterances equivalent to scripture, that requires us to

^aThis “suggestion” was offered by Brigham Young in the same discourse that Roberts cites below. Roberts’s reasoning that Adam and Eve were not resurrected personages when placed in the garden of Eden is in harmony with current Church teaching, although his belief that they were translated beings is not widely accepted. It may be more appropriate to refer to Adam and Eve’s pre-fall condition as premortal rather than immortal.

¹Young, *Journal of Discourses* 1:50. This discourse was delivered April 9, 1852.

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve responded: “The doctrine that Adam came here a ‘translated’ being from some other world is not accepted as a doctrine of the Church. The theory that he came here from some other world a ‘translated’ being does not take care of the element of ‘death’ as that condition came into the world, for translated beings are subject to death according to the teaching in the Book of Mormon (3 Ne. 28:36–40). The scriptures teach us that Adam was not subject to death before the ‘fall,’ and would have lived forever in that innocent state if he had not ‘transgressed’ the law. His ‘fall’ changed the condition and brought death into the world, which could not have happened if death was already here. It is true that Adam had not passed through the resurrection (2 Ne. 2:22, Alma 12:26 and other passages).”

believe that when Adam was brought to the earth he was an immortal personage; the fact that he died is proof positive that he was not immortal. On the other hand, the scriptures give an account of an order of men in whom the process of death is suspended by the power of God, ~~in order~~ that there might be an order of beings capable of performing such special missions to worlds where by the nature of them they would be fitted to such work as might be assigned to them. These are “translated” personages, such for instance as Elijah, who, we are told, was taken into heaven without tasting death (2 Kgs. 2:11). Also we are told in the Bible that Enoch “walked with God: and he was not; for God took him” (Gen. 5:24). This is explained by St. Paul who said: “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him”; which is generally understood that, as in the case of Elijah, he was taken to heaven without tasting death (Heb. 11:5).

Translation of Enoch and his city. Through modern revelation we obtain further knowledge as to Enoch and his translation, viz., in the fragment of the writings of Moses, known as the book of Moses, in the Pearl of Great Price. Here is given an extended account of the ministry of Enoch as a preacher of righteousness. Those whom his ministry brought to a knowledge of the truth were gathered together into a holy city called “Zion,” which signifies, among other things, the “pure in heart” (D&C 97:21), or the “City of Holiness” (Moses 7:19). We are also told that “Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven” (Moses 7:21); so that not only was Enoch translated, but his whole city, for not only did Enoch walk with God, but “Enoch and all his people walked with God, and he ⟨Enoch⟩ dwelt in the midst of Zion; and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, ZION IS FLED” (Moses 7:69).²

The Prophet of the New Dispensation on translated beings. The Prophet of our New Dispensation, Joseph Smith, also had something of importance to say concerning this principle of translation. In an article presented and read to the Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at Nauvoo, October 3, 1840, the Prophet said, commenting on Genesis 5:24, which deals with the translation of Enoch:

Now this Enoch God reserved unto Himself, that he should not die at that time, and appointed unto him a ministry unto terrestrial bodies,

²For the whole ministry of Enoch see Moses 6-7.

~~(i.e. terrestrial world)~~, of whom there has been but little revealed. He (Enoch) is reserved also unto the Presidency of a dispensation **(same as Adam)**,³ and more shall be said of him and terrestrial bodies in another treatise. He (Enoch) is a ministering angel, to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. . . . Now the doctrine of translation is a power which belongs to this Priesthood (i.e. the Melchizedek). There are many things which belong to the powers of the Priesthood and the keys thereof, that have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world; they are hid from the wise and prudent to be revealed in the last times.

Many have supposed that the doctrine of translation was a doctrine whereby men were taken immediately into the presence of God, and into an eternal fullness, but this is a mistaken idea. Their place of habitation is that of the terrestrial order, and a place prepared for such characters He held in reserve to be ministering angels unto many planets, and who as yet have not entered into so great a fullness as those who are resurrected from the dead.⁴

This means that translated persons have not altogether escaped from death; for it is most solemnly declared that, “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22). And if this holds true, then Elijah, Enoch, and Enoch’s people, all who have been translated, in fact, must also pass through the change that is wrought by physical death.

Later, namely at the Church Conference of October 3, 1841, the Prophet on this same subject said: “Translated bodies cannot enter into rest until they have undergone a change equivalent to death. Translated bodies are designed for future missions.”⁵

With these facts and principles **relative to translation** before us, established upon authoritative sources of knowledge accepted by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as authoritative teachings on this subject of translated beings, and the possible missions to which they may be assigned, we are prepared to apply this principle to the commencement of things in this earth life of man under the Adamic dispensation. We have pointed out that it would be inconsistent to say that immortal beings came to the earth to start things as Adam and Eve did and then to say that by partaking of forbidden fruit they were so changed in their immortal nature that they died, since a person who is once become immortal can not again be subject to death; and on this we have the most positive testimony from the Book of Mormon.

³Shall we say, even as Adam was reserved to the Presidency of the Dispensation he opened on our earth?

⁴Smith, *History of the Church* 4:209-10.

⁵Smith, *History of the Church* 4:425.

Immortality means “deathless”: *Book of Mormon Testimony.*
Speaking of the Christ, the prophet Mosiah [*sic*] says:

He is the light and the life of the world; yea, a light that is endless, that can never be darkened; yea, and also a life which is endless, that *there can be no more death*. Even this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruption shall put on incorruption. (Mosiah 16:9-10; italics added)

If this be true of the resurrected Christ, it is true of all resurrected personages.

The prophet ~~Zeezrom~~ **Amulek** is represented as saying:

Now, there is a death which is called a temporal death; . . . that all shall be raised from this temporal death. The spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time; . . . Now, behold, I have spoken unto you concerning the death of the mortal body, and also concerning the resurrection of the mortal body. I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body, that is from death, even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, *never* to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption. (Alma 11:42, 45; italics added)

The process of becoming immortal. The only way of obtaining immortality is in accordance with God’s plan in bringing about the immortality of man, namely, they are begotten mortal men into an earth life; they die and are resurrected to their immortality, and when so made immortal then it happens to them according to the above teaching of the Book of Mormon, they become immortal, that is, *deathless! They cannot die under any circumstance.* They have become “soul,” and also “sole,” a single thing—a spiritual being, compounded of a union of imperishable earth elements, and imperishable intelligent and spirit elements, that admit of no possible tearing apart or sundering, or dissolution. They are deathless—immortal! Proof against all possibility of dissolution; so that if Adam came to this earth a “celestial,” an “immortal being,” he could not have died, and since he did die the conclusion must be that he was not immortal when he came to the earth, but was possibly a translated being, such as Elijah or Enoch and the people of Enoch’s city were. In that state he could be brought to this earth to people it with offspring that would be mortal, subject to death as he himself was, and subject also to resurrection from the dead as he himself was; and brought by that resurrection to a glorious immortality.

Thus we have our start of the human race in the earth through Adam and Eve, children of God from some other world, begotten in

the image of God, after his kind, and now to beget offspring after their kind, and perpetuate the race of God's children in this earth in order that they might attain, ultimately, to immeasurable heights of power, and glory, and honor, and immortality—eternal life—physical and spiritual.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Lodge, *Science and Immortality*, sect. 3, chs. 8 and 9; Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology*; Mosiah 18; and Alma 11; 40.

The Problem of Evil

The garden of Eden. In the garden of God's planting, mentioned in Genesis second chapter, and into which man was brought and made the keeper, were two special trees, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Of this tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the Lord said to Adam: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:16-17). Thus God's commandment to man; thus the challenge of law to man's obedience, the application of God's pre-determined test:

We will make an earth whereon these ⟨preexistent spirits of men⟩ may dwell; And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; And they who keep their first estate ⟨i.e. preexistent spirit estate⟩ shall be added upon; . . . and they who keep their second estate ⟨man's earth estate⟩ shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever. (Abr. 3:24-26)

Symbols of knowledge and life: The tree of death and the tree of life. In the above symbols, together with the announced penalties to follow disobedience, we have assembled the great mysteries of this world—life, death, good, evil, the fact of man's agency—power to order his own course, to obey or disobey **God**; continued life for obedience, which is but conformation to the law of life; and death for disobedience, or departure from the conditions on which life is predicated. The tree of life was the symbol of eternal life, for later when man had partaken of the fruit of the tree of death—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—God is represented as saying, in effect, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, *and eat, and live for ever*;" let us send him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground,

and guard the tree of life by cherubims with a flaming sword. And so it was ordered (Gen. 3:22-25; italics added).

Death was symbolized in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (in the day thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die), hence the tree of death. Death, we learn from scriptures other than Genesis, is both temporal and spiritual. What is here called temporal death is physical death, separation of the spirit and body, the dust returning to the earth whence it came; but the spirit, being a thing immortal, survives in conscious life and goes to the world of spirits. “Dust thou art, and [un]to dust shalt thou return” (Gen. 3:19), was not written of the spirit of man. The spiritual death is disruption of the union of the soul of man with God, and hence spiritual death, since union with God is the source of man’s spiritual life. But while partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge would bring death, both spiritual (**separation from God—hence from good**) and temporal (**separation of spirit and body—physical death**); yet it would bring also the knowledge that would make men as Gods, to know good and evil; and so far become like Gods.^a

The world’s great mystery—the existence of evil. Here let us face this world’s great mystery, the existence of evil, especially of moral evil, which one high in religious and philosophical thought speaks of as “the real riddle of existence—the problem which confounds all philosophy, aye, and all religion too.” He represents that the real riddle is “that evil should exist at all!” “Against this immovable barrier of the existence of evil,” he continues,

the waves of philosophy have dashed themselves unceasingly since the birthday of human thought, and have retired broken and powerless, without displacing the minutest fragment of the stubborn rock, without softening one feature of its dark and rugged surface.¹

Testimony from the Book of Mormon: Lehi on the eternity of evil. In the Book of Mormon, which here we hold to be an ancient volume of American Scripture written by the inspiration of God in its prophets and seers, and translated also by the inspiration of God, is a master stroke of philosophy, as also an authoritative theological doctrine of highest value, the doctrine of necessary opposition in all things, the antinomies of the universe. This Book of Mormon treatise on necessary opposite existences, boldly carries the necessity of such existences to such an extreme that the sacred writer Lehi (of the first part

^aRoberts corrected Draft 2 to read *Gods*.

¹Mansel, *Limits of Religious Thought*, 197.

of the fifth [*sic*] century B.C.), makes existence itself, and even the existence of God, to depend upon the fact of things existing in duality: “things to act and things to be acted upon” (2 Ne. 2:14). Opposite physical forces are seen in attraction and repulsion, the centripetal and centrifugal forces, the action and reaction of which hold the worlds in balance; in ~~the~~ chemistry, the composing and decomposing substances; in electricity, the positive and negative forces; and in the whole universe is to be seen what is called the antinomy, or opposites, of light and darkness, movement and repose, energy and matter, heat and cold, life and death; “the one and the multiple”; in the moral order, good and evil, joy and sorrow, courage and cowardice, righteousness and wickedness. And now Lehi’s statement of the case and his reasoning thereon, and his startling conclusion:

For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, . . . righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad. Wherefore, all things **(i.e. in that event)** must needs be a compound in one; wherefore, if it should be one body it must needs remain as dead, having no life neither death, nor corruption nor incorruption, happiness nor misery, neither sense nor insensibility. Wherefore, it must needs have been created for a thing of naught; wherefore there would have been no purpose in the end of its creation. Wherefore, this thing must needs destroy the wisdom of God and his eternal purposes, and also the power, and the mercy, and the justice of God. And if ye shall say there is no law, ye shall also say there is no sin. If ye shall say there is no sin, ye shall also say there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these things are not there is no God. And if there is no God we are not, neither the earth; for there could have been no creation of things, *neither to act nor to be acted upon*; wherefore, all things must have vanished away. (2 Ne. 2:11–13; italics added)

This doctrine unique to modern revelations. The antinomies of the universe—things in necessary duality, essential to the existence of things at all—is the doctrine of this passage. Who before this in ancient times taught this doctrine? Who of modern times, prior to 1830, the year in which the Book of Mormon was published, ever taught it? And especially whoever, either in ancient or modern times, ever carried the daring thought to the height of making existences of the universe and the universe itself, and even the existence of God, depend upon the existence of things in duality, in a necessary opposition in all things? I shall make bold to claim this as a uniqueness of the Nephite scripture. But pride of it is not in its uniqueness, but in the self-evident truth of it, and in the tremendous consequences that draw with it, and the light

it throws athwart the world's mystery of the existence of evil; the aid it is to philosophy; the aid it is to religion; the assistance it will afford in our exposition of the fall of man.

Evil among the eternal things. We can be assured from the Book of Mormon doctrine that evil as well as good is among the eternal things. The existence of evil did not begin with its appearance on our earth. Evil existed even in heaven; for Lucifer and many other spirits sinned there; rebelled against heaven's matchless King, waged "war," and were thrust out into the earth for their transgression.

Evil is not a created quality. It has always existed as the background of good. It is as eternal as goodness; it is as eternal as law; it is as eternal as the agency of intelligences. Sin, which is ~~active~~ *evil*, is transgression of law, and so long as the agency of intelligences and law have existed, the possibility of the transgression of law has existed; and as the agency of intelligences, and law have eternally existed, so, too, evil has existed eternally, either potentially or active, and will always so exist. Evil may not be referred to God for its origin. He is not its creator. Evil is one of those independent existences that is uncreate, and stands in the category of qualities of eternal things.² The good cannot exist without the antithesis of ~~the~~ evil, the foil on which it produces itself and becomes known. The existence of one implies the existence of the other; and conversely, the non-existence of the latter would imply the nonexistence of the former. It is from this basis that Lehi reached the conclusion that either his doctrine of the existence of opposites is true, or else there is no existence.

Lehi's conclusion is woven into the very fabric of the things of the universe. It cannot be otherwise. The opposite, the absence of one or

²Lest some text-proofer should retort upon me and cite the words of Isaiah, "I make peace *and create evil*," the only text of scripture ascribing the creation of evil to God, I will anticipate so far as to say that it is quite generally agreed that no reference is made in the words of Isaiah to "moral evil"; but to such evils as may come as judgments upon people for their correction, such as famine, or tempest, or war; such an "evil" as would stand in natural antithesis to "peace," which word precedes, "I create evil," in the text—"I make peace and create"—the opposite to peace, "The evils of afflictions and punishments, but not the evil of sin" (*Catholic Bible*, comment on Isaiah 45:7). Meantime we have the clearest scriptural evidence that moral evil is not a product of God: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man," that is to say, God has nothing to do with the creation of moral evil, "but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:13-15). "The evil and the good are necessary co-relatives." Lodge, "Christianity and Science," 657.

the other member in a given series of antitheses is unthinkable. The fact of the **existence reality** of opposite existences must be recognized as a necessary truth, a truth the opposite of which is inconceivable.

The testimony of a modern (Harvard) philosopher: Since the publication of the Book of Mormon (spring of 1830), consideration of this subject of evil has been more frequent and fuller, but in none of these more recent discussions is to be found those who in consideration of the theme take on the coloring of Lehi's conclusions until you come to John Fiske, professor, historian and philosopher of Harvard fame, from whose writings is to be obtained full warrant for all that the Book of Mormon passage on opposite existences sets forth, and this in his great treatise on the "Mystery of Evil" (1899) and published in his *Studies in Religion*.

Mr. Fiske says:

Whatever exists is part of the dramatic whole, and this can quickly be proved. The goodness in the world—all that we love and praise and emulate—we are ready enough to admit into our scheme of things, and to rest upon it our belief in God. The misery, the pain, the wickedness, we would fain leave out. But if there were no such thing as evil, how could there be such a thing as goodness? Or to put it somewhat differently, if we had never known anything but goodness, how could we ever distinguish it from evil? How could we recognize it as good? How would its quality of goodness in any wise interest or concern us? This question goes down to the bottom of things, for it appeals to the fundamental conditions according to which conscious intelligence exists at all. Its answer will therefore be likely to help us. It will not enable us to solve the problem of evil, enshrouded as it is in a mystery impenetrable by finite intelligence, but it will help us to state the problem correctly; and surely this is no small help. In the mere work of purifying our intellectual vision there is that which heals and soothes us. To learn to see things without distortion is to prepare one's self for taking the world in the right mood, and in this we find strength and consolation. . . .

It is an undeniable fact that we cannot know anything whatever except as contrasted with something else. The contrast may be bold and sharp, or it may dwindle into a slight discrimination, but it must be there. If the figures on your canvas are indistinguishable from the background, there is surely no picture to be seen. Some element of unlikeness, some germ of antagonism, some chance for discrimination, is essential to every act of knowing. I might have illustrated this point concretely without all the foregoing explanation, but I have aimed at paying it the respect due to its vast importance. I have wished to show how the fact that we cannot know anything whatever except as contrasted with something else is a fact that is deeply rooted in the innermost structure of the human mind. It is not a superficial but a

fundamental truth, that if there were no colour but red it would be exactly the same thing as if there were no colour at all. . . .

If our palates had never come in contact with any tasteful thing save sugar, we should know no more of sweetness than of bitterness. If we had never felt physical pain, we could not recognize physical pleasure. For want of the contrasted background its pleasurable-ness would be nonexistent. And in just the same way it follows that without knowing that which is morally evil we could not possibly recognize that which is morally good. Of these antagonist correlatives, the one is unthinkable in the absence of the other. In a sinless and painless world, human conduct might possess more outward marks of perfection than any saint ever dreamed of; but the moral element would be lacking; the goodness would have no more significance in our conscious life than that load of atmosphere which we are always carrying about with us.

We are thus brought to a striking conclusion, the essential soundness of which cannot be gainsaid. In a happy world there must be sorrow and pain, and in a moral world the knowledge of evil is indispensable. The stern necessity for this has been proved to inhere in the innermost constitution of the human soul. It is part and parcel of the universe. To him who is disposed to cavil at the world which God has in such wise created, we may fairly put the question whether the prospect of escape from its ills would ever induce him to put off this human consciousness, and accept in exchange some form of existence unknown and inconceivable! The alternative is clear: on the one hand a world with sin and suffering, on the other hand an unthinkable world in which conscious life does not involve contrast.

The profound truth of Aristotle's remark is thus more forcibly than ever brought home to us. We do not find that evil has been interpolated into the universe from without; we find that, on the contrary, it is an indispensable part of the dramatic whole.³

Summary of Fiske's contribution. There can be no doubt that this is strong and direct support to the essential things in Lehi's philosophy. Let me throw the evidence of it in sight:

Whatever exists is part of the dramatic whole. . . . This question goes down to the bottom of things, for it appeals to the fundamental conditions according to which conscious intelligence exists at all; . . . It is an undeniable fact that we can not know anything whatever except as contrasted with something else; . . . If the figures on your canvas are indistinguishable from the background, there is surely no picture to be seen. . . . It is not a superficial but a fundamental truth that if there were no colour but red, it would be exactly the same thing as if there were no colour at all (so as to **the** good). . . . If we had

³Fiske, *Studies in Religion*, 242-43, 249-52.

never felt physical pain, we could not recognize physical pleasure. . . . Without knowing that which is morally evil, we could not possibly recognize that which is morally good. . . . In a happy world there must be sorrow and pain, . . . and in a moral world the knowledge of evil is indispensable. . . . We do not find that evil has been interpolated into the universe from without; we find that, on the contrary, it is an indispensable part of the dramatic whole.⁴

God did not create evil, nor is he responsible for it. From this view of things we get a new conception of evil. It is not a created thing, it exists in the sum of things, in the constitution of things. It is “part of the dramatic whole.” As already suggested God is not the creator of evil. It is repulsive to every worthy thought of Deity to think so; and contrary to the unity and consistency of his attributes of righteousness and true holiness, and justice and love that he should be the author of evil, or the creator of the devil to produce evil, and be responsible for it in our world or in any other world, for in that case God would still be responsible for the existence of evil.

Evil rests upon the eternal nature of things, of existences in both their eternal positive and negative forms. God did not create space (i.e. expanse or extension in which things exist); God did not create duration—limitless time; God did *not* create matter—the stuff that things are made of, and that occupies space; God did not create force, or energy, or mind, or intelligence—the thing in Lehi’s philosophy which “acts.” All these are eternal things, and God working among these brings to pass changes and ordains events, these his creative acts. God is not the author of evil or wickedness; neither did he create the devils of this or of other worlds; such devils as exist are intelligences possessed of free moral agency, who chose to do evil and rebelled against good and against God, and have had perverse inclination to seek to induce other intelligences to follow their evil course. There is no more mystery about the existence *of devils, than there is about the existence* of evil men. Meanwhile, but apart from devils or evil-minded wicked men, evil exists eternally, active or potential, in the very constitution of things. By the side of the virtue of courage lurks the evil of danger, without which courage would be unknown. In the same way, good must have its background of evil, else it would never be known; to employ Fiske’s illustration: “If the figures on your canvas are indistinguishable from the background, there is surely no picture to be seen.” So it stands that evil is as eternal as good; as eternal as space, or duration or matter or force. God did not create any of these things, nor is he

⁴Fiske, *Studies in Religion*, 242–43, 249–52.

responsible for them. He found himself, so to speak, coeternal with these other eternal things, and so works out his creative designs in harmony with those existences; not creating intelligences, but begetting intelligences, spirits. God is not responsible for the inner fact of them, the entity which ultimately determines the intellectual and moral character of spirits and of men, which are but spirits incarnate in human bodies. God is not responsible for their nature as if he had created them absolutely of nothing—intelligences, spirits, men; and created them as he would have them, measuring to each severally as he pleased to have them in intellectual degree and intensity of moral value. Had he so absolutely created them, he could have made the man of lowly degree the same as the man of highest degree: the man of brute mind and nature the same as the man of refined sentiment and aesthetic instincts. Why this inequality, if God absolutely created men, intelligence, spirit, body; and created them as he willed to have them, and could have had them different had he so willed? Why then did he not have them of higher grade all round? Why were not all the men made brave and all the women fair? The answer to all this is that God did all that could be done as the immanent, eternally, active, and creating and causing power in the universe under the limitations of other eternal existences such as we have previously enumerated, and including consideration of the intractableness of the material with which the Creator had to work. If that did not eventuate in the best conceivable of worlds, under the limitations of our human thinking, we may be assured that it has resulted in the best of possible worlds. And while this best possible world presents apparent limitation to the power of its Creator, such as he may not create space, nor matter, nor force, nor intelligence; nor annihilate evil, yet all the power that is, creative, or destructive, or controlling is his; he holds it, and hence he is all-powerful; all the might that exists is his; hence he is the Almighty; all the good that exists is his, hence he is the All Good; and the All Benevolent, and the All Loving One, for the same reason that he is the Almighty.

These are matters that affect our conceptions of God, and have now of a long time puzzled the minds of men leading to such troublesome questions as these.

Troublesome problems: Antitheses of Epicurus. If God is absolutely omnipotent, why does he not prevent evil? The fact that evil exists and persists, generally in the economy of the world, leads to the conclusion that the Deity is limited in power.

If God is absolutely benevolent or good why has he created a world where pain, sorrow, suffering, and death, are the common lot of men?

And the conclusion formed from such a question is that either the Creator is not benevolent, or that again he is limited in power. The most celebrated formula of these time-worn problems is known as the antitheses of Epicurus, namely:

- (1) Is God willing to prevent evil but not able? Then he is impotent.
- (2) Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent!
- (3) Is he both able and willing? Then why is evil?

These questions are supposed to present an *impasse* to any harmony in the nature of Deity on the basis of his omnipotence, benevolence and the existence of evil. Yet in the light of our reflections in this chapter on evil, and especially in the light of the philosophy of Lehi in the Book of Mormon and John Fiske's faultless reasoning, the antitheses of Epicurus are not so formidable as might otherwise appear.

Answer to Epicurus. God may not be able to prevent evil and destroy the source of it, but he is not impotent, for he guides intelligences, notwithstanding evil, to kingdoms of peace and security. Evil is a means of progress, for progress is overcoming evil.

God may not be able, nor willing if he were able, to prevent evil, and yet he is not malevolent. For knowing that evil exists in the whole scheme of things as the necessary antithesis of good, and that one may not be destroyed without destroying both, why wreck the universe in order to prevent evil? And which if achieved would be the greatest of evils, since all things else would go with it.

"Why then is evil?" the last of the questions of Epicurus? The answer is, that it is a necessary and eternal part of "the dramatic whole," as set forth in both Lehi's philosophy and John Fiske's **faultless** reasoning. And the kingdom of righteousness wherein dwelleth peace, the beatific vision and hope of the faithful, is the kingdom to be won by the conquest over evil; and which never may be realized but by that conquest.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Baring-Gould, *Origin and Development of Religious Belief* 2:22-23; Emerson, "Compensation"; Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 2:54-59; Gen. 1-3; 2 Ne. 2; and Alma 42. This chapter draws verbatim on many sections of Roberts's essay entitled "A Master Stroke of Philosophy in the Book of Mormon," *Deseret News*, Church Section, June 16, 1928, 5. For additional discussion about the problem of evil, see pages 607, 610-13 below.

The Affair in Eden—The “Fall” of Man

With the doctrine of a necessary opposition in all things set forth as essential to any existence at all, that good can only exist and be known in antithesis with evil, that both joy and sorrow are essential to be a happy world,^a and recognizing evil as [a]mong the eternal things not created or made, but existing as part of the “dramatic whole,”^b we are prepared to approach the affair in Eden—“the fall of man”—with larger assurance of understanding than could otherwise be hoped for.

The symbol trees—the tree of death; the tree of life. The story of the “Fall” is well known: we shall have small need of entering upon its details. In the garden of God’s planting, Eden, were two symbol trees. (1) The tree of the knowledge of good and evil: to eat of its fruit meant death to the life then known to man—the life of innocence, and the ~~temporal~~ physical life.[†] This tree, then, could also be known as “the tree of death.” (2) Opposite to this, and in the midst of the garden, was “the tree of life.” Here in the last analysis, are the symbols of the necessary “opposition in all things”—the tree of life, the tree of death—symbols of the antinomies of the universe!^c

With the necessity of knowing both good and evil in order to know anything, it can scarcely be expected that man was placed in the

This chapter is a more concise version of Roberts’s discussion of the Fall found in *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 4:35–45. Compare Roberts’s article “The Affair in Eden: The Fall of Man,” *Deseret News*, Church Section, June 30, 1928, 7. On Roberts’s attitude towards the Fall, see pages 657–59 below.

^a2 Ne. 2:11, 23–25.

^bSee the discussion in the preceding chapter.

[†]Regarding the statement about “temporal physical life,” the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve simply asserted: “This we question in the light of the Book of Mormon revelation” (2 Ne. 2:22). Evidently in response, Roberts crossed out the word “temporal.”

^c2 Ne. 2:15.

Garden of Eden to refrain from partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Notwithstanding the commandment not to partake of the forbidden fruit, why is he there if not to partake of it? And may not the “commandment,” respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying: “thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:17)—may not this be regarded more as announcing the nature of the fruit of the tree and the consequence of eating it, than an expected and effective prohibition of partaking of this fruit?^d

Back of all this iterated “commandment,”—“thou shalt not eat of the fruit of this tree, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”—is felt the fact of the agency of man, his power to choose for himself, to eat or not to eat. Only know the consequences, O Man! If you eat of it, death to your life of innocence will follow; death to your physical life will follow; for “dust thou art, and [un]to dust shalt thou return” (Gen. 3:19). It is full of risk, this eating of the forbidden fruit! It is full of danger. There are real losses to face. It means adventure. It will inaugurate a new order of things. Man, thou art forewarned, but thou art free!

The tree of knowledge not an evil tree. Let it be observed that the tree of knowledge, even though the tree of death, is nowhere called an “evil tree,” or its fruit bad. “And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:9). No intimation of this tree of knowledge being in itself evil. Rather to the contrary: it is included among the trees “pleasant to the sight, and good for food,” in the same verse in which it is named (Gen. 2:9). The observation **respecting of** Eve in the commencement of her conversation with Lucifer (symbolized by the serpent)^e may have been ~~really and~~ wholly true of the fruit of the tree of knowledge **of good and evil**: “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise” (Gen. 3:6), she was not merely echoing something that Lucifer ~~and~~ **had** suggestively infused into her

^dThis is suggested in the scriptural account in Moses 3:17: “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee; but, remember that I forbid it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

^eMoses 4:6 specifically connects the biblical serpent with Satan: “And Satan put it into the heart of the serpent.”

mind, but was uttering a truth respecting the tree itself, and what it stood for. It is good to know; and since the good may not be known without also knowing the evil, it is good—since from the constitution or nature of things it can not be otherwise—it is good to know both. Besides, throughout the whole narrative of Genesis, it is taken for granted that to eat the forbidden fruit “will make men as gods, knowing good and evil” (cf. Gen. 3:5); and is it not good for men to be as gods, knowing good and evil—in any way *to be* as gods? Who shall say nay? “The fall of man!” Is it not here that man begins to rise? True it is Lucifer who in the Genesis narrative ~~one~~ first suggests, and doubtless with evil intent, that eating the fruit would open the eyes of man, “and make him as God.” Yet it was a truth; for God himself is represented as saying *later*, after Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit—

Behold, the man is become as one of us (the Gods), to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground. . . . And he placed . . . Cherubims, and a flaming sword . . . to keep the way of the tree of life. (Gen. 3:22-24)

Which only means that the time had not then come for man to attain immortality, nor then to know the way to the tree of life. Opportunity to reap the full harvest *from eating* of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil must be granted, not only to Adam and his spouse, but to their posterity also—to the race; a testing period and a testing place is provided where the whole drama of good and evil in conflict shall work out the purposes of God in the planned earth life of man.^f

But for man to become as God, in any respect, in any way, and by any means must be great gain, and surely embraced from the beginning in God’s general and positive plan for man’s advancement. **It** must have been included in the covenant of “eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Titus 1:2); and not an incident that surprised the purposes of God and provoked his anger.

The doctrine of the Fall according to the Book of Mormon. And now as to the effects of the Fall according to the account of it given in the Book of Mormon: if Adam had not fallen

He would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state *in* which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. And they (Adam and Eve) would have had no children;

^fThis period is called a “state of probation” in 2 Ne. 2:21.

wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. (2 Ne. 2:22-24)

The parts to emphasize in these statements are (1) but for the “Fall” all things must have remained in the same state in which they were created without end: no change, hence no progression; (2) the state of man’s innocence before the “Fall” would have brought no joy, for in it man knew no misery; (3) Adam and Eve could do no good, for they knew no sin.

The dilemma: What shall Adam do? What then? Shall the creation in which they stand remain static? Know no good because, forsooth, to know good and to do good, evil must also be experienced! And that because of the eternal nature of things, for which no one is responsible, no; not God. No one has created that “eternal nature of things” any more than anyone has created space, duration, matter, force, or intelligences: these are eternal things. So too, are good, beauty, truth, righteousness, life, peace, joy. These **latter**, however, as we have seen, may be known only in duality—they are known only in contrast with their respective opposites; good by its opposite or antinomy of evil; joy by its opposite of sorrow; life by its opposite of death, and so following. To know any one of these you must experience its opposite.[†] The question resolves itself into this: Is the knowledge of the good, the beautiful and the true, the realization of life—even immortal life—worth while? Is conscious existence better than nonexistence? Even when conscious existence involves misery and suffering, but is attended by the hope that sometime, somewhere, there will be relief: such as “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”? (Ps. 30:5).

These were the principles involved in the Fall. These the issues set before man in Eden. And Adam and his spouse chose the way of life, even the way of immortal and eternal life, though the way led through the valley and the shadow of temporal death; and though by necessity they

[†]Reflecting on the statement “To know any one of these you must experience its opposite,” the reviewing committee in 1929 wrote: “This thought raises some questions. While it is necessary that there be opposition in all things, yet a man does not have to sin, or come in contact with wickedness by partaking of it, to know it. We may have failed in grasping the meaning here.” Reporting to President Clawson, George Albert Smith reasoned: “Christ did not sin, yet he ‘experienced’ evil. Can this be changed to avoid this ambiguity?”

must experience the mingled joys and sorrows of a world of broken harmonies, with good and evil, life and death in conflict—and fiercely in conflict—disclosing the pain of the universe, yet in all this Book of Mormon doctrine, there is no complaint of the hard condition the “Fall” imposes on the participants or on their descendants who fall heirs to their woes; no upbraiding of the Creator as being responsible for the evil. No, on the contrary the affirmed assurance is: “All things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things” (2 Ne. 2:24).

Later, when prophetically the coming of Messiah in the fulness of time is made known to Adam and the men who by now were with him, and the purpose of Messiah’s coming and mission is declared to be the redemption of “the children of men from the Fall,” then listen to the full organ-tones of the joy in which these things are recounted, and it will not be difficult to understand how the “Fall” is really held to be “the beginning of the rise of man.”

And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given. Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself. (2 Ne. 2:26-27)

Effect of the Fall. I shall doubtless be told, however, that this rejoicing is over the “redemption from the Fall” rather than rejoicing over the “Fall”; but it was the “Fall” which brought forth the need of the “redemption”; and therefore mediately if not immediately the cause of the rejoicing. Moreover, it is the things brought about by the “Fall” that are mentioned as the occasion for the rejoicing: men have a new-found freedom—“they have become free forever”; they know now “good from evil”; that knowledge came through the “Fall”; henceforth they will be free “to act,” and not merely to be “acted upon,” save to meet the consequences of their acts in judgments. A great change has been wrought in their status. Henceforth they will be self-centers of free agency, agents of self-determining power, centers of intelligent force with power of initiative. They are awakened to a knowledge of good and evil; they have become as God, at least so far as to know good and evil, and have become conscious of the power to choose between

them. This affair in Eden, the “Fall” is something more, allow me to repeat, than a thing “permissively embraced in the sovereign purpose of the Deity,” which he “designed to order to his own glory.”¹ The necessity of its taking place was something ~~rather~~ that is imbedded in the very constitution of things. The only way by which man could come to knowledge of good, and to do good, was by partaking of the fruit of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” This is the only way to be “as God” in respect of knowing good and evil, which knowledge is the source of man’s free agency, the consciousness of the freedom of the human will, of true morality, and of self-given loyalty to God. With so many things of high import and precious to man and dear to God, there can be no doubt but what the “Fall” was as much a part of God’s earth-planned life for man as the “redemption” provided for him; indeed there would have been no need of redemption but for the “Fall,” and ~~none~~ **no redemption** would have been provided but for anticipation of that “Fall.”

The attitude of Christendom on the Fall. Though all this seems so clearly set forth, or is very reasonably implied from the story of the “Fall” in Genesis, yet the attitude of Christendom, both in Roman Catholic and Protestant divisions, on the doctrine of the “Fall” of man seems to be one of profound regret that the “Fall” ever happened. As self-constituted interpreters of the event, these churches deplore the “Fall” and strongly hold that man and the world would have been better off had the thing never happened. And upon Adam is laid a heavy burden of responsibility. It was he, they complain, who “brought death into the world, and all our woe.”

(a) *The Roman Catholic view.*⁸ The Roman Catholic doctrine of the “Fall” is set forth straight forwardly in the Douay Catechism, from which I quote:

Q. How did we lose original justice?

A. By Adam’s disobedience to God in eating the forbidden fruit. . . .

Q. How do you prove that?

A. Out of Romans 5:12: “By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and so into all men death did pass, in whom all have sinned.”

¹*Westminster Confession*, chapter 6, section 1.

⁸This is a shortened form of the discussion in *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 4:143–48.

Q. Had man ever died if he had never sinned?

A. He would not, but would live in a state of justice and at length would be translated alive to the fellowship of the angels.²

Again, “The Catholic Church teaches,” says Joseph Fàa di Bruno, DD.,

that Adam by his sin has not only caused harm to himself, but to the whole human race; that by it he lost the supernatural justice and holiness which he received gratuitously from God, and lost it, not only for himself, but also for all of us; and that he, having stained himself with the sin of disobedience, has transmitted not only death and other bodily pains and infirmities to the whole human race, but *also sin, which is the death of the soul*.³

And again:

Unhappily, Adam by his sin of disobedience, which was also a sin of pride, disbelief, and ambition, forfeited, or, more properly speaking, rejected that original justice; and we, as members of the human family, of which he was the head, are also implicated in that guilt of self-spoilation, or rejection and deprivation of those supernatural gifts; not indeed on account of our having willed it with our personal will, but by having willed it with the will of our first parent, to whom we are linked by nature as members to their head.⁴

(b) *The Protestant view*.^h For the Protestant view I quote the following from Buck’s *Theological Dictionary*, published in 1844 (American Edition). It was the Protestant Encyclopedia on Protestant theology at the period of publication:

In the fall of man we may observe, 1. The greatest infidelity.—2. Prodigious pride.—3. Horrid ingratitude.—4. Visible contempt of God’s majesty and justice.—5. Unaccountable folly.—6. A cruelty to himself and to all his posterity. . . . *That man is a fallen creature*, is evident, if we consider his misery as an inhabitant of the natural world; the disorders of the globe we inhabit, and the dreadful scourges with which it is visited; the deplorable and shocking circumstances of our birth; the painful and dangerous travail of women; our natural uncleanness, helplessness, ignorance, and nakedness; the gross darkness in which we naturally are, both with respect to God and a future state: the general rebellion of the brute creation against us; the various poisons that lurk in the animal, vegetable and

²*Douay Catechism*, 13.

³Fàa di Bruno, *Catholic Belief*, 5-6; italics in original. The work carries the approval of Cardinal Henry E. Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, England.

⁴Fàa di Bruno, *Catholic Belief*, 330.

^h*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 4:49-51.

mineral world, ready to destroy us; the heavy curse of toil and sweat to which we are liable; the innumerable calamities of life, and the pangs of death.⁵

God, it is said, made man upright (Eccl. 7:29); without any imperfection, corruption, or principle of corruption in his body or soul; with light in his understanding, holiness in his will, and purity in his affections. This constituted his original righteousness, which was universal, both with respect to the subject of it, the whole man, and the object of it, the whole law. Being thus in a state of holiness, he was necessarily in a state of happiness. He was a very glorious creature, the favorite of heaven, the lord of the world, possessing perfect tranquillity in his own breast, and immortal. Yet he was not without law; for the law of nature, which was impressed on his heart, God super-added a positive law, not to eat of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 2:17) under the penalty of death natural, spiritual, and eternal. Had he obeyed this law, he might have had reason to expect that he would not only have had the continuance of the natural and spiritual life, but have been transported to the upper paradise. . . . Man's righteousness, however, though universal, was not immutable, as the event has proved. How long he lived in a state of innocence cannot easily be ascertained, yet most suppose it was but a [very] short time. The positive law which God gave him he broke, by eating the forbidden fruit. The consequence of this evil act was, that man lost the chief good; his nature was corrupted; his powers depraved, his body subject to corruption, his soul exposed to misery, his posterity all involved in ruin, subject to eternal condemnation, and forever incapable to restore themselves to the favor of God, to obey his commands perfectly and to satisfy his justice.⁶

From another Protestant source:

The *tree of knowledge of good and evil* revealed to those who ate its fruit secrets of which they had better have remained ignorant; for the purity of man's happiness consisted in doing and loving good without even knowing evil.⁷

(c) *Presbyterian modification of the Protestant view of the Fall.* All this severity is relieved but by one division of Christendom of any considerable numbers and standing; and by that division the modification is but slight. This is by the Presbyterian Church in its Westminster Confession of Faith and an authoritative comment upon it by A. D. Hodge. The confession dealing with the "Fall" concedes that "God

⁵Buck, *Theological Dictionary*, s.v. "Fall of Man."

⁶Buck, *Theological Dictionary*, s.v. "Man."

⁷Smith, *Old Testament History*, 26.

was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit it (the “Fall”) having purposed to order it to his own glory.”⁸

In the authoritative exposition of this chapter, it is set forth, “that this (aim) [sin] (the “Fall”) was permissively embraced in the (sovereign) [eternal] purpose of God.”⁹ Its purpose being God’s general plan, and one eminently wise and righteous, to introduce all the new created subjects of moral government into a state of probation for a time in which he makes their permanent character and destiny depend upon their own action. Still, this “sin” described as being “permissively embraced” in the sovereign purpose of the Deity and that God designed “to order it to his own glory,” nowhere appears to be of any benefit to man. The only thing consulted in the theory of this creed seems to be the manifestation of the glory of God—a thing which represents God as a most selfish being—but just how the glory of God *even* can be manifested by the “Fall” which, according to this creed, results in the eternal damnation of the overwhelming majority of his “creatures,” is not quite apparent.

Those who made this Westminster Confession, as also the large following which accept it, concede that their theory involves them at least in two difficulties which they confess it is impossible for them to meet. These are respectively:

First, how could sinful desires or volitions originate in the soul of moral agents created holy like Adam and Eve?

Second, how can sin be permissively embraced in the eternal purpose of God, and not involve him as responsible for the sin? “If it be asked,” they say,

why God, who abhors sin, and who benevolently desires the excellence and happiness of his creatures, should sovereignly determine to permit such a fountain of pollution, degradation, and misery to be opened, we can only say, with profound reverence, “even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.”¹⁰

Such the theology of yesterday, and also of today in official creeds and their expositions; but rapidly these are becoming obsolete to the thoughtful; who are doubtful if this lauded life of innocence in Eden would have been as desirable as the theologians of past generations would have us think. Dr. John Fiske of Harvard, in his “Studies in Religion” challenges it squarely, and on the “Fall,” as in the matter of the necessity of “opposite existences” in order to [have] existences at all,

⁸*Westminster Confession*, chapter 6, section 1.

⁹Hodge, *Commentary on the Confession*, 107.

¹⁰Hodge, *Commentary on the Confession*, 108.

is in strict accord with both the theology and with the philosophy of Lehi, the Book of Mormon prophet.¹

Views of John Fiske on life in Eden without “the Fall.”

What would have been the moral value or significance of a race of human beings ignorant of sin, and doing beneficent acts with no more consciousness or volition than the deftly contrived machine that picks up raw material at one end, and turns out some finished product at the other? Clearly, for strong and resolute men and women an Eden would be but a fool’s paradise. How could anything fit to be called *character* have ever been produced there? But for tasting the forbidden fruit, in what respect could man have become a being of higher order than the beasts of the field? An interesting question is this, for it leads us to consider the genesis of the idea of moral evil in man. . . . We can at least begin to realize distinctly that unless our eyes had been opened at some time, so that we might come to know the good and the evil, we should never have become fashioned in God’s image. We should have been the denizens of a world of puppets, where neither morality nor religion could have found place or meaning.¹¹

In this passage, the Harvard philosopher unwittingly supports the sober doctrine of the Book of Mormon that partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was an absolute necessity to a life worthwhile; for thereby was brought to pass the broken harmonies of the world out of which would be forged the experiences that would lead to virile manhood, high character, human freedom, morality, and loyalty to righteousness; and therefore the “Fall” is not an incident to be deplored. Again: It was “the beginning of the rise of man.”

Adam fell that men might be. One item mentioned in the passages quoted from the Book of Mormon on the “Fall” has not yet been mentioned in these comments; but it is worthy of a paragraph. The item is: “And all things . . . must have remained forever, and had no end. And they would have had no children. . . . Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:22–23, 25).

From this we learn that in some way, the “Fall” seems to be associated with the having of children, and also we learn that the purpose of man’s existence is that “he might have joy.” That is God’s good intent towards him. Tentatively I suggest the following as a possible solution of this phase of the “Fall.”

¹See chapter 33 for a discussion of Fiske.

¹¹Fiske, *Studies in Religion*, 252, 266.

Paul in his first letter to Timothy, referring to the experience in Eden said: “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Tim. 2:14).

Reference to the order of the happenings in Eden verifies the truth of this statement. Eve was persuaded to eat of the forbidden fruit, ~~and undertook the persuasion of Adam to the forbidden fruit~~, and undertook the persuasion of Adam to the same act of disobedience. Eve was already in “the transgression,” and stood in the shadow of the penalty of the law—banishment from Eden, union broken with God, separation from Adam, death! Under these circumstances what shall Adam do? Conjointly they had received this mission to “replenish the earth” (Gen. 1:28)—refill it with inhabitants. If this penalty falls upon Eve alone there will be separation of the pair, and the high purpose of their conjoint mission will be defeated. Again, what shall Adam do? Shall he draw about him the consciousness of his own innocence, and let his spouse bear the burdens of her violations of the law pertaining to the knowledge of good and evil? I refrain from what my comment would be could I think the progenitor of the human race guilty of such procedure. But no! Our Prince Michael did no such thing.¹ Not deceived, but with eyes open, and knowing all the consequences he ate the forbidden fruit offered by a loving hand—one who so loved him that she would have him as “God, knowing good and evil” (2 Ne. 2:18). He resolved upon fulfilling the major part of his mission, which might not be fulfilled in separation from Eve. And hence “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25). Despite the “Fall”? Nay, rather because of it! He has partaken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he has become as God that far; he shall *yet* find his way to the tree of life!

¹Adam is identified as Michael in D&C 27:11; 107:54; 128:21.

After the Fall: The First Dispensation of the Gospel

The “Fall” has become reality. The judgments have been pronounced. Adam, Eve, and Lucifer know their earth-fate. Broken union with God for both man and woman; banishment from Eden—guarded away from the tree of life. No access to it—yet. It must have been a comfort to the stricken pair to know of its existence in the midst of God’s garden—a ray of hope which would linger in blurred memories of Eden. Cherubims and gleaming sword now barred “the way to it”; but would it always be so?

Penalties: (a) Upon Adam. For Adam as a result of his special part in the changed conditions through partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge: “Cursed is the ground for ⟨your⟩ [thy] sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth ⟨un⟩to thee; . . . ⟨by⟩ [In] the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return [un]to the ground; . . . for dust thou art, and [un]to dust shalt thou return”—**physical death** (Gen. 3:17-19).

(b) Upon Eve. To the woman: “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Gen. 3:16).

Let it be remembered that these were but announced consequences of the “Fall,” resulting from the changed condition following the new order brought about by it, not vindictive cruelties invented from the anger of God. This parenthetically, now to return.

On the contents page introducing this chapter, Roberts noted: “Any of the standard dictionaries of the Bible or commentaries can be consulted sometimes with profit on these subjects, although they may not be relied upon as sustaining the views of the text of this work which is so largely influenced by the ‘new knowledge’ brought to light by the Prophet of the New Dispensation, Joseph Smith.”

(c) *Upon Lucifer.* To Lucifer (symbolized by the serpent), the Lord God said:

Because thou hast done this ⟨thing⟩ ⟨his part in the drama of early days in Eden and with evil intent towards man, and malice towards God⟩, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it ⟨the woman's seed⟩ shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Gen. 3:14-15)

Victory shall be with the seed of the woman; for, mark you, while Lucifer shall have power to bruise his [the woman's seed] heel; he [***the woman's seed***] shall have power to bruise Lucifer's head—wound him in a vital part. ~~bruise his head!~~

The “decrees” written in the book of experience. It is worthy of remark that these decrees forecasting what should befall man, and woman are as truly written in human experience as well as in the book of Genesis. And as for Lucifer, the sign and symbol and personification of evil, and in rebellion against God—who so despised, dreaded, feared, hated, as he? Well symbolized in the serpent—cold sinuous, clammy, noiseless in approach, fascinating, cunning, strong to crush in coils, deadly to strike with fang and poison with tooth, and merciless withal! And dreaded, and repulsive above all animals living, ***his symbol—the serpent.*** And as the symbol is, so the spirit of incarnate evil is—Lucifer! Of which “serpent” is the fitting sign.

The veil of forgetfulness. So man went forth from Eden bowed by the weight of sorrow, to his life and toil, and death. His “vision splendid” not yet risen, and as it was later said of a more glorious “Adam,” “In his humiliation his judgment ⟨knowledge on which judgment is based⟩ was taken ⟨from him⟩ [away]” (Acts 8:33),^a so may we say of this our first Adam—and more abundantly—“in his humiliation his judgment was taken from him”—a veil of forgetfulness cast over him, shutting out most memories of the creation days on this earth, and of the former home and friends and associates of the home-world where he had come to translation development^b to prepare him for this earth

^aActs 8:33 refers to Christ, but Roberts is identifying Adam as the “first Adam,” following the terminology of 1 Cor. 15:45, where Christ is identified as the “last Adam,” thus making it possible to apply the phrase in Acts 8:33 to Adam.

^bWhat Roberts meant by this phrase is unclear.

dispensation.[†] He perhaps remembered some little of the glory and splendor of the Lord God. Some recollection of the “tree of life” in the midst of the garden—did the memory carry with it a gleam of hope? Some remembrance, too, may have survived from that half-veiled promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. Perhaps a memory of the Lord God’s kindness survived seen in the gracious act of God making and giving to Adam and his wife coats of skin to “clothe them,” better covering than the fig-leafed aprons they had made to hide their nakedness in the first confusion following their disobedience. This was the parting act at the portals of Eden when they were driven forth. They would likely remember that and cherish it. Surely it portended good will. It was an act of mercy.

Adam’s world under the Fall. But Adam had come into no mere make-believe world, where there was to be no real hardships, only mock sorrows and sins that did not hurt, and that would have no lasting effect; where punishments would be light and all would be well in the end. Surely the Lord God had not framed such a thing as this for the earth-planned life of man! Charge not such folly to the Lord omniscient, and the Lord omnipotent!

Adam and Eve and all their posterity, numerous as the stars of heaven, or as the sand upon the seashore, were to learn that earth life was to be tremendously real; and in it would be real losses. There would be sorrows heart-breaking; suffering both mental and physical; severe tests of painful endurance to the point of blood-sweat and terror; disappointments to be endured that would stretch the heart strings to the point of breaking; death universal, and cruel, and pitiless, without remorse, without respect of persons, falling upon the young as upon the aged, upon the innocent as upon the sinful; striking quite recklessly, sinking some by slow and painful decay, cutting others off with the flash of lightning or the tempest’s fierceness, or the earthquake’s horror; by slow famine, or the shock of red battle—by any and all means by which life can be snuffed out, or crushed out—and so permanently! This a world where hope pales, faith falters, love weeps! Things are so obscure, so uncertain, so apparently meaningless; the light so dim and far away, the mists so recurrent and dense—they shut out the pathway to the tree of life. Scarce need to guard it, one would think, by cherubim and flaming sword!

[†]As in response to chapter 32, the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve noted on this occasion: “The question of ‘translation’ comes in here, and is questioned as in 32.”

Such was Adam's world into which he was driven from his Eden. How long it lasted so no one knows. Long enough to teach him the lessons to be derived from the knowledge of good and evil, no doubt. He is said to have lived nine hundred and thirty years in this world of broken harmonies!^c Cain's, Lamech's, and other wickedness appeared within his own days; his life doubtless approached sufficiently near the wickedness of Noah's times for him to see that the wickedness would be so great that "every imagination of the thoughts of his ⟨man's⟩ heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5).

The two deaths. Under the "Fall" Adam was confronted by two phases of death: spiritual death and physical death. The first a broken union with God; the second the separation of the spirit from the body, and the passing of the body back to dust whence it came. Both these deaths Adam realized in experience.

(a) *The spiritual death.* The first, or the spiritual death was experienced when Adam and his wife were driven from Eden, and shut out from the presence of God, the source of his spiritual life, and fountain that fed his spirit with love of the true, and good, and the beautiful. Separated from the source of spiritual life his spirit would languish into sluggish dullness and brutality; hope all but fled, faith strained to the breaking point, desire for righteousness fading—Adam wandering further and ever further from God! Let it but continue long enough and without renewal of conscious fellowship with the source of spiritual life, and there could be no doubt but that it would end in completely placing him beyond the power to repent, or desire for forgiveness—spiritual death.

The spiritual death consists of separation from God; and, with the banishment from Eden, is thus described in a modern revelation:

It came to pass that the devil tempted Adam, and he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the devil, because he yielded unto temptation. Wherefore, I, the Lord God, caused that he should be cast out from the Garden of Eden, from my presence, because of his transgression, wherein he became spiritually dead, which is the first death, even that same death which is the last death, which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say: Depart, ye cursed. (D&C 29:40-41)

"The last death, which is spiritual, . . . Depart, ye cursed!" (D&C 29:41). "Then will I ⟨confess⟩ [profess] unto them, I never knew you:

^cAdam's age is stated in Genesis 5:5.

depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matt. 7:23). “Then shall he say also unto \langle those \rangle [them] on \langle his \rangle [the] left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). In each case *separation from God; and in each case* spiritual death; banished into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (cf. Matt. 13:49–50).

(b) *Physical death.* The dreadful reality and mystery of physical death came into man’s experience first through a greater calamity than death itself—through a murder. By this the first pair were shocked into a realization of the sentence passed upon them while yet in Eden, upon their posterity—upon the race—as well as upon themselves, and of this they had stern evidence in the death of their second son, Abel, murdered by his brother Cain.[†] It must have been mysterious and doubly painful, this first death. First because inflicted by a brother’s hand; second because falling upon one least deserving of it; one strong, manly, gentle withal, a keeper of sheep—righteous, for he is so alluded to in the scriptures in many places (Heb. 11:4; also 1 Jn. 3:12), and according to the story in Genesis, he and his offering were acceptable to God, while Cain and his offering were rejected. Why should thus fall upon the righteous—the innocent—this first **recorded** instance of death? But here it was, this physical death, the very palpable evidence of it, thrown into the trembling arms *of Adam and Eve*—a strange silence, and coldness!

The mystery of sacrifices. Sometime before the death of Abel, something significant happened, but one gets only slight knowledge of it in Genesis, and nothing directly. Nothing may be learned from Genesis on the origin of sacrifices, either of first fruits or animal, that is to say, blood sacrifices.¹ They are simply referred to as an established

[†]On “Abel, Adam’s second son,” the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve stated: “We question this in the light of the writings of Moses. Adam may have had many sons and daughters before Cain was born, so it appears.”

¹In tracing the history of sacrifice, from its first beginning to its perfect development in the Mosaic ritual, we are at once met by the long-disputed question, as to the *origin of sacrifice*; whether it arose from a natural instinct of man, sanctioned and guided by God, or whether it was the subject of some distinct primeval revelation. . . . The great difficulty in the theory which refers it to a distinct command of God is the total silence of Holy Scripture—a silence the more remarkable, when contrasted with the distinct reference made in Genesis 2 to the origin of the Sabbath. Sacrifice when first mentioned, in the case of Cain and Abel, is referred to as thing of course; it is said to have been brought by men; there is no hint of any command given by God. This consideration, the strength of which

thing with the first sons of Adam: “In the process of time” — “at the end of days,” is the marginal rendering of the text, as if it were at the end of some fixed period of days, that the time of sacrifice recurred, and so at the end of that recurring period—

it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought ~~sacrifice, but~~ of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. (Gen. 4:3-5)

Such the first mention of the offering of sacrifice in Genesis. What its origin or purpose, or significance we may not know from this introduction to it. Also the account is silent as to why the offering of the lamb by Abel—a blood sacrifice—was acceptable to the Lord God; and why the fruit offering by Cain was not acceptable. But while Genesis is strangely silent on this subject the fragment of the writings of Moses, brought to light by the Prophet of the New Dispensation, supplies the much needed information.

The first revelation after “the Fall”—“the morning breaks!” This revealed fragment of the writings of Moses makes it known that after the banishment from Eden,[†] Adam and Eve amidst their toil and labors in cultivating the earth and subduing the animal kingdom to their dominion, they begot both sons and daughters “and they began to multiply and replenish the earth. And from that time forth, the sons and daughters of Adam began to divide two and two in the land, and to till the land, and to tend flocks, and they also begat sons and daughters.” Then it would appear that moved by their recollections of the Lord God in Eden, both “Adam and Eve, his wife called upon the name of the Lord” (and apparently for the first time since being driven from Eden), and ~~Θ, Joy!~~

They heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out from his presence. And he gave unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord. (Moses 5:4-5)

no ingenuity has been able to impair, although it does not actually disprove the formal revelation of sacrifice, yet at least forbids the assertion of it, as of a positive and important doctrine. (Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. “Sacrifice.”)

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve noted: “There is a question as to the time the law of sacrifice was given, whether it was in or out of the Garden.”

Observe, however, in all this there is no explanation as to “why” the sacrifice should be offered; but its kind was designated. It was to be of the firstlings of the flocks—a blood sacrifice. Perhaps that was the reason why Cain’s offering was not acceptable to the Lord God. He brought that for an offering which the Lord God had not appointed. He apparently set aside that which God had appointed and substituted something of his own devising, and insulted the majesty of God therewith.^d **A fruit offering did not symbolize the sacrifice to be offered up finally by the Christ.**

Communication with God established—revelation. But what a joy for Adam, this renewal of contact with the Lord God must have been! God’s silence was broken: “From the way toward the Garden of Eden” they had heard the voice of the Lord speaking to them. He had given a commandment, no matter what. The important thing was that communication with God had been resumed. The darkness in which Adam and Eve had lived, relieved only by fragment recollections, was breaking up, the shadows were fleeing. Of course they will obey the commandment, nor even ask the reason why. Blind obedience this? Nonsense! Intelligent obedience, under the circumstances; the unquestioning obedience was but natural obedience—the obedience which sprung from their joy—joyful obedience which forgot to ask the reasons why from the haste to obey.

A dispensation of the gospel to Adam. Then

after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel

^dIn regard to the reason the Lord rejected Cain’s sacrifice, Joseph Smith taught:

By faith in this atonement or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was accepted, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground, and was not accepted, because he could not do it in faith, he could have no faith, or could not exercise faith contrary to the plan of heaven. It must be shedding the blood of the Only Begotten to atone for man; for this was the plan of redemption; and without the shedding of blood was no remission; and as the sacrifice was instituted for a type, by which man was to discern the great Sacrifice which God had prepared; to offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised, because redemption was not purchased in that way, or the power of atonement instituted after that order; consequently Cain could have no faith; and whatsoever is not of faith, is sin. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 58)

spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son . . . forevermore. And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will. (Moses 5:6-9)

Rejoicing: (a) Of Adam. What a sermon of enlightenment is here! What a gospel revealed! No wonder that the record quoted goes on to say—

And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God. (Moses 5:10)

(b) Of Eve. And Eve, too, sent forth her paean of praise:

And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters. (Moses 5:11-12)

This original pair of the earth's inhabitants in their joy were breaking into the harmonies that had prevailed in the heavens when God "laid the foundations of the earth. . . . When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:4, 7), at the prospects opening before them for an earth-planned life. They would now live in hope of that "Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). A dispensation of the gospel had been imparted to them, and they delivered knowledge of it unto their posterity.

The earth antiquity of the gospel. Quite contrary to the general belief of Christendom, now and of old, knowledge was had of the gospel from the earliest ages—from Adam.^c Our enlightening fragment

^cRoberts discussed the meaning and significance of the dispensations in the second year of the *Seventy's Course in Theology*, subtitled *Outline History of the Dispensations of the Gospel*. In particular, see his definition of dispensation (37-38), and his discussion that each dispensation had the gospel of Jesus Christ (100-101).

from the writings of Moses, brought to light by modern revelation, closes the fifth chapter I have been quoting with this declaration:

Thus the Gospel began to be preached, from the beginning, being declared by holy angels sent forth from the presence of God, and by his own voice, and by the gift of the Holy Ghost. And thus all things were confirmed unto Adam, by an holy ordinance, and the Gospel preached, and a decree sent forth, that it should be in the world, until the end thereof; and thus it was. (Moses 5:58-59)

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: 2 Ne. 2:14-30; Mosiah 4:4-12; Alma 11:38-46; 42; D&C 84; Moses 5-8.

Further Development of the Gospel in the Adamic Dispensation

In addition to the knowledge concerning Adam and the hand-dealings of God with him and his posterity, learned from ~~our Mosaic fragment~~, the book of Moses, and set forth in the preceding chapter, we have still further knowledge revealed concerning him from the same source. Full knowledge was given to Adam concerning the whole plan of salvation as it had been wrought out in the council of Divine Intelligences when they contemplated the creation of the world and the mission to be given to the Christ as Redeemer, and doubtless the mission of Adam to the then desolate world; and we are told in this revelation to Adam concerning these things that the Lord said by his own voice to him:

Exposition of the gospel by direct word of God.

I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh. . . . If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given you. (Moses 6:51-52)

And the Lord further said unto him:

Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good. And it is given unto them to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves, and I have given unto you another law and commandment. Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his

Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time. . . . By reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory; For by the water ye keep the commandment; by the Spirit ye are justified, and by the blood ye are sanctified; Therefore it is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment. And now, behold, I say unto you: This is the plan of salvation unto all men, through the blood of mine Only Begotten, who shall come in the meridian of time. (Moses 6:55–62)

Adam’s baptism—born of the water and of the spirit.

And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water. And thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man. And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever; And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity. Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. (Moses 6:64–68)

Adam made an high priest. “Thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, . . . thou art one in me, a son of God” (Moses 6:67, 68). From other sources of knowledge, through revelation, we have reason to believe that these words carry with them peculiar significance; namely, that Adam was made an high priest of God, after the order of the Son of God. This was the same order of priesthood as that which later was held by Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18–20), of whom Paul said that he was king of righteousness, also king of peace; that he was “made like unto the Son of God; and abideth a priest continually” (Heb. 7:2–3).^a

^aFurther scriptural discussion about Melchizedek and the priesthood can be found in Alma 13 and JST Gen. 14:25–40.

Priesthood: God's authority given to man. Priesthood it may **be** well to remark here, is that power which God gives to men by which they become representatives of, or agents of, God; by reason of which they are authorized to act for God, that is to say, in his stead, in delivering the word of God unto men, preaching righteousness, and conveying to men from time to time such messages as God may have to send into the world. Also to administer in the ordinances pertaining to the salvation of men. ~~The degree of~~ This priesthood conferred upon Adam is after the order of that priesthood which the Son of God held.

Thus early in the Adamic dispensation ~~this~~ the priesthood after the order of the Son of God was conferred upon men, and was designed to be perpetuated among them that there might always be priests of the Most High God to minister in things pertaining to God, even as described by Paul:

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. . . . And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God. (Heb. 5:1, 4)

Even as Adam, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, and **as** many others were called.

“This priesthood,” we are assured by the Prophet of the New Dispensation,

was first given to Adam; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation. . . . He had dominion given him over every living creature. He is Michael the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures. . . . The Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years.¹ The keys have to be brought from heaven whenever the Gospel is sent (i.e., to the earth).²

The last days of Adam's life. The closing scene with reference to the ministry of Adam upon the earth **is** described in the following revelation to the Prophet of the New Dispensation:

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

¹This supplies the material for an explanation of Paul's somewhat mysterious saying when speaking of Melchizedek, he says: “Without Father, without Mother, without descent, [having] neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually” (Heb. 7:3). But it was the priesthood which Melchizedek held that was without father or mother, without beginning of days or end of life, not the man Melchizedek.

²Smith, *History of the Church* 3:385-86.

the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.

And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel. 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.

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. These things were all written in the book of Enoch,³ and are to be testified of in due time. (D&C 107:53–57)

Cain and his descendants. Running parallel with these events, which make up the development of the dispensation of the gospel given to Adam, is the continued opposition to the way of righteousness, set up and perpetuated by Cain and his coadjutors. Cain's wickedness did not end with the murder of his brother Abel. By direct decree of God he was cursed as to the earth which had opened her mouth to receive his brother's blood from his hand. The earth would no more yield her strength to his tillage—a fugitive and a vagabond should he become. He complained that under this decree his punishment was greater than he could bear; also he feared that every one that should find him would slay him. Whereupon God set a mark upon him (~~doubtless the mark of a black skin~~) and decreed that whosoever should slay Cain, vengeance should be taken upon him sevenfold (Gen. 4:9–15). He naturally would withdraw himself from the more righteous of the descendants of Adam, and Genesis recounts his living eastward from Eden, where he founded a city which he named for a son born to him—Enoch. And here the Genesis account of Cain ends, save that a descendant of Cain's—Lamech—fifth in the direct line of descent, also became a murderer, killing most likely two men, for in his confession to his wives he said: "I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold" (Gen. 4:23–24).

³Jude makes reference also to this book of Enoch wherein he says after speaking of certain vicious characters and what would befall them:

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him (Jude 1:14–15)

[Jude 1:14–15 is quoting from 1 Enoch 1:9.]

While the account of Cain in Genesis is brief, the historian Josephus, doubtless following Hebrew tradition, gives a very much fuller account of his life and of the character of the people who followed him.

Josephus on the people of Cain.

When Cain had travelled over many countries, he with his wife, built a city named Nod, which is a place so called, and there he settled his abode; where also he had children. However, he did not accept of his punishment in order to amendment, but to increase his wickedness; for he only aimed to procure every thing that was for his own bodily pleasure, though it obliged him to be injurious to his neighbors. He augmented his household substance with much wealth, by rapine and violence; he excited his acquaintance to procure pleasure and spoils by robbery, and became a great leader of men into wicked courses. . . . He changed the world into cunning craftiness. . . . Even while Adam was alive, it came to pass, that the posterity of Cain became exceeding wicked, every one successively dying, one after another, more wicked than the former. They were intolerable in war, and vehement in robberies: and if any one were slow to murder people, yet was he bold in his profligate behavior, in acting unjustly, and doing injuries for gain.⁴

Cain and his relationship to Lucifer: All this is in harmony with the further knowledge we have of Cain in the Mosaic fragment familiar to us now as the book of Moses. Here Cain is represented as loving “Satan more than God,” and this even before the murder of his brother. Could it be that Satan had suggested the offering of a sacrifice that God had not appointed, the offering of “first fruits of the ground,” rather than the “firstlings of his flock”? A fruit offering rather than a “blood offering”—such as would symbolize the offering to be made by the Son of God, who is called “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8)? Nothing could be more insulting to the majesty of God than this,[†] and nothing could be more gratifying to Lucifer than through Cain to offer such an insult to God—it would be mockery to his liking! A similar passage occurs in the Genesis account of the conversation between God and Cain in the matter of Cain’s rejected sacrifice:

And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?

⁴Josephus, “Antiquities of the Jews,” bk. 1, ch. 2, p. 27.

[†]On “Cain’s sacrifice, not what the Lord appointed [and] also the statement in regard to Cain’s offering, because he offered fruits,” the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve suggested a different explanation: “It was not because he offered fruits, but because he hearkened unto Satan rather than unto God (Moses 5:18–23).” Roberts wrote a question mark beside this suggestion.

and if thou doest not well, sin ⟨Satan⟩ lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. (Gen. 4:6-7)

This passage has given the commentators much trouble, and many and various explanations have been suggested for it. Light from the Mosaic ~~fragment~~, the book of Moses, however, makes complete understanding clear. The conversation on the matter of the rejected sacrifice is enlarged to read:

And if thou doest not well, sin ⟨Sin⟩ lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee; and except thou shalt hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver thee up, and it shall be unto thee according to his desire. And thou shalt rule over him; For from this time forth thou shalt be the father of his lies; thou shalt be called Perdition; for thou wast also before the world. And it shall be said in time to come—That these abominations were had from Cain; for he rejected the greater counsel which was had from God; and this is a cursing which I will put upon thee, except thou repent. And Cain was wroth, and listened not any more to the voice of the Lord, neither to Abel, his brother, who walked in holiness before the Lord. And Adam and his wife mourned before the Lord, because of Cain and his brethren. (Moses 5:23-27)

Something like this could well be supported from the text in Genesis: “And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him” (Gen. 4:7).

If “Sin” be regarded as one of the many names of Satan, then the reading becomes simple. Then it would stand: If thou doest not well Sin (Satan) lieth (or standeth) at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire (he will hope to possess thee); and then—strangely enough—“Thou ⟨Cain⟩ shalt rule over him ⟨Satan⟩.” Cain shall rule over Satan!

League and covenant between Cain and Lucifer. Turning again to ~~our Mosaic fragment~~ **the book of Moses**, the account is given of the league and covenant of evil between Cain and Lucifer:

And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear they brethren by their heads, and by the living God, that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and this that thy father may not know it; and this day I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands. And Satan sware unto Cain that he would do according to his commands. And all these things were done in secret. And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called Master Mahan, and he gloried in his wickedness. (Moses 5:29-31)

All this is in character with both Lucifer and Cain, and especially in keeping with that account of Cain and his following given by both the Bible and Josephus, and in harmony with the development of that wickedness in the antediluvian world which finally justified its destruction.

Of Cain and his place in the scheme of things we shall have occasion to speak in a future chapter. What is said here is merely to show how was launched that stream of evil in the world which ran counter to the plan of righteousness inaugurated by the introduction of the Way through the dispensation of the gospel given to Adam, the progenitor of the race.

Taking this chapter with the two immediately preceding it, chapter thirty-three on: “The Problem of Evil”; and chapter thirty-four, on “The Affair in Eden—The Fall of Man”; and now *the preceding chapter and* this on events “After the Fall,” and the first dispensation of the gospel as it was revealed to Adam—all this covers the transition period from men as spirits existing before the beginning of earth life, and the launching of the race into earth life as the progeny of Adam and Eve. We may now consider the gospel—the Way—at the commencement of its earth career.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: D&C 84; 107; and Moses 4-6.

The Gospel in the Patriarchal and Prophetic Ages

The line of righteous patriarchs. This dispensation of the gospel opening with the experiences and revelations imparted to Adam, and the events proceeding from such introduction, was continued through a line of ten patriarchs down to and including Noah in whose days came the flood. These patriarchs were in their order: Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah. Lamech the father of Noah, according to the Ussher *Bible* chronology, was fifty-six years of age when Adam died at nine hundred and thirty years of age. So that nine of these patriarchs were all living in the earth together. And according to the book of Moses, "They were preachers of righteousness, and spake and prophesied, and called upon all men, everywhere, to repent; and faith was taught unto the children of men" (Moses 6:23). Also in tracing this genealogy in the book of Moses, it is run through from Enoch back to Adam, "who was the son of God, with whom God, himself, conversed" (Moses 6:22).

Dispensation of Enoch. In tracing the dispensations after Adam, we will begin with the patriarch Enoch, since Adam's life overlapped into the life of Enoch, Adam's dispensation would be joined to that of Enoch's. Enoch is represented in the Mosaic fragment of revelation (book of Moses) as both a prophet and a seer; for "he beheld the spirits that God had created; and he beheld also things which were not visible to the natural eye; and from thenceforth came the saying abroad in the land: A seer hath the Lord raised up unto his people" (Moses 6:36). In the course of his preaching, Enoch recapitulates much that had been revealed unto Adam, also his vision extended into the future, even forward to the time when the purposes of God would culminate in the salvation of men and the complete redemption of the earth. The writer of the book of Jude bears witness to some of this, for in describing some of evil mind who would follow in the way of Cain,

become as “wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever,” he says: “Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds” (Jude 1:13-15). All of which has reference to the glorious coming of the Lord Jesus in the clouds of heaven and in great glory in the commencement of that righteous reign on earth that is testified of in the scriptures as “the Millennium”—the thousand-year reign of righteousness.

Enoch and his city “Zion.” Enoch made a special gathering together of the people whom he converted ~~of~~ **to** his doctrines and established them in a city, and they were called “the people of Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there \langle were \rangle [was] no poor among them,” also this city was called “the City of Holiness, even Zion” (cf. Moses 7:18-19). “And lo, Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven” (that is to say, it was translated), together with the inhabitants thereof, including Enoch (Moses 7:21). These translated persons, as we have before seen, were preserved for special work **and missions**, which the Lord had in mind.

The dispensation of Noah. Noah was the next prominent member of this patriarchal group. In his day came the flood, which cataclysm emptied the earth of its inhabitants, only Noah and his family being preserved to perpetuate inhabitants in the earth under the commandment of God. This commandment was given to him as it had previously been given to Adam—“multiply and replenish the earth” (Gen. 9:1), so that Noah may be regarded as a “second Adam,” from whom a new “beginning” of things started. It should be remembered that with Noah in the postdiluvian world, all the traditions received from Adam and succeeding patriarchs, and a knowledge of all the dispensations of the gospel were retained and taught to the new generations of men following the flood.

Cause of the flood. Much speculation has been indulged **in** with reference to the cause of the flood, which resulted in the destruction of the antique world, excepting Noah and his family. It is represented in Genesis (authorized version), that it was occasioned by the utter wickedness of man in the earth, and “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”; and so great was this wickedness and so universal, that “it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart” (Gen. 6:5-6).

This would lead one to believe that the great wickedness in Noah's period had quite surprised God, and was not present to his foreknowledge of things. It is certainly unthinkable that God would repent of having made man; *as surely nothing had happened up to this time that God had not foreseen.* The rendering of the text in the book of Moses is, "And it repented Noah, and his heart was pained that the Lord had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at ⟨his⟩ [the] heart" (Moses 8:25). This rendering is certainly more in conformity with reason than the rendering of the authorized version.

The "sons of God" and the "daughters of men." It is also written in Genesis "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh" (Gen. 6:2-3). That is to say, perishable; and so he shortened the years of man's life, evidently to curtail wickedness. "Also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bear children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown" (Gen. 6:4). Then follows the declaration of the races' universal wickedness, Noah's regret that God had made man, and the decree of God is entered for their destruction.

These paragraphs, Genesis 6:1-7, have perplexed the commentators and a number of solutions for the difficulties they present have been discussed,^a among them that we have here a trace of the stories of unions between deities and the women of earth which resulted in gigantic, monstrous, and cursed races. Others have suggested that the "sons of God" were evidently the angels, and that they had *carnal* union with the women of earth. None of these suggested explanations, however, is the truth. Running parallel with the descendants of Adam—through Seth—in the earth, was also the race of Cain, and they were known as the "sons of men," in contradistinction to the descendants of Adam, and the succeeding patriarchs of that line, who were called "the sons of God."^b The descendants of Adam were forbidden to intermarry

^aRoberts offers a more complete discussion and documentation of this issue in *Seventy's Course in Theology* 4:79-80. The articles "Noah" in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* and Kitto's *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, review the various interpretations of the "sons of men" and the "daughters of men." For a discussion of this issue, see page 659 below.

^bThe identification of the "sons of God" with the descendants of Seth and the "daughters of men" as the descendants of Cain is found in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* in the article entitled "Noah" as well as in the *Commentary* by Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown, 21. See the introductory material.

with the descendants of Cain, the “sons of men”; and the violation of this commandment by which a mongrel race^c was being produced by the intermarriage of descendants of Cain and the “sons of God,” was part of the wickedness which prepared the antediluvian world for its destruction.

Earth life: A sphere of rewards for conduct in previous states of existence. Reference to our chapter dealing with the “War in Heaven” (chapter 29) will recall the fact that Lucifer in that controversy drew away with him one-third of the hosts of heaven, and that they with him became the “fallen angels,” and by their rebellion forfeited their right of participation in the earth-planned life of man. They kept not their first estate—their spirit life estate (see Abr. 3:26–28). And of those who remained and were not cast out, there were doubtless among them a great variety of degrees as to greatness of soul, nobility of character and moral value. God himself showed unto Abraham such distinctions among the intelligences that were to inhabit the earth.

The Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers. (Abr. 3:22–23)

If there were such outstanding intelligences as these among those destined for habitancy of the earth, then by plain implication there were many who possessed the qualities of greatness, nobility, and of goodness in less varying degrees than these whom God declared he would make his “rulers.” And doubtless this all but infinite variety of intelligence, greatness and goodness would lead to a corresponding variety in faith and action in the “war in heaven,” calling again for corresponding variety ***of capacity for service, as also*** of rights and opportunities granted in earth life as rewards for ~~capacity~~, faith, ~~action~~, and demonstrated loyalty in the spirit life. Hence the endless variety of opportunity and apparent privileges granted to some races, tribes,

^cRoberts may have taken the term “mongrel race” from a passage he cited in *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:166, from the book *The Color Line: A Brief in Behalf of the Unborn*, in which the author argues against social relations between blacks and whites because such relations would eventually lead to intermarriage and what the author called the “mongrelization of the Southern people.” William Benjamin Smith, *The Color Line: A Brief in Behalf of the Unborn* (New York: McClure, Phillips, 1905), 12. See pages 658–60 for further discussion.

families and individuals in [the] earth process of events and changes making up the earth life of man.

The limitations of certain races. One of these distinctions in the earth life of man is to be observed in this marked difference between Cain and his descendants and the descendants of Adam through Seth, and the distinguished line of patriarchs to Noah: the “sons of men,” and the “sons of God.” The distinction rests primarily upon the difference in the intrinsic nature ~~or soul value~~ of the ***eternal, uncreated*** intelligences themselves, who were begotten ~~men~~ ***spirits***; and ***then*** what their faith and actions were ***as spirits*** in the preexistent spirit life. Evidently there were some who so demonstrated their worthiness in that ***life—pre-earth life—in*** greatness, nobility, and goodness, that God could entrust them with his power to act for him as his representatives and agents; and in this special way and sense become his “sons ***of God***” by holding appointed power from him—his priesthood, which is God’s authority in man.

And now among the hosts of the spirit world destined for earth ***life*** ~~the world~~ were ~~doubtless~~ many who would be unworthy of the distinction of holding this power from God—“the priesthood”—and yet had not so far transgressed as to have forfeited all right to an earth life, albeit under limitations, one of which might well be the right to hold power from God, to represent God and act in his name. These, the less “noble,” and “great” and “good,” whom God would not, and could not, in justice, make his rulers, hence their limitations in this respect in the earth life.^d

The progenitor of the less noble. Yet they are worthy, under such limitations as God’s justice may provide, to participate in earth life. Through what lineage shall they come? Obviously through those worthy only to be the progenitors of such classes as these less noble ones: Hence Cain, Lamech, Ham—this the line of progenitors whose progeny are worthy only to be called “the sons of men”; while those whom God has decreed he would make his “rulers” come of a line of progenitors, worthy only to be accounted in a special sense the “sons of God.” Hence Cain, jealous, evil-minded, covetous, murderous, loving Satan more than God—perhaps closely and dangerously allied with Lucifer in that “War in Heaven”—became the earth progenitor of those least

^dRoberts’s explanation of the denial of priesthood to Cain’s seed as a result of unworthiness in the preexistence was a common explanation among Latter-day Saints before the revelation in Official Declaration—2.

noble and valiant spirits who were permitted to come to earth, but under very serious and painful limitations, denial of right to the priesthood being among them; they are to be known merely as the sons of men.¹

It was doubtless to check this mingling of races between the descendants of Cain—the “sons of men,” and the race descending from the line of Seth to Noah—men of racial and character fitness to receive the priesthood—having right in this special way to be “sons of God,” that the flood was sent to cut off a growing mongrel race, unsuited to the purpose of God.

The descendants of Cain preserved through the flood. It will be of interest to note in what way provision was made to carry someone through the flood by whom fit ancestry could be provided for the less noble spirits of the spirit world. This was through Ham, the least noble of the sons of Noah. And now, after the flood, the numerical adjustment was so made that there would never be likelihood of the descendants of a forbidden race menacing the existence of the race competent to perpetuate those among them who could become, in the special way pointed out, the “sons of God.”

Of the low character of Ham we have the evidence in the unfortunate circumstance of his father Noah’s drunkenness after the flood, and Ham’s exposure of both his father’s weakness and his shamefulness to his brother’s nakedness,^c but which the nobler sons of Noah, Shem and Japheth, covered *and* with becoming delicacy. And when the patriarch of the two worlds—antediluvian and postdiluvian—awoke from his drunken sleep, and learned what shame his youngest son had put upon him, he cursed the posterity of Ham through Ham’s son, declaring an inferiority for him, saying: “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he *said*, Blessed *be* the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant” (Gen. 9:25-27).

¹For these distinctions see and cf. D&C 76:50-60, where those who receive the priesthood “after the order of the son of God” (the Melchizedek Priesthood), are declared to be “the sons of God”; Moses 6:67-68, account of Adam’s becoming a son of God (cf. D&C 84:6, 7, 17; 107:39-53); Adam referred to with other patriarch’s as “high priests.” Also Moses 8:13-15, where Noah and his sons are called “the sons of God,” and the daughters of these “sons of God” are reproved for having sold themselves to “the sons of men.” See also Moses 5:51-53, where descendants of Cain through Lamech are “the sons of men” and cursed of God—*i.e.*, *deservedly limited in opportunities granted to others*. See also Abraham 3.

^cGenesis 9 discusses Noah’s nakedness, not Ham’s brothers’ nakedness.

In addition to his low character exhibited in the shameful exposure of his father's plight during his intemperance, Ham had also married into the forbidden race of Cain. The name of his wife was "Egyptus," which interpreted means "forbidden" (see Abr. 1:23), evidence of the race whence she came—the forbidden race of Cain. And thus was the race of Cain perpetuated in the earth after the flood. The descendants of Ham were settled in Egypt by his daughter, also named "Egyptus" after her mother; and who named the land in which she settled her sons *in* Egypt, either in honor of herself or of her mother. "And thus," says the authority I am following, "from Ham, sprang that race which preserved the curse in the land" (Abr. 1:24).

Our authority, however, speaks well of the *eldest* son of Egyptus, daughter of Ham, who founded the first government in the land. This *government was* patriarchal in form and character, "imitating" the order of the patriarchal forms of his forefathers, including Noah; who, we are informed, "blessed him with the blessings of the earth, and with the blessings of wisdom, but cursed him as pertaining to the Priesthood" (Abr. 1:26).

Enoch, the patriarch seventh from Adam, and preeminently a seer, in the pre-vision God gave him of things to happen in generations future from his time, throws much light upon what would be the status of this Canaanitish race in the world.

The Lord said to this seer, "Look, and I will show unto thee the world for the space of many generations" (Moses 7:4). And among the things fore-visions to him were the movements and some of the wars waged by the Canaanites:

And the people of Canaan shall divide themselves in the land, and the land shall be barren and unfruitful, and none other people shall dwell there but the people of Canaan; For behold, the Lord shall curse the land with much heat, and the barrenness thereof shall go forth forever; and there was a blackness came upon all the children of Canaan, that they were despised among all people. (Moses 7:7-8)²

And here we may leave that "forbidden race"—forbidden to intermarry with those races whence may arise those who are not cursed by denial of the priesthood to them, but from whose midst may arise those who in a special way, may become the sons of God through receiving the priesthood—the power of God—by which they may be accounted sons of, or multiples of, God.

²The land occupied by descendants of Cain was northern Africa, and the barren land referred to as cursed with excessive heat was, doubtless, the desert of Sahara.

Other limitations. Among other limitations to the descendants of Ham, and to some other races might be named the tardy appearance of civilized enlightenment and knowledge of truth among them, because of their incapacity for, and their unworthiness of these things; and so they live their earth lives under necessary and deserved limitations. And yet this present earth life will and does hold high values for them, in that it affords them the necessary union of spirit and element essential to such “joy” as they may be capable of; and they shall be heirs, too, of salvation; for it is made known in our modern revelations that the inhabitants of the higher kingdoms of glory shall minister to the kingdoms of lower degrees of glory; and speaking of the angels who in the hereafter shall minister to those of “the telestial glory”—the very lowest of the kingdom—whose inhabitants come not forth until “the last resurrection”—even these shall be “heirs of salvation” (D&C 76:88). And of the heathen nations—“they that knew no law,” it is written: “The heathen nations shall be redeemed, and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them” (cf. D&C 45:54).

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Gen. 4-10; D&C 76; Moses 5-8; Abr. 1-3.

The Postdiluvian Dispensations

Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God. Noah after the flood lived three hundred and fifty years, being nine hundred and fifty years old when he died (Gen. 9:28-29).

Standing out in bold relief among the patriarchs of the postdiluvian period is Melchizedek, described in Genesis as the King of Salem, who met Abraham after his conquest of several of the petty kings in the land of Canaan. This Melchizedek was “priest of the most high God,” and he brought forth bread and wine and administered it to Abraham saying: “Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand” (Gen. 14:19-20).^a And Abraham gave Melchizedek tithes of all (that is, one-tenth of the spoils taken from the kings he had conquered).

Paul in the book of Hebrews makes reference to this high priest of the early postdiluvian age as being a priest-type after the order of the Son of God, saying, “Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he ⟨God⟩ [that] said unto him, Thou art my Son, ⟨this⟩ [to] day have I begotten thee. . . . Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec . . . called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 5:5, 6, 10). It must ever be that the Christ, being the Word that was in the beginning with God, and that was God, and afterwards “was made flesh” and dwelt among men (cf. John 1:1-14), must have precedence over Melchizedek; and the question then arises, how comes it that the Christ is spoken of as being a “priest forever after the order of Melchisedec?” The mystery disappears when we come to the knowledge that it is Melchizedek who is a high priest after the order of the Son of God, rather than the Son of God an high priest after

^aRoberts introduced the word “administered.” The King James Version simply reads, “brought forth bread and wine.” The Joseph Smith Translation, however, adds, “he brake bread and blest it; and he blest the wine.”

the order of Melchizedek; and this is learned from a revelation to the Prophet of the New Dispensation in the following language:

There are, in the church, two priesthoods, namely, the Melchizedek and Aaronic. . . . Why the first is called the Melchizedek Priesthood is because Melchizedek was such a great high priest. Before his day it was called the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God. 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. (D&C 107:1-4)

This changing of the name of the priesthood, however, from “the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God” (who was to come in the meridian of time) to the “Melchizedek Priesthood,” did not change the nature of the priesthood itself, and it was still after the change of the name “the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God”; and the Son of God, of course, takes precedence over Melchizedek, and it is Melchizedek that derives his priesthood from the Son of God, rather than the Son of God deriving ought from Melchizedek. Melchizedek was merely a prototype of that high priest, that was to be developed in the Christ, the Son of God, when he should appear in the earth in the meridian of time.

Much speculation has been indulged in regard to ~~who~~ Melchizedek *who was he*. Little doubt can exist, however, but that he was Shem, the son of Noah,¹ and therefore in the direct line of both the postdiluvian patriarch Noah, and through him in the line of antediluvian patriarchs back to Adam. It is most appropriate, therefore, that Abraham who was to become the great head of the Hebrew race should receive blessing from him, and take his place in the line of the patriarchs from Adam to his own day, and then pass on that same connection through his descendants Isaac and Jacob, whence sprang the Hebrew race and nation, destined to become God’s witness, par excellence in the earth.

“The call” of Abraham. This connection established between the patriarch Shem (Melchizedek) and Abraham, the head of the Hebrew race, introduces the Abrahamic dispensation of things in the earth, for in addition to this connection with the patriarch Shem, God also directly revealed himself to Abraham and called him to the special work unto which he had been appointed, even in the spirit world before his earth life began (cf. Abr. 3:22-23). The genealogy of Abraham, and some of his history, is given in the eleventh chapter of Genesis,

¹See note in text at close of this chapter.

and from it we learn that he originally dwelt in the land of Ur of the Chaldees and here the Lord spake unto Abraham commanding him to leave that country and his kindred and go into a land that the Lord had appointed unto him—the land of Canaan, “and I will make of thee a great nation,” said the Lord; “and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:2-3). This is generally referred to in theological writings as the “call of Abraham.” A famine diverted him from immediately possessing Canaan and hence came Abraham’s sojourn in Egypt from which he afterwards returned and settled in Canaan where came his contact with Shem (Melchizedek). God’s reason for calling Abraham is thus given: “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him” (Gen. 18:19). That is, make of him the head of a people and nation and that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him and in his seed. Also the patriarch received the further compliment of being called the “friend” of God (2 Chr. 20:7), and “I ⟨God⟩ have chosen ⟨Jacob⟩, the seed of Abraham my friend” (Isa. 41:8).

“The gospel” preached to Abraham. We learn from another scripture that a dispensation of the gospel was given to Abraham.^b This is the passage: “The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Gal. 3:8). Let it be remembered that there is but one gospel, but one plan for man’s salvation, one covenant which God made of eternal life, and though an angel should preach any other than this one gospel he is under apostolic anathema (Gal. 1:6-9; Titus 1:2). Paul himself asks the question, “wherefore then serveth the law?” (Gal. 3:19)—having reference to the law of Moses, given, of course, subsequently to this gospel, which had been preached unto Abraham, and which was “the law of [a] carnal commandment(s)” (Heb. 7:16; 9:10), under which Israel lived, and of which we shall say something more later. But the question again: “wherefore then serveth the law,” if the gospel was preached to Abraham? The answer of Paul to that question is,

It was added because of transgressions, till the seed ⟨the Christ⟩ should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels

^bOn dispensationalism, see pages 657-58 below.

in the hand(s) of a mediator. Wherefore the law (again referring to the law of Moses) was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:19, 24-26)

Which simply means that the gospel was preached unto Abraham, but later, when his posterity had developed into a people who proved themselves unfaithful and inadequate to live in harmony with the gospel as it had been revealed to Abraham, (and later to Moses), because of transgression, an inferior law, called in the scriptures “the law of carnal commandments,” a law of symbols and ceremonies for their training, was given to them in place of the gospel of faith and grace and the higher spiritual life and union with God. But the gospel as known from of old was given to Abraham *and also to Moses* before the law, known as the law of Moses, was given.

Mosaic dispensation. This course of events brings us now to Moses, the next great prophet following after the patriarchal period which seems to have closed with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; and Joseph, son of Jacob. And we now enter the prophetic period in the development of God’s purpose in the earth.

To Moses and to Israel under Moses the gospel was first presented before a coming in of the law of Moses.[†] This is evident from the scriptures. It is written by Paul:

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. (1 Cor. 10:1-4)

It is written, and here let me say, in quoting this passage from Hebrews, I take no note of the fact, except for this remark, that the passage is made up of the closing verses of chapter three and the opening verses of chapter four. It must be remembered that the inspired writers of the scriptures are not responsible for these divisions of their writings into chapters or verses, and sometimes passages of scripture that relate to one thing and ought not to be divided by so much as a period, are

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve cautioned regarding chapter 39, page 7: “The law of Moses not an eternal law. In the chapter it is so stated with other law.” Roberts commented: **not in ch. 39.** In fact, the relevant material was on this page of chapter 38.

nevertheless sometimes torn apart by being placed in separate chapters. The passage I am about to quote is an instance of this kind. Paul speaking of Israel, part of whom provoked God by their transgressions, as they were led out of Egypt by Moses, says:

But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: (ancient Israel under Moses mentioned above), but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (Heb. 3:17-19; 4:1-2)

And so the gospel was preached not only to Abraham, but also to Israel under Moses, before the law was given; but not being equal to living in harmony with its excellence, and because of their transgression, God gave them the law of carnal commandments. The fact that the gospel was first offered to Israel through Moses established by the above scriptures, makes clear also the knowledge that Moses evidently had knowledge of the Christ to come in the future, for it is written of him,

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. (Heb. 11:24-26)

The priesthood under the Mosaic dispensation. Again the fragment, which we call the book of Moses revealed to Joseph Smith, contains the evidence that the gospel was made known unto Moses from the council in heaven to the full development of the gospel as it had been revealed unto Adam after the "Fall," and to Enoch, and also to Noah. Also Moses organized the priesthood after the order of the Son of God, the same that is known as the Melchizedek priesthood or priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. And in our modern revelation to the Prophet of the New Dispensation it is made known that Moses received this priesthood under the hands of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian (Ex. 3:1),^c who received this priesthood through a line of men reaching back to Abraham, and thence to Melchizedek who conferred that priesthood upon Abraham, and thence

^cExodus 3:1 identifies Jethro as Moses's father-in-law and priest of Midian. The lineage of Moses' priesthood is found in D&C 84:6-18.

back to Noah, and from Noah **back** to Adam, through the line of the ten patriarchs to Adam, who is the first man. “Which priesthood,” says this revelation, “continueth in the Church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years” (cf. D&C 84:6–17). In this revelation also is mentioned the fact that “the Lord confirmed a priesthood upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations” (D&C 84:18). 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 **chiefly** outward ordinances. This “priesthood also continueth and abideth forever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God” (D&C 84:18)—i.e., after the order of the Son of God.

Referring again to this higher order of priesthood, the Melchizedek—the revelation continues:

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of [the] mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live. Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory. Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also (i.e., the priesthood after the order of the Son of God); And the lesser priesthood (i.e., which he had conferred upon Aaron) continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel; Which gospel is the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John (i.e., the Baptist), whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb. For he was baptized while he was yet in his childhood, and was ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old unto this power, to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord, in whose hand is given all power. (D&C 84:19–28)

Visions of God under Moses. Notwithstanding what is written above about the failure of Moses to bring his people into full and sustained contact with God because of the hardening of their hearts,

which made it impossible for them to endure the presence of the Lord, and that ~~which~~ ultimately resulted in the Lord taking Moses and *the* higher priesthood as an organization out of their midst, still there are some bright spots during that time when Moses was seeking to induce his people to live in harmony with the higher law of the gospel, and he was able to bring some part of his people into visible and actual communion with God. As for instance—we read in Exodus:

And he ⟨the Lord⟩ said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, ⟨and⟩ Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him. (Ex. 24:1-2)

This commandment Moses delivered to assembled Israel, and

then went up Moses, [and] Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the Elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and *there* was under his feet as it were a paved work of *a* sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. (Ex. 24:9-11)

Above in this chapter it has been set forth that without holding the Melchizedek priesthood, the priesthood after the order of the Son of God, man may not see the face of God and live. But since this number of men out of Israel could be brought into the presence of the Lord and eat and drink in his presence (was it a sacramental eating and drinking on that occasion?) it is evident that they must have held the priesthood after the order of the Son of God, ~~after the order of Melchizedek~~, and to that extent, at least, that Moses succeeded in bringing his people into that intimate relationship which he would have brought all Israel into, had it not been for the hardening of their hearts; but because of “transgression,” the gospel which had been preached to Abraham, and which was given to Moses to introduce to Israel, but which they were unworthy of and unable to live, therefore this holy priesthood ~~after the order of Melchizedek~~, was taken from them as an organization, and also Moses, who held the keys of it. And Israel was left with the lesser priesthood, and the law of carnal commandments to be their schoolmaster to prepare them finally for the coming of that great high priest himself, from whom all others in the world, in ancient times, in meridian times, and in the last days shall derive whatsoever of priesthood they may hold.

Taking away Moses and the Melchizedek priesthood, and leaving for the purpose named the lesser priesthood, left Israel also with only

the lesser law. Later the gospel dispensation, graced by the presence of the Christ, the great high priest, who offered himself as a sacrifice for the redemption of the world, was ushered in—then the higher priesthood again assumed the direction of things, the lesser priesthood occupying its proper subordinate relationship, and the law was supplanted **by** the gospel, with its higher spiritual powers and life.

Melchizedek priesthood held by the prophets of Israel. There remains but one thing more to be accounted for, namely, that some of the prophets in Israel between the departure of Moses and the coming of the Christ, seem to function in a manner that could only be warranted by their possessing the Melchizedek priesthood, as for instance: Where Isaiah had the face to face vision of God,

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims. . . . And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. (Isa. 6:1-5)

The explanation of this must be, that while the priesthood as an organization, together with Moses was taken away from Israel, from time to time individual prophets received direct individual ordination from God in order to accomplish his purposes in the earth.^d We have such an instance as this in the case of Esaias, where the revelation of God to our Prophet of the New Dispensation traces back the line of Jethro's priesthood (father-in-law of Moses and of whom Moses received the ordination to the priesthood), through four predecessors in the line of his priesthood to Esaias who also lived in the days of Abraham and of whom it is said, "and Esaias received it ⟨the priesthood⟩ under the hand of God" (cf. D&C 84:7-12).^e Since Esaias lived in the days of Abraham and Abraham was blessed of him, is it not quite possible that

^dThis is supported by a statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith: "All the prophets had the Melchizedek Priesthood" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 181). Further evidence that the Melchizedek Priesthood was available to various individuals in the Old Testament period can be seen in Alma 13.

^eIn reference to the "hand of God," note D&C 36:2, where the Lord said to Edward Partridge, "And I will lay my hand upon you by the hand of my servant Sidney Rigdon."

this “Esaias” *under that name* was Melchizedek[†] and that he was the one to whom the priesthood of Jethro is traced in this revelation here considered, for Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, received his priesthood from one Caleb, “who received the priesthood from Elihu, who received the priesthood under the hand of Jeremy, and Jeremy received the priesthood under the hand of Gad, and Gad under the hand of Esaias,” who is also the one who received his priesthood under the hand of God, and Esaias also lived in the days of Abraham and blessed him (cf. D&C 84:7-14). He doubtless was the Melchizedek and this name, which he appears under here (“Esaias”) accounts for the variation perhaps of this Elias who appeared in the Kirtland Temple.

This brief historical sketch made possible by reason of the revelations given in the New Dispensation to Joseph Smith, and quoted in this chapter, unites the dispensations of Moses and the prophets of Israel with Abraham on the one hand, and with Christ, the Messiah, on the other, which dispensation we are to consider in the next chapter.

Note: *Melchizedek-Shem*.^f That Melchizedek was Shem is recognized by the “Palestinian Targum” and also by Jerome of the fourth and fifth centuries in his comments on Isaiah 41.² It may be interesting to record also that it was Shem who offered the sacrifices ~~on the earth~~ after Noah and his family came out of the ark (cf. Gen. 8:20), since tradition has it that Noah had been crippled by the lion, and was therefore unfitted for the priestly office (Lev. 21:17-23); Noah gave Shem the priestly garments also which he had inherited from Adam. This, too,

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve succinctly stated: “We question the statement that Esaias and Melchizedek are the same, based on what is written in D&C 84.” Roberts noted in response: **Obj[ection] not valid**, but nevertheless he appears in response to have made a slight modification by adding “under that name.”

^fIn his argument identifying Shem with Melchizedek, Roberts is summarizing evidence from articles in Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, Kitto’s *Cyclopaedia*, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and the *Jewish Encyclopedia*. See also a similar summary in *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 2:86-88. A recent LDS scholar has summarized the discussion since Roberts’s time: “It was asserted by some early LDS leaders that Melchizedek was Shem, son of Noah (see, for example, *Times and Seasons* 5:746). Though Shem is also identified as a great high priest (D&C 138:41), it would appear from the Doctrine and Covenants 84:14 that the two might not be the same individual (*Mormon Doctrine*, 475), and Jewish sources equating Melchizedek and Shem are late and tendentious.” Bruce Satterfield, “Melchizedek: LDS Sources,” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 2:879-80. See also the excellent review of ancient sources in Birger A. Pearson, “Melchizedek: Ancient Sources,” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 2:880-82.

²*Encyclopedia Britannica* (11th ed.), s.v. “Melchizedek.”

confirms the tradition held in relation to Shem being the successor to Noah in the patriarchal line.³ The Samaritans also identified the city of Samaria with the city of Salem,[†] and their sanctuary on Mt. Gerizim. The Rabbis of later generations also identified Melchizedek with Shem, the ancestor of Abraham.⁴ In one of the Messianic Psalms (Ps. 110:4) it is foretold that the Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek, which the author of the epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 5:20) cites as showing that Melchizedek was a type of Christ, and the Jews themselves certainly, on the authority of this passage of the Psalm, regarded Melchizedek as a type of the regal priesthood, higher than that of Aaron to which the Messiah should belong.⁵

A mysterious supremacy came also to be assigned to Melchizedek,⁶ but by reason of his having received tithes from the Hebrew patriarch Abraham; and on this point the author of the epistle to the Hebrews expatiates strongly (Heb. 7:1-2); but the Jews in admitting this official or popular superiority of Melchizedek to Abraham sought to account for it by alleging that the Royal priesthood was no other than Shem, the most pious of Noah's sons, who according to the shorter chronology (Ussher's) might have lived at the time of Abraham (according to that chronology Shem's life overlapped into the life of Abraham over one hundred and fifty years). Shem as a survivor of the deluge is supposed to have been authorized by the superior dignity of old age to bless even the father of the faithful, and entitled as the paramount Lord of Canaan (Gen. 9:26) to convey his light to Abraham (Gen. 14:19). This opinion (i.e. that Shem was Melchizedek) was embraced by Martin Luther, his strong supporter and learned friend Melancthon, by H. Broughton, Selden, Bishop Lightfoot, Jackson, and many others.

Jerome of the fourth and fifth centuries in his epistle written in Rome⁷ which *is* entirely devoted to consideration of the person and dwelling place of Melchizedek, states that this (i.e., that Melchizedek is Shem) was the prevailing opinion of the Jews in his time, and it was also ascribed to the Samaritans.

³*Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1905), s.v. "Shem."

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve added: "We also question the statement that Salem and Samaria are the same." Roberts defended the point: **Obj not valid. (not mine. quote. Ency. Jewish see)**

⁴*Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Shem."

⁵McClintock and Strong, *Encyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, s.v. "Melchizedek," covering the two next paragraphs.

⁶Philo, *Opp. Rom.* 2:34 [Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis*, 2, 3, 79-82; and Philo, *On Abraham*, 235]. [No work by Philo entitled *Opp. Rom.* has been found. An account of Abraham giving tithing to Melchizedek in Philo is found in *On Abraham (De Abrahamo)*, 235.]

⁷Jerome, *Epistle 73* [in *Patrologia Latina* 22:681].

Also it is interesting to note that in an editorial in the *Times and Seasons*, December number for 1844, published at Nauvoo, Illinois, the statement is made, that Melchizedek was Shem: “And with the superior knowledge of men like Noah, Shem (who is Melchizedek), and Abraham the father of the faithful, holding the keys of the highest order of the priesthood,” etc.⁸

Other conjectures in relation to Melchizedek on account of the mystery that shadows his name and career, is that he was an impersonal power, virtue, or substance of God personified; that he was the son of God, appearing in human form; that he was the Messiah (Jewish opinion); also that he was Ham, which, of course, in the light of what we have already said of Ham would be *obviously* ridiculous.

*Shem, Melchizedek, and Elias identical?*⁹ The establishment of the identity of Shem and Melchizedek leads to the likelihood of an important fact connected with the New Dispensation. We read in the Doctrine and Covenants of the appearing in the Kirtland Temple to the Prophet Joseph Smith and to Oliver Cowdery, first the Savior; ~~afterwards~~ **then** Moses, who restored to the Prophet the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the North; then of Elias who appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying to Joseph and Oliver that in them “and in their seed all generations after them should be blessed.” Then follows the account of the appearing of Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death (see D&C 110).

The question arises, who is this “Elias” who committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham? Why is it that in all our modern revelations Abraham never appears as coming with the keys of a dispensation, since he is so prominent a figure of antiquity? The answer, of course, would be that a greater than Abraham lived in his day, and held the keys of that dispensation; and who ordained Abraham to his special work of perpetuating the patriarchal line after the departure of

⁸Unsigned editorial, *Times and Seasons* 5 (December 15, 1844): 745-46.

⁹The identification of Elias has generated various opinions. For example, Joseph Fielding Smith argued that Elias in D&C 110 was probably Gabriel (Noah), basing his argument on D&C 27:6-9, where Gabriel is identified as an Elias. *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957-66), 3:138-41. The only direct scriptural evidence about Elias is found in D&C 110:12, where he “committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham.” The article “Elias” in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* declares: “Nothing more is known about this man.” George A. Horton, Jr., “Elias,” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 2:449.

that greater one, who held the keys of the dispensation in which Abraham was started upon his career in the priesthood. Between Noah and the appearance of Abraham on the scene, the one intervening great character that looms large, is Melchizedek, and with the fact established that he was Shem, we have a beautiful and unbroken line of God's great servants from antediluvian patriarchs through Noah into the postdiluvian period in which period Noah continued his life for three hundred and fifty years. Shem continuing to live contemporaneously with him through that period, meeting with Abraham, conferring the priesthood upon him and thence the line continuing until Israel arose to be enlarged into a nation to perpetuate the work of God through the earth. This conception of the course of things arising out of the identification of Elias who appeared in the Kirtland Temple to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery with Melchizedek, and Melchizedek with Shem, perpetuates the patriarchal line of the priesthood, and it was doubtless that patriarchal feature of the priesthood and the work of God linking the generations of men together in the patriarchal line that Elias—or Melchizedek—came to restore.

“Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed” (D&C 110:12).

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1901-1906, s.v. “Melchizedek” and “Abraham”; Josephus, *Works of Flavius Josephus*, bk. 1, ch. 10; standard Bible commentaries and dictionaries, esp. Kitto, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, s.v. “Melchizedek” and “Abraham”; Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 2:86-90; Gen. 20; Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6-10; 6:20.

The Meridian Dispensation

The mission of the Christ in outline. We come now to the dispensation of the gospel that is to be graced by the advent of the Son of God and the performance of his great mission. That mission is to reveal in person God the Father; and all that is or can be called God in the universe: “For . . . in him ⟨shall⟩ [should] all fulness dwell . . . ⟨even⟩ the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 1:19; 2:9; and context). To redeem man from the consequences of Adam’s transgression, from the “Fall.” To introduce the element of mercy into the divine economy, by making it possible under a reign of moral and spiritual law to forgive the personal sins of men without violence to justice; also bringing men from their alienation from God back to fellowship and union with him; by which they are redeemed from spiritual death, and restored to spiritual life. To bring to pass the resurrection from physical death, by which shall be established immortality—a deathless, physical life. Lastly, the Christ came to stand as a witness for the truth of all the foregoing things; for he said unto Pilate, when brought before the Roman procurator by the Jews. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth” (John 18:37). These several things constituted the very heart and life of the mission of the Christ, and, of course, of the gospel, the whole plan of God for the establishment of both the physical immortality of man, and also the eternal spiritual life of man.

The two great Christian sacraments. We pass over the historical features of the meridian dispensation as being too well known to require restatement: viz, the coming and mission of the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist; and the birth and youth and early ministry of the Messiah himself. It should be noted, however, that to set forth in concrete form and perpetuate the main features of his mission, the Christ established two sacraments; each having two parts, viz., first, baptism; and second, the Lord’s supper. Baptism, as stated

above, consists of two parts: (a) baptism, or birth of the water; and (b) baptism, or birth of the spirit.

(a) *Water Baptism.* Water baptism is to be performed by immersion, or complete burial of the candidate in water. The official formula for this ordinance as given by the risen Christ to the Nephites in America, was as follows:

Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water. . . . And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them ⟨the candidates⟩ by name, [saying]: Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. And then shall ye immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water. (3 Ne. 11:23-26)

This ordinance is to be preceded by a confession of faith, in God the Father, in Jesus Christ his Son, and in the Holy Ghost. In baptism is represented, symbolically, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ; as the Christ died and was buried, so the candidate dies to his old life of sin, by separating himself from it by repentance; and he is buried with Christ in baptism. And as the Christ rose from the grave to “newness of life” (Rom. 6:4)—to immortal life—so the immersed candidate rises from the watery grave of baptism to a newness of life in righteousness. The symbolism is complete.

Through this ordinance comes remission of sin by visible acceptance of the Atonement of the Christ, and the cleansing power of his sacrificial blood in that atonement made for sin. Also it is partial entrance, or a preparation for entrance, into the kingdom of heaven—the Church of Christ. Also this water baptism is a preparation for the other part of baptism—the baptism, or birth, of the spirit: this by cleansing from sins, by forgiveness of them, through the grace of God (John 3:3; Mark 1:4; Acts 2:37-39; Rom. 6:4).

(b) *The baptism of the spirit—The Holy Ghost.* The second part of this one baptism—the baptism of the spirit, is administered by the laying on of the hands by those having authority to minister the spirit, by which the properly prepared water-baptized convert receives an immersion of the Holy Ghost to his soul. He is born again into a union with God—into a renewal of spiritual life. This baptism of the spirit completes his entrance into the kingdom of God. He is born both of the water and of the spirit, without which he could neither see nor enter into the kingdom of God—the Church of Christ. This baptism brings him to possession of that spirit which guides him into all truth; which takes the things of God and makes them known to him; by which he

may know that Jesus is the Christ (John 3:3–4; 14; Acts 2:37–39; 8:14–24), by which also he may know the truth of all things (John 14, 15, 16; 1 Cor. 12:3; Moro. 10:4–5). Blessed baptism into a union with God; and to a knowledge of all the things of God.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper. The nature of this sacrament will best be learned from the prayer of consecration of the bread and the wine of the supper. This is to be found both in the Book of Mormon as given by the Christ among the ancient Nephites, and to the Prophet of the New Dispensation by revelation (Moro. 4:3; 5:2; D&C 20:77, 79). Moroni describing the manner in which it was administered among his people says: “The manner of their elders and priests administering the flesh and blood of Christ unto the church; and they ⟨did⟩ administer[ed] it according to the commandment[s] of Christ; wherefore we know the manner to be true” (Moro. 4:1). Consideration of the prayer over the broken bread will be sufficient for the present purpose.

Prayer of Consecration

O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it; that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he hath given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen. (Moro. 4:3)

A similar prayer to this with only slight variations to make it appropriate as representing the blood of the Christ instead of his broken body is given in the same revelations. These prayers of consecration, are the most perfect forms of sacred literature to be found. So perfect they are that one may not add to them or take ought from them without marring them. One may say of these prayers of consecration what Archdeacon Paley says concerning the Lord's Prayer, namely—

for a succession of solemn thoughts, for fixing the attention upon a few great points, for suitableness, . . . for sufficiency, for conciseness without obscurity, for the weight and real importance of its petitions, is without an equal or a rival.¹

And as representing a few great fundamental and all-comprehensive truths concerning religion, these prayers of consecration form a rallying point—raise a standard that will make for the holding together in union and fellowship the followers of the Master, beyond all other formulas

¹Paley, *A View of the Evidences of Christianity*, 235.

known to man; and for that purpose, beyond all doubt, were they given, as well as to call up to man's consciousness the sacrifice God made for man's redemption, and man's covenant to remember and to keep God's commandments, that he might always be in union with God.

The prayers of consecration expounded. These prayers of consecration are a "creed," as well as sacramental prayers. This will sufficiently appear if we analyze the prayer over the bread.

"O God, the Eternal Father." Here, in addition to being the most solemn form in which Deity can be addressed, is expressed faith in God as "Eternal Father." Remembering that the first fact of fatherhood is creation through begetting; and next is watching over and guiding to proposed ends, loving watchfulness over the creation—fathering! We have God recognized as the Father of men, and the Eternal Creator of all things, and the eternal sustaining power of all things—"the very Eternal Father of heaven and [of] earth" (Mosiah 15:4; cf. Alma 11:38–39), not as "first cause," but as "Eternal," continuing cause, and "Eternal" sustaining power. How fortunate the form of that address, "O God, the Eternal Father!"

"We ask Thee, in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ." This is an assertion of faith in Jesus Christ; and in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, as Son of the "Eternal Father." He was the "firstbegotten" of the spirits destined to come to the earth, called "firstbegotten" by the father himself (Heb. 1:6; cf. Rom. 8:29); and hence "Elder Brother" to all that host of spirits. Also he is "the only begotten of the Father"; of all the sons of men born into the world (John 1:14)—having reference, of course, to the Christ's birth of Mary and as the Son of the Highest—"the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). So that indeed God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, both of his spirit and of his body, and in this respect the Christ *is* uniquely "the Son of God."

"We ask Thee . . . to bless and sanctify this bread." And what is this bread? It is broken when blessed and presented to the communicants, and is the symbol of the broken body of the Christ. Symbol of the fulfillment of the prophecy: "He was wounded for our iniquities" (cf. Isa. 53:5).² Symbol of the broken body of the Christ; broken when the crown of hard thorns was pressed upon his brow, and blood streamed down his face; broken when the cruel nails were driven through the quivering flesh of hands and feet; broken when the Roman soldier's spear pierced his side and shed the life's blood that was to save

²And the serpent was given power to "bruise" the heel of the woman's seed (Gen. 3:15).

the world. The Christ's suffering in Gethsemane, where in agony he sweat blood at every pore; and his suffering on the cross, where hung his broken body in unspeakable pain: this was the price *of suffering* paid for man's salvation and the broken bread is the symbol of it. . . . "Bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it." The broken bread is to be a soul-food then, not bodily food; an appeal to remembrance, to gratitude, to moral obligation.

In the prayer of consecration, then, faith is declared in God as Eternal Father; in Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God (in the flesh); in the Atonement of Jesus Christ for the sins of men (as a race and as individuals), and this by accepting the symbols of the broken body of the Christ in the broken bread. These *are* three great fundamentals of the gospel, which if a man accepts in his convictions, all else of the gospel will follow as matter of course.

The second part of the sacrament deals with the renewal of covenant with God on the part of man:

"That they may witness unto Thee, O God, the Eternal Father:

(a) that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son"; become Christ's men, and Christ's women—Christians!

(b) "and always remember him"! every day remember him, every month, and through all the years—always!

(c) "and keep his commandments which he hath given them." In human weakness men may not always "keep" perfectly his commandments; but they may keep alive in their souls their "willingness" to keep his commandments; and by affirming and re-affirming that willingness, the memory of the obligation "to keep his commandment" will be ever present to consciousness.

And the end of all this? the climax? the purpose of it?

"That they may always have his <the Christ's> spirit to be with them." What an end to be attained! The spirit of the Christ to be with men always! The perpetuation of the spiritual life into which they were born when they accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ. What could be more desirable? What more admirable? What more profitable for the individual and for *the* community life, than that men should always have the spirit of the Christ to be with them? "To live and move and have their being" (cf. Acts 17:28), and work and serve in that spirit—the spirit of the Master—the Christ!

The resurrection of the dead. It is fitting that a word should be spoken here in relation to one other stupendous fact connected with the dispensation of the meridian of times, namely, the Christ's resurrection from the dead. And his resurrection *it* should be remembered, is a

prototype of the resurrection of all men, the actual, physical resurrection of the body of all men, and the immortality of the individual so raised from the dead, in fulfillment of God's covenant made to the spirits of men before the foundation of the world—namely, the covenant of eternal life (Titus 1:2). I waive all discussion as to the physical possibility of such a resurrection. We have God's assurance in his revealed word that it shall be so, and such is the manifest power of God in creation, in the miracle of man's mortal life, in the miracle of the existence of all animal and plant life, the miracle of existence of the earth itself, sun, moon, and stars, that it is not worthwhile carping over the alleged "impossibility" and "improbability" of the physical resurrection of men. It is no more difficult for God to bring to pass the physical immortality through the reunion of spirit and body, than it is impossible for God to bring to pass the mortal life of man; and in the presence of all the "miraculous" things known to men about life and its wonders. We might repeat, even to this scientific age, proud of its acquired knowledge yet confusedly ignorant of the mystery of life in general, and human life in particular, we could still say to them, as Paul did to King Agrippa, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8). This resurrection to physical, immortal life is the great unique thing of the Christian religion as founded by the Christ, and developed by the ministry of the apostles. Other faiths have presented more or less dimly the idea of a continued consciousness of being in some form or other, some spirit essence kind of existence, or some absorption back into the being whence the individual has been called into existence, some survival of ethereal existence, as the perfume of the rose after her petals are fallen, or else some pilgrimage of the soul through transmigration into varied forms of life, sometimes in the way of retribution visited upon the spirit because of the absence of some perfection or failure to fulfill purposes of existence in granted life periods, a procession of chastisements until the right is purchased to escape the painful consciousness of personal existence, and there comes the alleged blessed period of Nirvana, or rest from the weary round of struggle and effort. It is the Christian religion alone out of all the faiths that raises up as a standard this proclamation that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22). And the promise of the Christ himself, if a man "believe[th] in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"; and also his solemn words, "I am the resurrection, and the life" (cf. John 11:25); and again the Master's words near the close of his mortal life's ministry:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is *coming*, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear

shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. . . . Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:25-29)

The resurrection of the just and also of the unjust. God's covenant to his spirit children before the earth life of man began was that he would give unto men immortality—deathless physical existence, in the union of spirit and element; and we are assured of the possibility of such a thing by reason of the existence of accomplished things all about us equally miraculous with the fulfillment of this promise of resurrection from the dead.

The testimony of the Judean apostles. The fact of the resurrection of the Christ from death is witnessed by the apostles in their discourses in the New Testament scriptures; and is also used by them as proof positive of the divinity of the Christian scheme of things, as witnessed in Paul's speech in Athens where he represents that God hath given assurance that he hath called all men to repentance under the Christian scheme of things—"in that he hath raised him (the Christ) from the dead" (Acts 17:31 and context).

To all this is to be added the testimony of each of the writers of the four Gospels who represent the resurrection of the Christ as a most literal resurrection of the personal Christ by the reunion of his body and spirit. The reality of this reunion is most emphatically given perhaps in St. John's Gospel where on his second appearance to the apostles he gives the assurance of the reality of his resurrection to Thomas, who had said to his brethren who reported the first visitation of the risen Christ, "Unless I see the wounds in his hands and in his side and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." On the second visitation the Master called "Doubting Thomas" to him and said unto him, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to the risen Christ, "My Lord and My God!" And the Christ reproved him for his previous lack of faith (cf. John 20:24-29).

On the first visit of the risen Lord, when the disciples were affrighted at his appearing among them, supposing that they had seen a spirit, he said unto them,

Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?
Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see;

for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. . . . And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of [a] broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. (Luke 24:38-43)

Peter in the course of his ministry was wont to refer to this and other circumstances of physical contact with the risen Christ, an example of which is found in his discourse in the home of Cornelius, saying, “We”—referring to himself and brethren that were with him on that occasion—

we are witnesses of all things which he ⟨the Christ⟩ did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem: whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. (Acts 10:39-41)

The testimony of a modern prophet. This is the testimony of the Jewish scripture, more especially of the New Testament, although through the whole course of the scriptures there is abundance of witness to this great truth, and especially in our modern revelation given through the Prophet of the New Dispensation: “And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him,” said this prophet, “this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we”—referring to himself and his early associate, Sidney Rigdon—“For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father” (D&C 76:22-23).³

The testimony of the Book of Mormon. Also in the Book of Mormon is given a most dramatic and soul-thrilling testimony to the resurrection of the Christ by the appearance of the risen Redeemer to a multitude of people in America, shortly after the resurrection of the Christ; for to the people of America, no less than to the people of the Eastern hemisphere, did God give assurances through their ancient prophets from time to time of the existence of his gospel and of its power unto salvation; and lastly the risen Christ came to them to assure them of the verities of the plan of salvation and especially of this feature of it, the

³The whole great revelation in this section of the Doctrine and Covenants, one of the greatest outgivings of God to man in any age of the world, is based upon this testimony of the risen and present living Christ, the Son of God, and we commend that whole revelation to the consideration of the reader.

resurrection from the dead, by his own glorious appearance among them, and his quite extended ministry among them.⁴

Here the resurrected Christ according to the Nephite record, descended out of heaven and appeared to the multitude, proclaiming himself to be the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world; and the multitude blessed the name of “the Most High God,” “And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him” (3 Ne. 11:17).

Assurance of the resurrection. No incident in the gospel history is more emphatically proven than this great truth, the resurrection of the Son of God, and the promise of the resurrection of all men. It was the center around which all the hope of the early Christians was grouped—the hope of immortality, of eternal life. It is the vital force of the Christian religion. It is the hope of the world, ~~for~~ the only kind of a future life that can meet the aspiring, uplifting desires of the human soul. If such a life as that which is promised through the resurrection, as taught in the Christian religion, is not to be realized, then the future hopes for any existence worthwhile fall in dark confusion about the feet of men.

⁴For all which see Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi, the whole book, but especially chapter 11.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Smith, *History of the Church* 4:553-56; the closing chapter of each gospel: Matt. 27, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 21; Acts; 1 Cor. 15; Epistles; Moro. 4-5; and D&C 20; 45; and 76.

The Atonement I— The Revealed Fact of the Atonement

Note: I must ask at the outset of this treatise on the Atonement—comprising six chapters—that there be a suspension of judgment on the respective parts of the theme until all shall have been read; as knowledge of the whole, I am sure, will be necessary to the complete understanding of the parts.

Introductory. ~~The Revealed Fact of It.~~ It is fitting that the Atonement should receive doctrinal exposition when considering the dispensation of the gospel in which the sacrifice comprising it was made. What has already been set forth in this work as to the plan of man's redemption from spiritual and physical death, together with the knowledge of what took place in the heavenly council among preexistent spirits before man's earth life in the dispensation of Adam began, relieves us of the necessity of a full statement and a long discussion in the introduction of the Atonement. Under our plan we have been able from the very first to proceed with the consciousness of the purpose of man's earth life and redemption all the while present. It still remains, however, to consider the Atonement from the scriptural and philosophical side of it, and deal with the necessity for it, and the nature of it; and first of all to be convinced as to the revealed fact of it. Upon the established fact of it by revelation is where we begin our discussion; and first by noting briefly the testimony of prophecy for the promise of it.

Prophecy of the Atonement. St. Paul says:

When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle,

and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without \langle the \rangle shedding of blood is no remission. (Heb. 9:19-22; cited from Ex. 24:8)

It is very generally conceded that the sacrifices and oblations of the Mosaic ritual have a direct relationship to the great atoning sacrifice to be made by the Christ. From the ninth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews it is evident that “the law” was “a shadow of good things to come” (Heb. 10:1). The law’s sacrifices for sin, and reconciliation with God but figured forth the greater and more efficient sacrifice to be made by the Son of God; nay, whatever of virtue there was in the sacrifices of the law was dependent upon the greater sacrifice to follow. Of themselves, the sacrifices of the law had no virtue at all unconnected with the sacrifice to be made by the Christ; they were but symbols showing forth that sacrifice in which the virtue was, the sacrifice of the Christ himself.

The Paschal sacrifice. In some respects the Paschal sacrifice more perfectly than any other, perhaps, foreshadowed the future sacrifice of the Son of God for the deliverance of his people—those who would trust the sign of deliverance in his blood. The institution of the sacrifice and the accompanying feast were as follows: When all other judgments upon Pharaoh failed to persuade him to let God’s people go, then said the Lord to Moses:

All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. . . . But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptian[s] and Israel. (Ex. 11:5-7)

When this terrible judgment was about to be executed the Lord provided the following means of deliverance for his people: Each family in Israel was commanded at a given time to take a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year, for a “passover offering,” and it was to be killed in the evening.

And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. . . . And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord

throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. (Ex. 12:7-8, 13-14)

Of course it cannot be doubted that this festival of the Passover was instituted as a great memorial of the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the birth of the nation of Israel; and there are not wanting those who maintain that this was its primary and only significance. But the leading feature in the festival, the paschal lamb, "a male without blemish" (Lev. 1:3; see also Ex. 12:5); the killing of it; the blood sprinkled upon the door post, the sign of safety to God's people; the eating of the lamb in preparation of the journey; the subsequent honoring of this feast by the Christ with his disciples; the substitution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for the Passover festival at the very time and on the very occasion of celebrating the feast of the Passover among the Jews; together with the subsequent inspired reference to Christ as the "Paschal Lamb" of the Christians, are circumstances too numerous and too nearly related to doubt of the significance of the Passover festival having reference to the great sacrifice to be made by the Son of God through the shedding of his blood in atonement for and the deliverance of his people.

The sin offering. Other sacrifices of the Mosaic law which shadowed forth the future atonement to be made by the Son of God was the "sin offering." Of Mosaic sacrifices in general and of this sacrifice in particular, the author of the article on "Sacrifices" in Dr. Wm. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* (this is Rev. Alfred Barry, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge) says:

All {sacrifices} had relation, under different aspects, to a *Covenant* between God and man. The "Sin Offering" {described in detail in Leviticus chapter 4} represented that Covenant as broken by man, and as knit together again, by God's appointment, through the "shedding of blood." . . . The shedding of the blood, the symbol of life, signified that the death of the offender was deserved for sin, but that the death of the victim was accepted for his death by the ordinance of God's mercy.¹

To the same effect our author sets forth the ceremonial of the "Day of Atonement" (detail of which is given in Lev. 16:7-10). A number of the early and later "Christian Fathers" take the same view.²

The fact of the Atonement in history. The first intimation of an atonement in the earth-history of man was doubtless the statement in

¹Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. "sacrifices" 4:2774; italics in original.

²See Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 4:53-54.

Genesis that the serpent—standing for and symbolizing in the narrative Lucifer—would bruise the heel of the woman’s seed; while the seed of the woman, meaning the Christ would bruise the serpent’s, or Lucifer’s, head (see Gen. 3:15). This and the institution of sacrifice, early in Adam’s and his sons’ lives, with the explanation which some time afterwards was given of the significance of the sacrificial offering—all taken together—is our earliest historical data on the Atonement. It will perhaps be remembered that the revealed purpose of the sacrifice was (see chapter 35 above):

This thing is a similitude [of the sacrifice] of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son . . . forevermore. And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will. (Moses 5:7-9)

Witness of the New Testament. We turn next to the testimony of the New Testament writers on the fact of the Atonement.

(a) *Testimony of the angel Gabriel.* In Matthew we read what the angel said to Joseph, when warning him not to put away Mary, his betrothed wife, because of her being found with child: “Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife. . . . She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:20-21; cf. Luke 1:26-35). Such the testimony of an angel of God as to the mission of the Christ.

(b) *Testimony of John the Baptist.* John the Baptist said to his own disciples as Jesus passed, “Behold the Lamb of God, ⟨that⟩ [which] taketh away the sin of the world. . . . And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God” (John 1:29, 34).

(c) *Testimony of the Christ.* The Christ’s own testimony is recorded as follows:

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: . . . that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (John 3:14-17)

And again the Christ, “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he ⟨i.e., the one that taketh away the sins of the world⟩” (John 8:28). And again the Christ at the Paschal supper, preceding his betrayal,

Jesus having blessed the bread brake it, and gave it to his disciples and said, take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of it, for this is my blood which is the new testament which is *shed* for *many* for the remission of sins. (cf. Matt. 26:26–28)³

After the resurrection, Jesus overtaking two of the disciples on their way to Emmaus engaged them in conversation respecting the crucifixion of Jesus, and in the course of their narrative about the crucifixion and the missing body of the Christ, the risen Lord said unto them:

⟨Ye⟩ [O] fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning ⟨with⟩ [at] Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24:25–27)

Subsequently, appearing to the twelve, he opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures and said unto them: “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name in all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:46–48).

(*d*) *Testimony of St. Peter.* St. Peter, chief of the apostles, bears witness of this same truth when he says: “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18). Again:

Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: . . . Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. (1 Pet. 2:21–24)

Again:

Elect . . . through ⟨the⟩ sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. . . . Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. (1 Pet. 1:2, 18–20)

³Luke and Mark practically give the same account of the incident; and St. Paul in his account of the resurrection states, “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3).

(e) Testimony of St. Paul.

All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the *re*mission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. (Rom. 3:23-25)

When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. . . . And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Rom. 5:6-11)

(f) Testimony of St. John. So St. John, in his epistles: “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jn. 2:1-2).

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. . . . Not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 Jn. 4:9-10)

And so throughout the New Testament, in an unbroken harmony the witnesses testify to the fact of the Atonement and the “propitiation” for man’s sins through that Atonement.

The same is true also as to the Book of Mormon witnesses both when speaking through the voice of prophecy and the voice of history.

Book of Mormon prophecies of the Atonement. Before the birth of Christ, early in the fifth century B.C., in the small colony Lehi led from Jerusalem to the promised land of America, it was declared:

The Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil. . . . Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil. (2 Ne. 2:26-27)^a

Passing over many such prophecies, *we come to* one written near the close of the second century B.C. [that] is peculiarly emphatic: speaking

^aThe edition of the Book of Mormon used by Roberts read “mediation.” The 1981 edition has corrected this to read “Mediator.”

of children who die in childhood before the years of accountability for sin, the Nephite prophet Benjamin says:

I say unto you they are blessed; for behold, as in Adam, or by nature, they fall, even so the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins. . . . But men ⟨who have come to an age to understand⟩ drink damnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and become as little children, and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. (Mosiah 3:16-18)

There are many more such prophetic passages in the Book of Mormon.

Book of Mormon historical utterances on the Atonement. The most important utterances that can come to man on any subject would be what the Lord Jesus Christ himself would say upon those subjects. For that reason I am limiting the historical statements of the Book of Mormon on the Atonement, to such words as are alleged to have been spoken by the risen Lord Jesus:

Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. . . . I was with the Father from the beginning. . . . And in me hath the Father glorified his name. . . . The scriptures concerning my coming are fulfilled. And as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name, for behold, by me redemption cometh, and in me is the law of Moses fulfilled. I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. . . . Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin. . . . Therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved. (3 Ne. 9:15-18, 21-22)

Again he said to a multitude of Nephites, when appearing to them as the resurrected Christ:

Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning. (3 Ne. 11:10-11)

Centuries later, a Nephite teacher said to his people: “Ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his ⟨the Christ’s⟩ resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise” (Moro. 7:41).

Testimony of the Prophet of the New Dispensation on the Atonement of Christ. The revelations to the Prophet of the New

Dispensation of the gospel as they are published in the Doctrine and Covenants are all founded upon the Atonement of the Christ as a fact, as a reality. One passage *being* as of special emphasis and particularization is quoted in proof of the above. It occurs in a revelation reproving one of the early disciples for his unbelief and disposition to swerve from the faith. And now the word of the Lord to him through the Prophet:

I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink— Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men. (D&C 19:15-19)

After the consideration of these scriptures, we shall regard the fact of the Atonement as a reality established by the revelations of God.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: four Gospels; Acts; Epistles; Mosiah 3-5; 3 Ne. entire book, esp. chs. 9 and 11; Book of Mormon references to the Atonement from the index; D&C 19. For a discussion about Roberts's conception of the Atonement, see pages 663-69 below.

The Atonement II— In Harmony with a Reign of Law

In a former chapter we said somewhat respecting the universe being under a reign of law (see chapter 6). That brief ~~treatise~~ **mention** had to do chiefly with physical laws, while the Atonement deals with moral and spiritual laws. However, it will be found that the physical universe and the spiritual universe are alike in this: both are under the dominion of law. And hence I am holding here that the Atonement is in harmony with a reign of law which obtains in the moral and spiritual kingdoms of the universe.

The law. “Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence ⟨from prison⟩, ⟨un⟩till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing” (Matt. 5:26). “Think not [that] I am come to destroy the law. . . . I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matt. 5:17-18).

The essence of law. First it is necessary to remark somewhat upon the nature of the law. Inexorableness is of the essence of law. There can be no force in law, only as it is inexorable. What effect is to cause, in the physical world, so penalty or consequence must be to violation of law in the moral and spiritual kingdom. The inexorableness of law is at once both its majesty and glory; without it neither majesty nor glory could exist in connection with law; neither respect, nor sense of security, nor safety, nor rational faith. If the idea of the “reign of law” be set aside and there be substituted for it the “reign of God” by his sovereign will, independent of law, even then we must postulate such conception of the

In preparation for this chapter, Roberts suggested “a careful examination of all the citations of scripture in the text and the footnotes of this lesson with their context.”

attributes of God that regularity will result from his personal government, not capriciousness, today one thing, tomorrow another. Hence, one of old viewing God's government from the side of its being a direct, personal reign of God, rather than a reign of God through law, wrote his message from God as follows: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6).¹ And another holding the same point of view said: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." And then he adds immediately, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

The quality of regularity of law—how secured. View the matter, then, from whichever standpoint you may. Government of the world by the personal, sovereign will of God, or the government of God through the reign of law, the quality of regularity that can only come of inexorableness (arising either from the quality of God's attributes or the inherent nature of law) is necessary to a sense of security, to right mental attitude, to rational thinking and right conduct. All this becomes apparent if the matter is thought upon conversely. If a reign of law is supposed to exist and the law is not inexorable, but may be set aside, suspended, abridged, enlarged, or its penalties modified or annulled altogether; and if these changes [were to be] affected not by the operation of any fixed principle, or by some controlling higher law, but capriciously through the interposition of some sovereign will, call it "special providence" or what not, then, of course, you have no reign of law at all, but the reign of a sovereign will that operates independent of law. Under such government—if, indeed, it could be called government—all would be confusion, uncertainty, perplexity, doubt, despair. Happily no such condition exists; but instead there exists—paralleling a reign of law in the physical universe—a divine moral and spiritual government in the universe, operating through a reign of law; and the virtue and value of that government arises from the inexorableness of the laws of which it consists.

Where then is mercy? If, however, the *in*exorableness of law is to be insisted upon up to this degree of emphasis, where then does mercy, which is supposed to mitigate somewhat the severity and inexorableness of law, and furthermore, is supposed in some way to represent the direct and gracious act of God when mitigating the law's severity—where does mercy appear? At what point does she enter into the

¹For the notion expressed in the text that Malachi viewed God's government from the side of a personal government, see the preceding verses of the chapter cited.

moral and spiritual economy? A large question, this, and one not to be considered just yet, except to say that the entrance of mercy into the economy of the moral and spiritual kingdom is not in violation of law, but in harmony with it. In fact, as we shall see somewhat later, mercy takes her part in the economy of the moral and spiritual kingdoms because of the existence of a reign of law, rather than in derogation of it.

Seeming modifications of law in the moral and spiritual world in accordance with law. When a reign of law is conceived as governing in the physical world, then the conception must also include the destructive or disintegrating forces as well as the integrating forces, else your reign of law is not universal and would be imperfect. Moses stood with God and beheld the vastness of his numberless creations:

And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I <created them> [made these things]. . . . And worlds without number have I created; and I <have> [also] created them for mine own purpose. . . . Behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man. . . . And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words. (Moses 1:31-35, 38)

This passage implies constant movement in the universe. The statement, “As one earth shall pass away and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come” corresponds somewhat to the modern scientist’s notion of “evolution and devolution,”[†] the operation of integrating and disintegrating forces. But the thing to be noted here is that not only is God represented as having created these worlds and world systems “by the word of his power,” but also that “there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of his power.” By which we are to understand that destructive as well as creating forces in the physical world operate under law.

So also should we understand that in the moral and spiritual world, where there appears to be a modification of the inexorableness of law, such as comes in a manifestation of mercy in the modification or

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve took exception to this as follows: “Evolution and devolution of worlds, as stated here, is questioned. Worlds pass away, just as this earth shall, but go on through the resurrection, or renewing, to continue their existence in permanent, or immortal form (D&C 29 and 88).” On all four of the committee’s remarks about points in chapter 41, Roberts simply noted in the margin of their report: **Meaningless.**

suspension or the obliteration of the penalty of a law, say by forgiveness of sins, “for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 Jn. 3:4), all this must not be thought upon as capriciousness, the arbitrary act of Deity in the interests of special favorites. No; the manifestation of mercy which seems to set aside the severity of the law, which seems to soften its inexorableness by allowing an escape from its penalty by forgiveness of sins, this must be viewed as the result of the operation of law as much so as when the law proceeds to the utmost of its severity, to the extreme manifestation of its inexorableness in the exaction of the utmost farthing of its penalty. It is not by special and personal favor that men shall have forgiveness of sins and find shelter under the wings of mercy. That must be obtained, if obtained at all, under the operation of law governing the application of mercy in the economy of the moral and spiritual world, by law that operates upon all alike. Forgiveness of sins, like other blessings, is predicated upon the obedience to law and is not based upon personal favor. “There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundation[s] of <the> [this] world,” says the Prophet of the New Dispensation, “upon which all blessings are predicated—And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:20-21)—forgiveness of sins with the rest. It is because we live under this reign of law that the scriptures teach that God is no respecter of persons. God “regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward” (Deut. 10:17). “Neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him” (2 Sam. 14:14). “Peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God” (Rom. 2:10-11). “Call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work” (1 Pet. 1:17).

Sense of security under a reign of law. Men stand under the reign of law then, before God, who administers the moral and spiritual law. No one may hope to escape the penalty due to violation of law through favor; no one will fall under the condemnation of the law through lack of favor with God, by reason of capriciousness in him, much less through vindictiveness, which is unthinkable in God. God will make no infraction of the law in the interests of supposed favorites; such “blessings,” whether in the providing of permanent opportunities for individuals, families, or races, as may reach through the apparent complexity of things to men; or occasional blessings such as seem to come to some individuals as special acts of providence; all will come in accordance with the laws upon which such blessings were predicated before the foundations of the world were laid; and this notwithstanding inequalities and diversity

of fortunes and misfortunes that exist among individuals, families, nations, races of men. Underneath all the diversities and inequalities that exist, so difficult to account for in some of their aspects, there law is operating despite all seeming incongruities; and out of all these diversities and complexities of experiences, at the last, will come justice—God’s justice; and men will be satisfied that it is so.

Meanwhile this reign of law, with all its inexorableness—nay, rather because of it—present and operating, present in the manifestations of mercy and special “acts of providence”; as also in manifestations of severity—how splendid it all is! How satisfying! What assurance, what confidence it gives! No wonder that John Fiske, remarking upon the idea of the reign of law, said: “So beautiful is all this orderly coherence, so satisfying to some of our intellectual needs, that many minds are inclined to doubt if anything more can be said of the universe than that it is a ‘reign of law,’ an endless aggregate of coexistences and sequences.”

But the deeper and truer view of things will be not to accept this “reign of law” as God nor mistake it for Deity, for mistake it would be if confounded with or mistaken for God. Let the reign of law be conceived rather as the means through which God is working to the achievement of his high purposes—God in the world and working through law “*⟨Reconciling⟩ [to reconcile] all things unto himself*” (*Col. 1:20*).² God [is] the administrative power in a perfect reign of law.

The inexorableness of law required the Atonement. It is this quality of inexorableness in law that made the Atonement of the Christ necessary to the salvation of man. The condition was this: A law is

²It is only just to John Fiske to say that such is his conception of the matter; for, commenting upon the effect upon the thinker who has this conception of the reign of law in the world, he says:

The thinker in whose mind divine action is thus identified with orderly action, ⟨reign of law⟩, and to whom a really irregular phenomenon would seem like a manifestation of sheer diabolism, foresees in every possible extension of knowledge a fresh confirmation of his faith in God. From this point of view there can be no antagonism between our duty as inquirers and our duty as worshippers. To him no part of the universe is godless. In the swaying to and fro of molecules and ceaseless pulsations of ether, in the secular shifting of planetary orbits, in the busy work of frost and raindrop, in the mysterious sprouting of the seed, in the everlasting tale of death and life renewed, in the dawning of *the* babe’s intelligence, in the varied deeds of men from age to age, he finds that which awakens the soul to reverential awe; and each act of scientific explanation but reveals an opening through which shines the glory of the Eternal Majesty. (Fiske, *Studies in Religion*, 167–68)

broken. The penalty must be paid. The majesty of law[†] has been violated; the law must be vindicated. It must be conceded that the law is just; for to suppose that the law itself is defective would be to challenge the whole moral system of the universe. If the law be conceded to be just, then its penalty must be executed by rigid enforcement *or a propitiation made*: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18:4).³

But the law must not be unjust; for injustice is not and cannot be law. And if in the nature of eternal things—such as a necessary opposition in all things, and the eternal existence of evil as well as of good be allowed, so that the good, the true, the beautiful and the harmonious may not be realized in the consciousness of intelligences but by setting into action the opposites of the good, the true, the beautiful, and the harmonious; and if the conditions to full equipment for eternal life and progress, such as eternally and deathlessly uniting elements of matter and spirits into immortal personages—then necessity would demand that such a program be inaugurated as would bring to pass the full achievement of these ends; and the obstacles which would hinder intelligences awaiting that opportunity for progression must be removed. And yet in bringing about these conditions, the violation of a law is involved—the law for the perpetuation of innocence. The fruit of the tree of knowledge, if eaten, will bring consciousness of evil as well as of good; and with that new and strange consciousness of evil, innocence will depart; the law on which her perpetuation depended has been violated. A new order of things will have to be brought in, a new order based upon a knowledge of good and evil. The new righteousness—for there must be righteousness—will be based upon virtue instead of upon mere innocence. It will be a righteousness founded upon experience, upon tested experimentation, an intelligent righteousness.^{††}

How harmony may be obtained in a reign of law. But again the violation of the law? How shall the harmony of a reign of law be maintained if a law be broken and no penalty inflicted which vindicates it?

[†]Wondering if Roberts overemphasized the role of law in the Atonement, the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve wondered if this chapter inferred that the law of Moses was an eternal law and asked: “The majesty of law—vindicated?” Reporting to President Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith explained: “We feel that, inadvertantly [*sic*], the statement is made that the law of Moses was an eternal law. It was a temporary one.”

³The declaration is several times repeated in the same chapter, and the whole chapter should be studied to get the whole majesty of the doctrine.

^{††}The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve left a remark here: “Experimentation and righteousness?”

The consequences of violated law, however, did fall upon those guilty of the violation. Adam and Eve, by eating of the forbidden fruit, did come to the knowledge of good and evil and spiritual death—banishment from the presence of God—followed; and, in due time, physical death—the dissolving of the union of spirit and element—followed. Owing to the conditions under which they are born, these consequences fell also upon all the posterity of the first pair. So that the situation requires a vindication of the law[†] that there may be redemption for the race subject to its consequences. Let the developing thought of this paragraph at this point be suspended for the moment, until other data are brought into view.

The propitiation for sin. When God, according to ~~the Mosaic fragment~~—the book of Moses—was instructing Adam on the means provided for his redemption, Adam asked the question: “Why is it that men must repent and be baptized in water?” And the Lord answered: “Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgression in [the Garden of] Eden. Hence came the saying ⟨around⟩ [abroad] among the people,” says the sacred writer of the text, “that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt,⁴ wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world” (Moses 6:53–54), i.e., under the conditions provided, of course, by the Atonement. Taking this full text into account, it is evident that God had forgiven Adam his transgression in the Garden of Eden not arbitrarily as an act of sovereign will, but “because the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt.” Propitiation had been—or would be—made for “original guilt”—eating the forbidden fruit in Eden, which violated the law of innocence and of life. It brought forth the consciousness of guilt and the certainty of death, but “the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt”: he would satisfy the claims of the law. But how? By the Son of God, who was in the beginning with God and who was God, “being made flesh,” and dwelling among men, and in that human life keeping in behalf of man the law of absolute obedience to God. Living man’s life, but yielding to no temptation. Suffering, but not for his own transgressions, for he was without sin (Heb. 4:15; cf. 7:26). Such is the whole tenor of the scriptures respecting the Christ: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve wondered about the phrase “vindication of law.”

⁴Or that he “would” atone for “original guilt” when the fulness of the time would have come; for necessarily the matter was at this time prophetic.

own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:3–4). This passage is undoubtedly to be understood as follows: For what man could not do under the law in that he was weak because of the flesh (human nature), God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to do, and condemned sin in that he in the flesh kept the law of perfect obedience, and thus for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them who thereafter should walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

“We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet *<remained>* without sin” (Heb. 4:15). “Christ also suffered . . . Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Pet. 2:21–22). “For he hath made him *<the Christ>* to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

The Christ suffered for Adam’s transgression, not for his own; and for the transgression of all men, for the sins of the world. He suffered for all men, that they might not suffer on certain conditions—***the condition of repentance, and acceptance of the Christ*** (D&C 19:16–17)—and that by reason of his stripes men might be healed (Isa. 53:1–5). He made “propitiation” for men’s sins (1 Jn. 2:2), and thus satisfied the claims of the law to the uttermost even unto death—the death of the cross. But it was not “possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts 2:24), i.e., of death; for he was Lord of life and of death. He had power to lay down his life, and to take it up again: “I lay down my life for the sheep *<men>*. . . . Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:15–18).

The Christ’s suffering and death, then, wherein consists his sacrifice, will be voluntary. But since he may not “be holden of death,” he will take up his life again in a resurrection from the dead; and so will all men ~~by this means~~, and ***that*** by the power of the Christ ***imparted unto them***; “For as in Adam *<through one>* all die, [even] so in Christ *<by one>* shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22).

Man freed “from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2). It should ~~also~~ be observed, in passing, that in the matter of original sin, the Atonement of the Christ arrested the ***permanent*** visitation of that sin of the fathers upon the children: “Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgression

in the Garden of Eden,” said the Lord to Adam, “Hence came the saying . . . the Son of God hath atoned ⟨speaking prophetically⟩ for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world” (Moses 6:53–54). That is to say, that while death as a result of Adam’s transgression will come upon all men, in that all must die, yet it will not be permanent, there is redemption from it, and free redemption; ~~that is~~, there is no condition precedent necessary to this redemption, **except only, of course, the Atonement made by the Christ**. For though death may have reigned from Adam to Moses, and from Moses until now, “over ⟨those who have⟩ [them that had] not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” yet “not as the offence, so also is the free gift. . . . And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one ⟨un⟩to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification” (Rom. 5:14–16). From all which it appears, that while death came as a result of Adam’s transgression, there came also free and universal redemption from death through the Atonement and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In view of this, the Church of the Latter-day Saints say in their summary of faith: “We believe that ⟨all⟩ men will be punished for their own sins, and *not* for Adam’s transgression” (A of F 2; emphasis added).

The Atonement infinite. Take note again that this Atonement is made by the Son of God, “who was in the beginning with God, and who was God.” It was, then, an Atonement made by God; and by virtue of that fact it was the highest atonement that could in any way be made—a supreme sacrifice indeed! And that is why, no doubt, it is so frequently referred to as “an infinite atonement.” It is a supreme sacrifice because it was made by a Deity, and because it also embraced all that could be given even by Deity; and that done, the law that was broken in Eden must stand vindicated at the bar of the reign of law.

As to whether the sacrifice by an innocent person can atone for the sin of a guilty one; or whether vicarious suffering for sin can be admitted in the scheme of things at all under a reign of law, I shall postpone the consideration of [that] to the last chapter dealing with this subject of **the** Atonement (chapter 45 below).

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Draper, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, ch. 9; Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, esp. introduction; Lodge, *Science and Immortality*, ch. 3; Spencer, *First Principles*, 53, 59, 203, 347 and note, 384, and 589–91; Tennyson, *In Memoriam*; White, *History of the Warfare of Science*, esp. vol. 1, ch. 4.

The Atonement III— Its Relation to the Attributes of God

The attributes ascribed to God. As the attributes of God are necessarily involved in the philosophy of the Atonement, we think it proper here to make brief allusion to them, especially to those more immediately involved in the Atonement. The attributes usually ascribed to God, either upon the ground of scripture or the supposed necessity of his nature, we shall consider as falling into two groups. First group, attributes of power: eternity, immutability, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, intelligence, wisdom; these seven attributes we shall consider as one group, out of which grows the power of God. The second group which we shall regard as the moral attributes, the spiritual forces or powers in the nature of God. **They** consist of holiness, truth, justice, mercy, love. Let it be remembered that in the main we are dependent upon God for our knowledge of him and his attributes, and therefore, we quote the scriptures freely in relation to him. And now a very brief description of the first group.

Attributes of power: 1. Eternity. By “eternity,” regarded as an attribute of God, is meant God’s eternal existence. We may not in rational thought assume a time when God was not—or when he did not exist. God’s eternity is sustained by such scripture as David’s 90th Psalm: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Ps. 90:2). Also St. Paul bears the same witness:

And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. (Heb. 1:10-12)

2. Immutability. God’s “immutability,” his unchangeableness, is sustained in such passages of both ancient and modern scriptures as

follow: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). “For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Mal. 3:6).

For God doth not walk in crooked paths, neither doth he turn to the right hand nor to the left, neither doth he vary from that which he hath said, therefore his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round. (D&C 3:2)

“Listen to the voice of the Lord your God, even Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, whose course is one eternal round, the same today as yesterday, and forever” (D&C 35:1). These remarks are subject to modification as noted under the discussion which follows this first group of attributes in a subsequent paragraph.

3. *Omnipotence*. By “omnipotence” is meant all-powerfulness. This attribute is essential to all rational thinking upon God. We may not think upon God and then think upon him as being overruled by a higher power, and still have him remain to our thought as God. The scriptures in their whole spirit present this view of the omnipotence of Deity.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . . . And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. . . . And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. (Gen. 1:1, 3, 9)

In this manner the work proceeds throughout the creation periods.

Of this attribute David sings:

The heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord. . . . For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? . . . O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? . . . Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves [thereof] arise, thou stillest them. . . . The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them. . . . Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. (Ps. 89:5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13)

To the same effect sang Isaiah (Isa. 11:10–15); also Jeremiah (Jer. 27:17), and Daniel (Dan. 4:35).

In the New Testament, the Christ teaches that “with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26); and negatively, “with God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:37). The Revelation uses the term “omnipotent” direct: “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and [as] the voice of ⟨the⟩ mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth” (Rev. 19:6).¹

¹Also Smith, *Lectures on Faith*, lecture 3; so too in *the Book of Mormon*, Mosiah 3:17–18, 21.

4. *Omniscience.* By “omniscience” is meant all-knowing. “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world,” said the Holy Spirit-inspired council of the apostles and elders of the early Christian church (Acts 15:18).

Remember the former things of old: [for] I am God, and there is none else; . . . Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isa. 46:9-10)

A sparrow falls not without the Father’s notice (Matt. 10:29).

5. *Omnipresence.*^a “Omnipresence” means everywhere present; and perhaps the best description of this attribute of God is in David’s passage—

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely [the] darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. (Ps. 139:7-12)

“Will God indeed dwell on the earth?” asked Solomon, in dedicating the first temple, “behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded” (1 Kings 8:27). And Paul, in teaching the nearness of God to men, said that God had “made of one blood all nations of men” and had given to all the privilege of seeking “the Lord, if ⟨happily⟩ [haply] they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:26-28).

Under the attribute of “omnipotence”—all powerful—I include “power,” which is sometimes, and usually, treated separately as an attribute of God: And under “omniscience” I include “knowledge,” which is also usually regarded separately as an attribute of Deity; but both these terms—“power” and “knowledge”—may very appropriately fall under the larger terms—“omnipotence” and “omniscience.”

6. *Intelligence.* In reasoning with Abraham upon the intelligences in heaven, and the fact that they varied in degree of intelligence, the Lord said that where there were two intelligences and the one was more intelligent than the other, “there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all” (Abr. 3:17-19). By which is meant, as we think, not that God is more

^aRoberts left an instruction that the sections on omnipresence and intelligence were to be transposed, and that direction has been followed.

intelligent than any other one of the intelligences, but more intelligent than all of them together. On this head the Prophet of the New Dispensation gave to the world that wonderful announcement, all-comprehensive in its greatness, glorifying God as no other sentence in the language in all the ages has ever glorified him, saying: "The glory of God is intelligence" (D&C 93:36). This is the force and the power that holds in right balance and union all the attributes of God, in their application and in the working out of the purposes of God.

7. *Wisdom.* Wisdom that arises from knowledge seems essentially an attribute of Deity; as well from the nature of the attributes as from the declaration of scripture. God as unwise is unthinkable; unpossessed of this attribute, he could not appeal to the consciousness of man as God at all. Therefore it is agreeable to think with Elihu in Job, that God "is mighty in strength and wisdom" (Job 36:5). Also with David: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches" (Ps. 104:24). And again David: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (Ps. 147:5). So Paul: "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever" (Rom. 16:27); "The wisdom of <the> [this] world is foolishness with God" (1 Cor. 3:19); He says, again so high above the wisdom of men does he esteem the wisdom of God; that even "the foolishness of God is wiser than men" (1 Cor. 1:25). We may fittingly close his testimony with his prayer: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Tim. 1:17).

Worth to go with this testimony is that of Joseph Smith, in which is found the same spiritual music: "The Lord is God, and beside him there is no Savior. Great is his wisdom, marvelous are his ways, and the extent of his doings none can find out. His purposes fail not, neither are there any who can stay his hand" (D&C 76:1-4).

Comments on the limitations in the attributes of God. We may now consider somewhat the limitations of the attributes so far named.

The eternity of God may be regarded as absolute. "I Am that I Am" (Ex. 3:14), the Eternal One, the Self-existent, admits of no modification. His immutability should be regarded as stability, adherence to principle. What stands among men under the name of "constitutional morality," fixed devotion to law; and working through law to achievement of his divine purposes, rather than by caprice, or by arbitrary, personal action. But God's immutability should not be so understood as to exclude the idea of advancement or progress even of God. Thus, for example: God's kingdom and glory may be enlarged, as more and more redeemed souls

are added to his kingdom: as worlds and world-systems are multiplied and redeemed and enrolled with celestial spheres, so God's kingdom is enlarged and his glory increased. So that in this sense there may come chance, enlargement, and progress even for God. Hence we could not say of God's immutability as we do of his eternity that it is absolute, since there may come change through progress even for God; but an absolute immutability would require eternal immobility—which would reduce God to a condition eternally static, which, from the nature of things, would bar him from participation in that enlargement of kingdoms and increasing glory that comes from redemption and the progress of men. And is it too bold a thought, that with this progress, even for the mightiest, new thoughts, and new vistas may appear, inviting to new adventures and enterprises that will yield new experiences, advancement, and enlargement, even for the Most High.² It ought to be constantly remembered that terms absolute to man may be relative terms to God, so far above our thinking is his thinking; and his ways above our ways.

²On this point Sir Oliver Lodge has a passage at once advanced and bold, and yet for which he claims Christian warrant. It is, however, far removed from modern Christian orthodoxy, though splendidly true:

The universe is not a "being" but a "becoming"—an ancient but (light-burning) [light-bringing] doctrine when realized,—it is in change, in development, in movement, upward and downward, that activity consists. A stationary condition, or stagnation, would to us be simple non-existence; the element of progression, of change, of activity, must be as durable as the universe itself. Monotony, in the sense of absolute immobility, is unthinkable, unreal, and cannot anywhere exist: save where things have ceased to be.

Such ideas, the ideas of development and progress, extend even up to God Himself, according to the Christian conception. So we return to that with which we started: the Christian idea of God is not that of a being outside the universe, above its struggles and advances, looking on and taking no part in the process, *solely* exalted, beneficent, self-determined and complete; no, it is also that of a God who loves, who yearns, who suffers, who keenly laments the rebellious and misguided activity of the free agents brought into being by Himself as part of Himself, who enters into the storm and conflict, and is subject to conditions as the Soul of it all; conditions not artificial and transitory, but inherent in the process of producing free and conscious beings, and essential to the full self-development even of Deity.

It is a marvelous and bewildering thought, but whatever its value, and whether it be an ultimate revelation or not, it is the revelation of Christ. (Lodge, *Science and Immortality*, 292)

The attribute “omnipotence” must needs be thought upon also as somewhat limited. Even God, notwithstanding the ascription to him of all-powerfulness in such scripture phrases as “with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19:26), “with God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:37)—notwithstanding all this, ~~we~~ I say, not even God may have two mountain ranges without a valley between. Not even God may place himself beyond the boundary of space: nor on the outside of duration. Nor is it conceivable to human thought that he can create space, or annihilate matter. These are things that limit even God’s omnipotence. What then, is meant by the ascription of the attribute omnipotence to God? Simply that all that may or can be done by power conditioned by other eternal existences—duration, space, matter, truth, justice, reign of law, God can do. But even he may not act out of harmony with the other eternal existences which condition or limit even him.

So with the all-knowing attribute, omniscience: that must be understood somewhat in the same light as the other attributes just considered: not that God is omniscient up to the point that further progress in knowledge is impossible to him; but that all *the* knowledge that is, all that exists, God knows. All that shall be he will know. The universe is not so much “a being” as a “becoming,” an unfolding. Much more is yet to be. God will know it as it “becomes,” or as it unfolds; for he is universal consciousness, and mind—he is the “All Knowing One” because he knows all that is known, and all that shall yet be to become known—he will know it.[†]

“Omnipresence” is the everywhere present attribute. This must be so far limited as to be ascribed to God’s Spirit, or influence, or power,

[†]Raising a point that has remained somewhat open in LDS doctrine, the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve expressed a desire that Roberts be less definitive about the nature of God’s progression with respect to knowledge: “Progression of God in knowledge. This thought is not accepted by members of the committee. We do not feel that it is wise to express a thought limiting God in this manner, which will cause needless controversy. While we believe in eternal progression and that God is progressing, it is not in quest of hidden truth or laws yet undiscovered to Deity. We prefer to believe with Nephi: ‘O how great the holiness of our God! For he knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it’ (2 Ne. 9:20). Moreover, we believe that his progress is because of his knowledge and that he is the author of law (D&C 88:42).” Here also, Roberts wrote: **Meaningless**. Reporting to President Clawson, George Albert Smith explained: “What is the need of stating that God is progressing in knowledge? In other words that there are laws and eternal truths, which he does not know? This will only lead to controversy and needless discussion and argument, and no purpose accomplished. In the judgment of the committee the statement should not be made. There are scriptures which contradict this thought.”

but may not be affirmed of God as a person or individual, for in these latter respects even God is limited by the law that one body cannot occupy two places at one and the same time. But radiating from his presence, as beams of light and warmth radiate from our sun, is God's Spirit, penetrating and permeating space, making space and all worlds in space vibrate with his life and thought and presence; holding all forces—dynamic and static—under control, making them to subserve his will and purposes.

God also uses other agencies to reflect himself, his power or authority: also his wisdom, goodness, justice and mercy—angels and arch-angels, both in heaven and on earth; and in the earth prophets, apostles, teachers—all that make for up-lift, for righteousness; all that catch some ray of the Divine Spirit in poem, music, painting, sculpture, state-craft or mechanical arts—all these but reflect God and are a means of multiplying and expressing him, the Divine. And in some special way, as witness for God, and under very special conditions, the Holy Ghost, that Being accounted the third person of the Godhead—he reflects and stands for God, his power, and his wisdom, his justice, truth, and mercy—for all that can be, or is called God, or is God. All these means, direct and indirect, convey God into the universe, and keep him everywhere present in all his essentials of wisdom, power and goodness, while his bodily presence remains as the moving center of it all.

Moral and spiritual attributes of God. There is yet to be considered the second group of attributes: holiness, truth, justice, mercy, love; and these are the attributes which are more immediately involved in the doctrine of the Atonement.

1. Holiness. "Holiness" as an attribute of God, is equally indispensable as any other of the attributes of Deity. Equally unthinkable is it that Deity should not possess it, as it is that he should not possess intelligence or wisdom. No marvel that Moses sang, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? . . . glorious in holiness" (Ex. 15:11). "I am the Lord your God: . . . ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44) was God's word to ancient Israel. Throughout the scriptures God is spoken of as the "Holy One of Israel." "Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises <in> [of] Israel" (Ps. 22:3). "Sing unto the Lord . . . at the remembrance of his holiness" (Ps. 30:4). "God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness" (Isa. 5:16). "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa. 6:3). Both the Old and the New Testaments are replete with the doctrine. In one of the prophets it is written: "O Lord, . . .

Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Hab. 1:12–13). And again in the scripture: “I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance” (D&C 1:31);³ which perhaps more than any other utterance of holy writ, asserts the holiness of God.

2. Truth. The attribute of “truth” is ascribed to God; and here we again come in touch with the absolute, as when speaking of God’s eternity. God can be no other than the absolute in this quality. An untruthful God! The thought is blasphemy! “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent” (Num. 23:19). “Mercy and truth shall go before thy face” (Ps. 89:14). “A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deut. 32:4). “Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth” (Ps. 31:5). “Abundant in goodness and truth” (Ex. 34:6). So our modern scriptures: “God doth not walk in crooked paths, neither doth he turn to the right hand nor [to] the left, neither doth he vary from that which he hath said, therefore his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round” (D&C 3:2). It cannot be emphasized too strongly—God is a God of truth; and does not, and **could** not lie without ceasing to be God. It would wreck the moral universe for God to lie. He must be, he is truth! “A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (Deut. 32:4).

3. Justice. “Justice,” as an attribute, is of the same quality as the attribute of “truth”—it must be conceived as absolute in Deity. God not just! The thought would be unbearable. Of course we have scripture warrant for the doctrine: “Justice and judgement are the habitation of thy throne” (Ps. 89:14). “There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour” (Isa. 45:21). “The just Lord is in the midst thereof” (Zeph. 3:5). “Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation” (Zech. 9:9).

4. Mercy. “Mercy” as an attribute of God is in a class with truth and justice and holiness. A God without compassion—only another name for mercy—would be a monstrosity. No, God must be merciful! Else what shall become of man? God not merciful! It is unthinkable, that is all. “Mercy and truth shall go before thy face,” is the testimony of the Psalmist (Ps. 89:14). “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious” (Ex. 34:6). “But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful” (Neh. 9:17).

³“Nevertheless,” continues the passage, “he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven” (D&C 1:32), showing that while God may not compromise with sin by looking upon it with any “degree of allowance,” yet he has compassion upon the sinner who repents.

5. *Love.* “Love!” The crowning glory of all the attributes of God! We may revel in this attribute. “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” (1 Jn. 4:8). “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him” (1 Jn. 4:16). “Every one that loveth is born of God” (1 Jn. 4:7).

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 Jn. 4:9-10)

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

The harmony of God’s moral and spiritual attributes. These attributes of the second group, as well as those considered in the first group, must be thought upon as constituting a harmony; those—the first group—in harmony with the existences as real and eternal as ~~themselves~~ *the attributes*; and these—the second group—in a harmony within or among themselves. Thus justice may not deny the claims of mercy. Mercy may not rob justice. Even love may not allow God to intrude upon justice, or wisdom, or truth. At the same time it must be remembered that mercy and love, no less than justice, are attributes of God, and somehow and somewhere must find entrance into the divine economy, must get themselves expressed and that worthily; worthy of their intrinsic nature and value, and worthy of God in whom they inhere in perfection, and all in perfect balance. And while “all must be law”; all must also be “love”—i.e., in harmony with love; for God, from first to last, is love. The attributes of God must be preserved in perfect accord if the moral and spiritual harmony of the universe is to be maintained. And the matters relating to man must conform to the moral and spiritual attributes of God, or they cannot be conceived as substantially placed, and eternally secure. It is these considerations which unite the attributes of God with the subject of the Atonement. If God’s moral government of the universe is, like his physical government, one of law, then law, not personal, arbitrary caprice, will and must rule. And if God’s attributes constitute a moral and spiritual harmony, and are united perfectly with his attributes of power and majesty—then again in the devising of any scheme for redemption of men from the consequences of the violation of law, that scheme must take into account the attributes of God; and plan its scheme of “salvation” in accordance with the attributes of Deity and their harmonious action and reaction upon one another.

It may be thought that our exposition of the attributes of God in this chapter is unnecessarily elaborate, especially since but two or three paragraphs are devoted directly to a treatment of their relationship to the Atonement; but I am sure that a realization through consciousness of the majesty and beauty, and glory of those attributes, is necessary to a full appreciation of their relations to the Atonement, hence the space devoted to their consideration; and I offer it as all worthwhile.

The relationship of the Atonement to the attributes of God. We have already said in the chapter preceding this, that it is the quality of the inexorableness in law that made the Atonement of the Christ necessary; and now at the conclusion of the considerations of the attributes of God—which are his perfections—they also make the Atonement of the Christ necessary to the salvation of man if harmony be maintained *within* them. For the perfections of God’s attributes correspond precisely with a reign of perfect law. Maintenance of the harmony of God’s attributes and maintenance of a reign of perfect law is essentially the same thing; for each demands that when there is a transgression there shall be an atonement for it; which is but the vindication of the law, in the one case; and reaction to the harmony of the attributes of God in the other. So when the attributes of God are brought to bear on the squaring human conduct with either a reign of law or the attributes of God, the quality of the attributes, say of wisdom and justice, mercy and love, and their harmonious relations must needs be so taken into account that any adjustment that can make redemption from the consequences of a broken law possible, must be of a character that will make no break in the sustained harmony and interplay of God’s attributes, as well as in the maintenance of perfection in the application of mercy and justice and love in a reign of law.

These are the considerations which make the ethic of the gospel so absolute. “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith” (Rom. 1:17). The only way to achieve an absolute standard of “oughtness” of righteousness, is to accept the immutable ethic founded upon the attributes of God, as the true standard of the law of righteousness.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: *Oxford and Cambridge Bible Helps*, concordance; Smith, *Six Lectures on Faith*; Wright, concordance, in *Bible Treasury*. For a discussion about the implications of Roberts’s ideas concerning the attributes of God, see pages 626–28 below.

The Atonement IV— Could Other Means Than the Atonement Have Brought to Pass Man’s Salvation?

The question proposed. The next question to be considered is: could any other means than the Atonement of Christ have been devised to bring to pass man’s salvation? Let it be kept in mind what that term means—salvation. The declaration of the Christ concerning his mission was, “the Son of man is come to save that which was lost” (Matt. 18:11). And we have already in previous chapters shown what it was that was lost: (1) man’s spiritual life, his union with God; (2) man’s physical life, separation of spirit and body. And so, when considering the means of restoring that which was lost, we must have in mind these two things.

Our present inquiry is, could this salvation have been secured by any other means than the Atonement made by the Christ? Perhaps a brief summary of some of the principles previously discussed will help us approach this important theme more understandingly. We say “important” because many doubt the necessity of the Atonement and argue that if a forgiveness of Adam’s transgression in Eden was needed, or if man’s individual sins need a pardon, then God of his sovereign will, without any expiation for the one or the other of these sins, could have forgiven these transgressions. And now the proposed summary.

Summary of principles affecting the Atonement. Violations of law, whether ignorantly done, or deliberately planned, even for right ends, destroy the steady maintenance of law, and also involve the transgressors in the penalties inseparately [*sic*] connected with law and without which law would be of no force at all.

For this chapter, the suggested initial scripture assignment includes: “All four books of our scriptures, Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price—passim: diligent use of indexes and cross references therein.”

A reign of law subsists throughout the universe, as well in the moral and spiritual kingdoms as in the physical world; this perfect reign of law, and reign of perfect law, is in strict harmony with and the concomitant of God's perfect attributes.

The attributes of God, complete as they are and perfect, must exist in harmony with each other, no one supplanting another or intruding upon its domain.

Any manifestations of mercy or special providence, prompted even by love, must not violate the conception of the universal reign of law or justice; or violate the harmony subsisting in the attributes of Deity.

Love and mercy, however, must also enter into the economy of the earth[ly] order of things; they must get themselves in some way worthily expressed. No divine economy can exist without them and without expression of them. Justice cries aloud for their presence in the divine government.

To get love and mercy adequately expressed in the earthly order of things, in harmony with all the attributes of God present and active, and in harmony with a universal reign of law, is the burden and mission of the Christ through the Atonement. And now to take up our present inquiry.

The testing place and period. According to what is set forth in previous pages, God has created our earth and provided for the existence of man upon it. He designs man's earth life to be a testing period for man. His aim is to provide a means of eternal progression. His words in the great council where this purpose was planned, are—speaking of the spirits that were to come to the earth as men: “And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abr. 3:25). And those who would prove their integrity by their obedience were to “have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever” (Abr. 3:26). In other words, a pathway was to be opened to them for eternal progress. To open such a highway, however, it is necessary to create a testing period in the midst of broken harmonies. We say this is necessary, and we emphasize that word “necessary” up to the standard of being absolute, and this necessity becomes the pivot on which this whole idea of atonement turns. The end proposed by the Lord God cannot be achieved in any other way than *through* a temporal life, for the manifestation of the necessary opposition in all things. To bring that to pass, “necessity” demanded the “fall” of man, attended by the ~~falling of the~~ *veiling of* ~~over~~ his memory between his spirit life and his earth life, that he might learn to walk by faith, to master the lessons that broken harmonies have

to teach, that he may learn important truths acquired by actual experience in seeing things as through a glass darkly and in conflict; learning to know things also by seeing them in sharp contrast: light and darkness, truth and error, joy and sorrow, sickness and health, life and death, and so on throughout the whole category of antinomies which earth experience has to teach. To get all this expressed and man brought into contact with it, harmonious conditions must be violated, to produce which law must be broken and hence the “Fall.”

In that “fall,” however, law is broken and penalties must be enforced, else the reign of law is at an end. ~~or it is a mockery.~~ Its integrity is destroyed unless penalties follow. The penalties made and provided in this case, however, do follow. Those penalties are found in the events actually following the “Fall”: “in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:17). And that is what happened. Union with God was severed. This was spiritual death; and it happened as God decreed it would, in the day that man partook of the fruit that was forbidden. Later came the second part of the penalty: men began to die physically. Nine hundred thirty years after the “Fall,” Adam died. And having begotten children while in mortality, they became heirs to that mortality, and death has reigned in the earth from Adam until now. The race has found in its experience the decree of God to be true. Man’s physical life consists of a union of spirit and element; man’s body is of the dust, and—true to the decree of God in the event of disobedience—to dust it returns.

The law given as to an immortal being. It should be observed also that this commandment given to man is addressed, of course, to his understanding, to the intelligent entity; therefore, to the already immortal part of man, to the thing within him which cannot die! “All things,” says the Prophet of the New Dispensation,

whatsoever God of his infinite wisdom has seen fit and proper to reveal to us, while we are dwelling in mortality, in regard to our mortal bodies, are revealed to us in the abstract and independent of affinity of this mortal tabernacle; but are revealed to our spirits precisely as though we had no bodies at all; and those revelations which will save our spirits will save our bodies. God reveals them to us in view of no eternal dissolution of the body, or tabernacle.¹

¹Sermon at April Conference, Nauvoo, 1844, known as the “King Follett Sermon,” published in *Journal of Discourses* 6:7. Also in *Improvement Era* 13 (January 1909): 169-91; and now in pamphlet form by the Magazine Printing Co., 1926.

And again the Lord said to this prophet:

Not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither . . . Adam, your father, whom I created. Behold, I gave unto him that he should be an agent unto himself; and I gave unto him commandment, but no temporal commandment gave I unto him, for my commandments are spiritual; they are not natural nor temporal, neither carnal nor sensual. (D&C 29:34-35)

Such then was the commandment of God to Adam, a commandment addressed to an eternal intelligent being; the penalty as well as the commandment, being part of the law, was so addressed to him.

What can man or God do in the face of these conditions? And now, in the presence of these facts, what can man do to mend this breach in the law? What can God do? Forgive man his transgression out of hand, as becomes the true sovereign of the universe? An ancient, and, we could well say, a time-honored suggestion. Origen, the theologian of the third Christian century, and held to be the greatest Christian mind of the Ante-Nicene age, held forth the possibility of such procedure. For, in his view,

the remission of sin is made to depend upon arbitrary will, without reference to retributive justice, as is (evidenced) [evinced] by his (version) [assertion] that God might have chosen milder means to save man, than he did; e.g., that he might by a sovereign act of his will have made the sacrifices of the Old Testament to suffice for an atonement for man's sin.²

"But logic," says Shedd's commentary on Origen's doctrine, "could not stop at this point." For if the provision for ratifying the broken law "is resolved into an *optional* act on the part of God, it follows that . . . an atonement might be dispensed with altogether." "For," he continues, "the same arbitrary and almighty will that was competent to declare the claims of justice to be satisfied by the finite sacrifice of bulls and goats would be competent, also, to declare that those claims should receive no satisfaction at all."³

The views of Origen are all the more surprising from the fact that the Epistle to the Hebrews makes clear all the inadequacy of the sacrificing of animals for the satisfaction of the claims of justice for man's transgression of the law (Heb. 9-10). On this point the Book of

²Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine* 2:234. He cites Redepenning, *Origenes* 2:409 for his authority.

³Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 10th ed., 2:260-61.

Mormon prophet Alma [*sic*; Amulek is speaking], among the greatest of the ancient American prophets, is very clear:

Behold, I say unto you, that I do know that Christ shall come among the children of men, to take upon him the transgressions of his people, and that he shall atone for the sins of the world; for the Lord God hath spoken it. For it is expedient ⟨necessary⟩ that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish ⟨i.e. remain in the condition that the “Fall” of Adam brought upon them—alienated from God, under the doom of spiritual death—and subject also to physical death⟩; yea, all are hardened; yea, all are fallen and are lost, and must perish except it be through the atonement which it is expedient ⟨*necessary*⟩ should be made. For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice. . . . And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law ⟨i.e., of Moses, in which only symbols of the true sacrifice obtained⟩, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal. (Alma 34:8-10, 14)

It should be remembered that the doctrine of the reign of law in the moral and spiritual government of the world excludes arbitrary action—action independent of law—even though beneficent; and if this as to a reign of law in the spirit world were not true, even then God must act in harmony with his own attributes. Mercy must not be at variance with justice. Even God’s omnipotence must conform to the attributes of truth and wisdom, *and justice and mercy*. Satisfaction for violated law, satisfaction for divine justice, is a claim that may no more be set aside than the pleadings of mercy. A way shall be found out of these difficulties, but it must not be by a “schism in the Deity,” or a conflict among the divine attributes.

Mere Arbitrary power may not nullify law. It can be readily understood that not even God’s omnipotence could make it possible for him to act contrary to truth and justice. It ought to be no more difficult to understand that God’s omnipotence would not permit him to set aside a satisfaction to justice, any more than to grant an arbitrary concession to mercy. Mere power has not the right to nullify law, nor even omnipotence the right to abolish justice. Might in deity is not more fundamental than right. God, we must conclude, will act in harmony with all his attributes, else confusion in the moral government of the world.

These reflections lead to the inevitable conclusion that there must be a satisfaction made to justice before there can be redemption for man. They also lead to the conclusion that the necessity of expiation in order to pardon both Adam's transgression, and secure forgiveness of man's individual sins, arise[s] from the nature of the case, an existing reign of law, and harmonious reactions to the attributes of God, and not from arbitrary action. Justice is of such an absolute character that it would be as impossible to save the guilty without an antecedent satisfaction to God's attribute of justice as it would be for God to lie; and for God to lie would wreck the moral government of the universe, and result—if such a thing were possible—in his dethronement.

If other means were possible—? We have already seen that the necessity for the Atonement is established by an appeal to the revelations of God. The absolute necessity of the Atonement as it stands would further appear by the confidence one feels that if milder means could have been made to answer as an atonement, or if the satisfaction to justice could have been set aside, or if man's reconciliation with the divine order of things could have been brought about by an act of pure benevolence without other consideration, it undoubtedly would have been done; for it is inconceivable that either God's justice or his mercy would require or permit more suffering on the part of the Redeemer than was absolutely necessary to accomplish the end proposed. Any suffering beyond that which was absolutely necessary would be cruelty, pure and simple, and unthinkable in a God of perfect justice and mercy.

Much has been said, and much that is vicious has been said, about the severity of the suffering of the Christ in the Atonement; and all the more because he who is sacrificed is innocent of any transgression, and suffered vicariously for man, all which seems to make the Christ's part so pitiful. It is through suffering, however, and pain, that men are most powerfully moved and influenced, so that suffering possesses highly influential appeal. Says Oxenham:

Pain is one of the deepest and truest things in our nature; we feel instinctively that it is so, even before we can tell why. Pain is what binds us most closely to one another and to God. It appeals most directly to our sympathies, as the very structure of our language indicates. To go no further than our own, we have English words, such as condolence, to express sympathy with grief; we have no one word to express sympathy with joy. So, again, it is a common remark that, if a funeral and wedding procession were to meet, something of the shadow of death would be cast over the bridal train, but no reflection of bridal happiness would pass into the mourners' hearts.

Scripture itself has been not inaptly called “a record of human sorrow.” The same name might be given to history. Friendship is scarcely sure till it has been proved in suffering, but the chains of an affection riveted in the fiery furnace are not easily broken. So much then at least is clear, that the Passion of Jesus was the greatest revelation of His sympathy; “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” And hence fathers (i.e., of the Christian church) and schoolmen alike conspire to teach, that one reason why He (God) chose the road of suffering was to knit us more closely to Himself. For this He exalted His head, not on a throne of earthly glory, but on the cross of death. It is, indeed, no accident of the few, but a law of our present being, which the poet’s words express:

“That to the *Cross* the mourner’s eye should turn
Sooner than where the stars of Christmas burn.”⁴

For all, in their several ways and degrees, are mourners. The dark threads are woven more thickly than the bright ones into the tangled skein of human life; and as time passes on, the conviction that it is so is brought home to us with increasing force.

The Christ doubtless was aware of the force that attached to suffering when he, contemplating his mission, said: “And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32). “Crowns of roses fade, crowns of thorns endure.” “(The) [A] man of sorrows” and *the* one “acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3), who knows the pain and struggle of the universe, is more powerful than the man of joys only, and the death of the testator *alone* ~~only~~ is accepted as the effectual seal to the testimony of the testator.

Helplessness of man under broken law. Admittedly man, as the transgressor of law, is powerless to make satisfaction to the law. True it is conceivable that he might repent of his transgression, and through struggle may maintain himself in righteousness for the future, but that does not reach the past. If he should by struggle maintain himself in righteousness for the future, that is no more than he ought to do; man owes that duty every day in the present and in the future; and also he owed it as his duty in the past. It is the breach in the law that must be mended. Man is under the sentence of death for a past transgression of the law of God, keeping the law is his duty in the present, and will be his duty in the future, and will not make satisfaction for the past. Man is helpless in the presence of that broken law; no act of his can

⁴Oxenham, *Doctrine of the Atonement* (1869), 290-92, quoted by Baring-Gould in *Origin of Religious Beliefs* 2:307-8.

atone for his own individual sins, nor for the transgression of Adam, or stay the effects of the “Fall” upon the race, or redeem them from the penalty of death. Man has started something by his transgression and by begetting a race that is mortal. He cannot arrest the progress of it; the mischief is larger than his power to undo. Adam’s sin was against a divine law, and the “first judgment,” as one of the Nephite prophets expresses it—“the first judgment which came upon man ⟨the judgment of death, spiritual and physical⟩ must needs have remained to an endless duration. And if so, this flesh must have laid down to rot . . . to rise no more” (2 Ne. 9:7). Again: because of the Fall of Adam, “all mankind were fallen, and they were in the grasp of justice; yea, the justice of ⟨law⟩ [God], which consigned them forever to be cut off from ⟨God’s⟩ [his] presence” (Alma 42:14). And also they were subject to ~~the~~ physical death.

*The capacity to do, as well as willingness to do, **needful**.* To redeem man from this condition must be the work of one who has the power to do it. It is not only a matter of willingness, but a matter also of capacity to do it. The effects of the sin, unless some means of escape should be found, are eternal; and in this, “like must meet like, and measure answer measure.” As just suggested, it is a question of power, of capacity. Not only must there be made satisfaction to eternal justice, but there must be the power of deity exercised if man is to be saved from death; there must be a power of life so that that which was lost may be restored, both as to the spiritual life of man and the physical life. A restoration through union of the spirit to the body, on which, as we have seen in preceding chapters, the joy and progress that God has designed for man depends. Man, it should be always remembered, in the greater fact of him, is spirit, but it requires “spirit and element ⟨inseparately⟩ [inseparably] connected” in order to receive a fulness of joy (D&C 93:33–34). Hence the importance of man’s physical life, the union of his deathless spirit with a body that is to be made equally immortal; and since the Fall brought to man this physical death, as well as the spiritual death, his redemption to be complete must reestablish that physical life by reuniting the essential elements of the body of man and his spirit, through a resurrection from the dead, and the Atonement and the power of it must be as universal as the Fall; as in Adam all die, so through the Redeemer of men must all be made alive (1 Cor. 15:22). The Atonement must be sufficient for all this; and this, doubtless, is what our Nephite prophets mean when they say, in speaking of the Atonement, “it must needs be an infinite atonement” (2 Ne. 9:7; see also 2 Ne. 25:16; Alma 34:12). The Redeemer must be a Lord of Life,

hence deity. He must not only have the power of life within himself, but the power to impart it to others—a Godlike power! And to inspire faith in his possession of such power, the manner of the Atonement must be such as to include demonstration of that fact, else how shall man have faith in him? All these considerations left the Redeemer and the Atonement that must be made far above man and what man can do. Truly the redemption of man is to be the work of God—by his power—hence, truly, “the gospel . . . is the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16).

The Atonement a voluntary act. Scripture warrant for the above is abundant. “I lay down my life for the sheep ⟨men⟩. . . . Therefore doth my Father love me,” said the Christ, “because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:15-18).

“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” He spake of the temple of his body—“When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them” (John 2:19, 22).

“Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day” (Luke 24:46).

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4).

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:25-29)

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. (John 5:19-21)

But to return now to the thought that “God” must make atonement for man’s transgression in order to have it adequate, it will be necessary to keep in mind that Jesus the Savior is God, the Son of God, and God as Atoner. There is that which smacks of justice in a god

making the atonement. A god proposed the whole plan. His plan for man's progress could only be accomplished by breaking the world's harmonies. There was no other way. It had to be. Necessity dominated in the case, and God so desired that man should have this opportunity for progress, and he so loved man that if man himself would take his part of the risk, God's covenant with him was that his Son, who also was God, would make the necessary atonement; and hence the covenant of eternal life was made, as Paul says, "before the world began" (Titus 1:2). We come back to that thought, namely, that a god must make the atonement, with increased conviction after considering the element of "power" or "capacity" to do the thing, to make the atonement; the ability to restore that which was lost, life spiritual and life physical. The work truly of deity, not of man; a Lord of Life—"God himself must redeem man." That, or justice must take its course and man be left to satisfy justice in endless misery under the sentence of law, without union with God, and without physical, immortal life, the thing necessary to his progress. Justice must not be left to take its course, else a greater injustice will be done to man who was promised eternal life if he would enter into the scheme of things proposed by God, for his progression.

Moreover, the atonement must be made by deity, living man's life, enduring man's temptations, yet remaining without sin, that the sacrifice might be without spot or blemish; just as the animals used in ancient times as the types indicating the sacrifices were not only to be the firstlings of the flock—firstborn of the flock—but without spot or blemish. He must give the world its illustration and demonstration of the one perfect life. A life in which "the will" shall be wholly subjected to the will of God, the Father (Mosiah 15:7). The atonement must be made by a deity who shall die man's death; but who shall not be holden of it; but break its bands, and demonstrate the power of the resurrection of which he will be the first fruits, and ever after the Lord of Life and the power of the resurrection (Alma 34:10).

In view of all that is here set forth, it must be clear that no other means than the Atonement of the Christ, as it was made, could have been devised for the salvation of man.

The severity of the Atonement considered. Here is doubtless the place where a further word may most appropriately be said in relation to the severity of the Atonement already mentioned in this chapter. And this with reference to what the Atonement purchased for man, and the effect it was doubtless designed to have in forever fixing in the minds of men the values upon certain great things.

Hereafter, and because of the Atonement, we must have exalted conceptions of the value of that stately fabric known as the moral government of the world, for it was for the preservation of its integrity that the Christ suffered and died.

When the plan of redemption is contemplated with reference to what it cost the Christ, then we must have exalted notions ever after of the majesty and justice of God, for it was to make ample satisfaction to that majesty and justice of God that the Christ suffered and died.

We must set a higher value even upon physical life hereafter, for it was in order to bring to pass the resurrection of man to physical life, and to make that life immortal, that the Christ suffered and died.

New glory must attach hereafter to spiritual life—perpetual union between soul of man and soul of God, for it was to bring to pass that spiritual life, that indissoluble union with God on which it depends for existence, that the Christ suffered and died.

We must henceforth have a higher regard for God's attribute of mercy, for it was that mercy might be brought into the earth-scheme of things, and claim her own, that *the* Christ suffered and died (Alma 42:15).

We must have a deeper reverence for the love of God and the love of Christ for man, and a higher regard for man himself since God so loved him—for it was to give a manifestation of that love, that the Christ suffered and died (John 3:16).

If it be true, and it is, that men value things in proportion to what they cost, then how dear to them must be the Atonement, since it cost the Christ so much in suffering that he may be said to have been baptized by blood-sweat in Gethsemane, before he reached the climax of his passion, on Calvary. "Behold, he suffereth the pains . . . of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam" (2 Ne. 9:21).

Again, but in a modern revelation: "Surely every man must repent or suffer ⟨i.e. the eternal consequences of sin⟩. . . . For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not . . . suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup" (D&C 19:4, 16-18).

Advantages to be realized in eternal life purchased at such a cost as this, should indeed be regarded by men as pearls of great price, to obtain which a man would be justified in selling all that he hath, that he might buy them.

But on the other hand, if the great and important things enumerated above—redemption of a world from death—spiritual and physical; and salvation of men as individuals from the consequences of their own sins—if all this could only be secured by the severity of suffering that attended upon the Atonement made by the Christ, then, we say, and we trust with becoming reverence, that it was worth all that the Christ by his suffering paid for them; and make bold to add: what an infinite pity it would be if in the moral and spiritual economy of the universe there had been no such means of salvation possible! And I further add, what a commentary it would be upon the strength, and courage, and sympathy, and altruism and love of the divine intelligences of the universe if none—no, not one—could have been found to come, under the conditions prescribed, to save a world—a race, his brethren!

The lesson taught by severity of the Atonement. Let the severity of the Atonement impress men with one very important truth, viz., that breaking up the harmony of the moral government of the world is a serious, adventurous, and dangerous business, even though when necessary to bring about conditions essential to the progress of intelligences; and more serious when man in his presumption and apostasy from God, of his own perverse will, to gratify his ambition, or pride or appetite or passions, violates the law of God and breaks the union between himself and deity. That is serious; and how difficult it is to re-establish that union, to purchase forgiveness for that sin! How hard it is to make amends to God, dishonored by man's individual transgression of divine law—let the severity of the Christ's Atonement for man's sin bear witness to that, for it required all that the Christ gave in suffering and agony of spirit and body to lay the grounds for man's forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

The severity of the Atonement should impress men with the fact that we live in a world of stern realities; that human actions draw with them tremendous consequences that may not be easily set aside if the actions in which they have their origin are wrong.

Moral laws have their penalties as physical laws have their consequences; there could be no moral laws without penalties; and the penalties of laws must be enforced, else laws are mere nullities. Violations of moral law are attended by shame and suffering; suffering is the consequence or the penalty of violating divine, moral law; and the penalty must be paid, either by the one sinning or by another who shall suffer vicariously for him, and make satisfaction to the law.

This brings us to one of the great questions inseparably connected with the Atonement. Can there be such a thing as vicarious suffering?

And can the vicarious suffering of an innocent victim pay the debt to justice due from one who is guilty of the transgression of moral and spiritual law?

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology*, 4th year; and "all four books of our scripture." Roberts commented:

Since this treatise of the Atonement is derived from the "New Knowledge" that is peculiar to the New Dispensation of the gospel, the treatises of Catholic and Protestant Christendom are of little use in development of the theme. In the *Seventy's Course of Theology*, however, fourth year, *The Atonement*, is an appendix in which is given "Other Views of the Atonement," Catholic, Protestant, and Liberal views and is valuable for comparison and contrast.

The Atonement V— The Atonement of Broader Scope Than Making Satisfaction for Adam's Sin

Sins of the individual. The Atonement is of much broader scope than redemption from Adam's transgression for "original guilt." Not only was satisfaction to be made for the transgression of Adam, that the integrities of the moral government of the world might be preserved, but a redemption was also to be provided from the effects of the individual sins of man. Man, when he sins by breaking the laws of God, sins, of course, against divine law; commits a crime against the majesty of God, and thereby dishonors him. And man is just as helpless to make adequate satisfaction to God as Adam was for his sin in Eden; and is just as hopelessly in the grasp of inexorable law as Adam and his race were after the first transgression. For individual man from the beginning was as much in duty bound to keep the law of God as Adam was; and if now, in the present, and for the future he observes the law of God and remains righteous, he is doing no more than he ought to have done from the beginning; and doing his duty now and for the future cannot free him from the fact and the consequences of his past violations of God's law. The individual man, then, is in need of a satisfaction being made to the justice of God for his individual transgression of divine law.

Distinction between Adam's ~~sin~~ transgression and individual sins. The difference between the sin of Adam and the sin of the individual man is this:

First, Adam's sin, which the scriptures call the "Fall," was racial, in that it involved all the race of Adam in its consequences, bringing upon them both a spiritual and a physical death, the nature of which has already been explained. Man's individual sin is more limited in its consequences, though for a time his personal sin may involve the happiness of others in its consequences; yet ultimately they will be limited to

personal results, affecting the actual sinner's personal relationship to God, to righteousness, to truth, to progress, to sustained joy.

Second, Adam's sin was necessary to the creation of those conditions under which man could obtain the experiences of earth life necessary to the union of his spirit with earth elements; necessary to this progress as a divine intelligence; necessary to his knowledge of good and evil in actual conflict; joy and sorrow; pleasure and pain; life and death; in a word, necessary that man might become acquainted with these opposite existences (2 Ne. 2),¹ their nature, and their values; all which was essential to, and designed for man's progress, for his ultimate development in virtue and power and largeness and splendor of existence. But man's individual sins are not necessary to these general purposes of God. That is, the Fall of Adam was necessary to the accomplishment of the general purposes of God; but it was not necessary to those purposes that Cain should kill Abel, his brother; or "that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart" should be "evil continually" (cf. Gen. 6:5).

The "Fall" of Adam, we say, was necessary to the attainment of these possibilities of progress for man, and hence the atonement made for Adam's sin is of universal effect and application without stipulations or conditions, or obedience, or any other act as a condition precedent to participation in the full benefits of release from the consequences of Adam's transgression. Hence it is written: "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men <to the> [unto] justification of life" (Rom. 5:18). Free redemption from the consequences of Adam's transgression, but not so with reference to man's individual sins. Salvation from the consequences of those sins is another story. All men sin: "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). "And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). "There is none righteous, no, not one. . . . They are all gone out of the way; . . . there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10-12). But while all sin—except those who die in infancy or early childhood—it is not necessary to any of the general purposes of God, or to the interests of the race, that men should sin; and hence they may be held fully accountable to the justice of God for their individual transgression of law, and are so held accountable.

The penalty for the individual sins of men is a second spiritual death, not a physical death, not a separation of the spirit and the body

¹Roberts, *New Witnesses for God* 3:219-27.

of man after the resurrection, for what is achieved for man's physical life by the resurrection remains. He will not again be subject to physical death. But for his own individual sins (and this constitutes the third distinction between Adam's "original sin" and the *personal* sins of ~~other~~ men) the individual is subject to a second spiritual death, to banishment from the presence of God; his spiritual union and communion with God is broken, and spiritual death ensues—his death to righteousness. The Lord, in speaking of Adam and his first transgression, says: "I, the Lord [God], caused that he should be cast out from the Garden of Eden, from my presence, because of his transgression, wherein he became spiritually dead, which is the first death, even that same death . . . which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say: Depart, ye cursed" (D&C 29:41).

So, Alma, the Nephite prophet, explained the "fall" of man, and how God gave unto men commandments, after having made known unto them the plan of redemption, even in the days of Adam, says:

God conversed with men, and made known unto them the plan of redemption, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world; and this he made known unto them according to their faith and repentance and their holy works. Wherefore, he gave commandments unto men, they having first transgressed the first commandments as to things which were temporal, and becoming as Gods, knowing good from evil, placing themselves in a state to act, or being placed in a state to act according to their wills and pleasures, whether to do evil or to do good—Therefore God gave unto them commandments, after having made known unto them the plan of redemption, that they should not do evil, the penalty thereof being a second death, which was an everlasting death as to things pertaining unto righteousness; for on such the plan of redemption could have no power, for the works of justice could not be destroyed, according to the supreme goodness of God. But God did call on men, in the name of his Son, (this being the plan of redemption which was laid) saying: If ye will repent, and harden not your hearts, then will I have mercy upon you, through mine Only Begotten Son; Therefore, whosoever repenteth, and hardeneth not his heart, he shall have claim on mercy through mine Only Begotten Son, unto a remission of his sins; and these shall enter into my rest. And whosoever will harden his heart and will do iniquity, behold, I swear in my wrath that he shall not enter into my rest. (Alma 12:30–35)

Furthermore he says—speaking of the willfully impenitent: "They shall be as though there had been no redemption made; for they cannot be redeemed according to God's justice; and they cannot die, seeing there is no more corruption (i.e. physical decay or death of the resurrected body)" (Alma 12:18).

~~Individual~~ *Men dependent on the Atonement for salvation from individual sins.* As already remarked, men having transgressed the law of God by their own personal violations of it, are helpless of themselves to make satisfaction to the justice of God, or of the law; and are just as dependent upon a Redeemer to rescue them from the spiritual effects of their personal transgression of the divine law, as from the effects of Adam's "Fall." Also, under a reign of law, God may not pardon men for their individual sins by arbitrary act of sovereign will. He may no more set aside the claims of justice unsatisfied in the case of men's personal sins than in the case of Adam's first sin. In both cases a "necessary attribute of Deity" stands in the way of the non-infliction of the penalty due to sin, viz., the attribute of justice, which not even the attribute of mercy may displace or rob. God must act in harmony with his own attributes.

Identical principles operative in man's redemption from individual sins as in redemption from Adam's sin. In the case of man's individual violation of law, as in Adam's sin, the inexorableness of law holds good (Hel. 14:17-18). Thus satisfaction to justice in the case of man's individual sins, like the satisfaction to justice for Adam's "original sin," must be rendered by one competent to make such satisfaction. The same necessity for one not only willing but able to make the atonement, by suffering the penalty due to the sins of all men. He must suffer for them; for the ground work of their forgiveness and restoration to union with God must be that the penalty due to their sin has been paid. This, or justice goes unsatisfied—mercy robs justice. This—satisfaction must be rendered to justice by an atonement or else the law must take its course and punishment be actually inflicted upon the transgressors, which leaves man to a life of eternal misery, alienated from God, separated from the source of spiritual excellence. Man, under such circumstances, would indeed be spiritually dead, and dead eternally, since he is helpless to extricate himself from such conditions, as a sinner cannot justify his sin, nor a criminal pardon his own crime. But to leave the punishment to be actually inflicted upon man would thwart the purpose of God with reference to man's earth life; for God designed that man's earth life should eventuate in joy, in the union of man with God. "Men are, that they might have joy" (2 Ne. 2:25). By other Book of Mormon teachers the plan for man's redemption is called "the plan of happiness," "the great plan of happiness" (Alma 42:8, 16); and as this "happiness" depends upon union and communion with God, which is but another way of saying "in harmony with the true, the good and the beautiful," it is

proper to think of the gospel as contemplating the spiritual union of man with Deity.

We conclude then that for man's individual sins as for Adam's transgression, though differing in some respects, already noted, involve the same necessity of atonement. There is the same inexorableness of law; the same helplessness on the part of man to make satisfaction for his sin; hence man's dependence upon a vicarious atonement, if he is to find redemption at all. There is the same need for ability on the part of the one making the atonement to make full satisfaction to justice by paying the uttermost farthing of man's obligation to the law; the idea of satisfaction necessarily involves that of penal suffering. This couples together the two ideas, satisfaction through expiation, or satisfaction to justice through expiation. Whosoever redeems man from his individual sins must pay the penalty due to sin by suffering in man's stead. No merely human sacrifice will be adequate. As put by Alma, the Nephite prophet: "If a man murder, behold will our law, which is just, take the life of his brother? I say unto you, Nay. But the law requireth the life of the murderer; therefore there can be nothing which is short of an infinite atonement which will suffice for the sins of the world" (cf. Alma 34:11-12). What man is equal to the whole world's sin, and the suffering due to it? Who can bear it? The answer is obvious: no man. But there remains God. What man cannot do, what no human brother can do, it may be that God can do. And that is the basis of the gospel doctrine, the doctrine of the Atonement—God will atone for the sins of man. Man incapable of saving himself, may be saved of God. God may find and save that which was lost. As it was said in the matter of atoning for man's individual sins, it must be a supreme sacrifice of atoning for Adam's "original sin," so in atoning for man's individual sins, it must be a supreme sacrifice. It must be by the sacrifice of the Highest—God! And hence an infinite sacrifice. It must be all that can be given in sacrifice—there must be no more that can be given in sacrifice for sin. Hence it is the last, and is final. As we concluded in our reflections of the Atonement of the Son of God as applied to the sins of Adam, so here: The Atonement is made by the Son of God, "who was in the beginning with God, and who was God" (cf. John 1:1). It is, then, an atonement that was made by God, the highest atonement that can be made. A supreme sacrifice, indeed! And all that could be given in sacrifice it embraces, and meets the demands of justice. Men were bought with a price, but "not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from <their> [your] vain conversation received by tradition from <their> [your] fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as [of] a lamb without blemish and without

spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Pet. 1:18–20).

Motive force in the Atonement. What shall prompt a deity to make such an atonement? The answer is: two attributes of the Deity now of a long time kept in the background, viz., love and mercy. They will supply motive for the Atonement. We have seen and considered at some length the helplessness of man in the midst of those earth conditions necessary to his progress, viz., knowledge of good and evil. **God saw** man’s helplessness from the beginning; and—

so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (John 3:16–17)

This love prompts the Son of God to suffer for the individual sins of men as well as for the sin of Adam in Eden. He undertook to pay the penalty due to each man’s sin, that there might be ground for man’s justification under the law; that mercy might claim the sinner upon conditions that love may prescribe. And so—

“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves,” says Paul, “it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8). “The law entered, that ⟨sin⟩ [the offence] might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did [much] more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:20–21). And in harmony with this a Book of Mormon prophet—the first Nephi, declares: “We know that it is by grace [that] we are saved, after all ⟨that⟩ we can do” (2 Ne. 25:23).

Man’s cooperation with God necessary to salvation. Notwithstanding this doctrine of being “saved by grace after all that men can do,” yet in securing redemption from the consequences of man’s individual sins, the cooperation of man is required; his acceptance, through faith, of God’s plan for his salvation; acceptance of Jesus Christ and his redemptive work—obedience to him manifested by baptism, or burial in water for the remission of sin. The baptism is the symbol of the death, burial, and the resurrection of the Christ, and also the sign of the convert’s acceptance of the Christ and the Atonement he has made for the sins of men. Then also the acceptance of confirmation into membership of the Church of Jesus Christ by the laying on of hands by which comes also the baptism of the Spirit—the Holy Ghost—bringing the convert into fellowship and union with God, by which he becomes

spiritually alive—"born of the spirit," by reason of which he has become united to the spirit life of God, and hence put in the way of eternal progress.

The gospel so far as the individual man is concerned is the "power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16) to everyone that believes it, and obeys its prescribed ordinances, and its covenant of thereafter continuing in righteousness. In the difference between the redemption from the transgression of Adam and redemption from man's personal sins, the one being free, unconditional, and universal; and the other being free, possible to all, but conditional, and therefore limited to those who comply with the conditions, there are to be observed nice discriminations in the justice of God. Free and universal redemption comes from the consequences of Adam's "Fall," because that "fall" is absolutely necessary to the accomplishment of the purposes of God with reference to man's progress; without it nothing may be done for his progress. He must know the distinctions between good and evil in order to *make* progression, though that knowledge may not be acquired but by a "fall" from a state of innocence. Therefore since that fall is necessary to these ends, justice demands that there be provided free and universal and complete and unconditional redemption from its consequences. But in the case of man's personal sins they are not absolutely necessary to the accomplishment of any general purposes of God. Of course the earth-environment of man, including the broken harmonies as he finds them, may be necessary to the individual experience of man; but all that will abundantly come once men are at the same time free to choose, and good and evil is set before them. But what is here meant is that it is not an absolute necessity that individual men should sin, or that they sin without limit. Men can refrain from sin if they will; the power is in them. They are brought into earth life able to stand, "yet free to fall."^a They have power to choose good and to follow that instead of evil if they so elect. Therefore, while it is eminently proper that the Atonement of the Christ should be made to include satisfaction to justice for the personal sins of men, and the debt of suffering due to them should be paid, and paid vicariously, since man is powerless to offer expiation for himself, and it is needful that ample provision be made for the justification of man's pardon; yet it is also in accordance with justice that man shall cooperate with God in bringing about the blessed result of his deliverance from the consequence of his personal sins; and that conditions shall be required as necessary to participation in the forgiveness provided, such conditions as belief in

^aJohn Milton, *Paradise Lost* 3.99.

and acceptance of the terms of atonement, repentance of sin, and a hearty cooperation with God in overcoming the evil, and its effects, in the human soul.

The work of salvation: A work of sanctification as well as of justification. Moreover, this salvation from the effects of personal sins is not only a matter of forgiveness of past sins; a matter of justification before God; a matter of reestablishing union with God, which is spiritual life; but it is a matter of sanctification of the soul; and of power to maintain the renewed spiritual life with God. It is a matter that involves human desires and human will. Surely it is unthinkable that God would hold man in union with himself against man's desire, or against his will. Such a condition would not be a "union" but "bondage." The cooperation of man then in this work of his personal salvation becomes an absolute necessity, and hence the conditions of individual salvation already noted, and which may be summed up in the fact of man's self-surrender unto God, manifested by his obedience to God under the divine law; and the declared intention of that obedience by receiving the symbols of the Atonement, to be found in the ordinances of the gospel, especially in baptism of both the water and the spirit, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Spiritual and moral growth. The attainment of the condition of Christian righteousness is a matter of character building under the favorable conditions provided by the gospel; and character building, even under favorable conditions, is a matter of slow, self-conquest. It means to follow the admonition of the chief Judean apostle, St. Peter:

Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 1:5-8)

To be fruitful in that knowledge means to be growing in grace, in knowledge of the truth, in righteousness. It means development according to type of the Christian spiritual life, which type is Christ Jesus, our Lord. "If you wish to go where God is," said the Prophet of the New Dispensation, "you must be like God, or possess the principles God possesses."² All of which, of course, may not be possessed without

²Joseph Smith, April 10, 1842, in Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 216.

divine help, as well as by human effort. “He that lacketh these things”—the virtues above enumerated by St. Peter, and the disposition to build them up by his own effort, as well as by divine grace, “is blind, and cannot see afar off,” continues that apostle:

And hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 1:9-11)

Phases of the Atonement peculiar to the New Dispensation of the gospel:

(1) *Redemption from Adam’s sin unconditional; from individual sins conditional.* It may be remarked, in passing, that the distinction noted in the foregoing paragraphs of this chapter on applying the Christ’s Atonement to Adam’s sin and man’s personal sins—in the first case unconditional, and in the second conditional—is a doctrine, in modern times, peculiar to the New Dispensation of the gospel revealed to Joseph Smith; and is derived almost wholly from the teachings of the Book of Mormon (see 2 Ne. 2; 9; Alma 34; 42; Morm. 9). In that distinction the beauty and glory of the Atonement, the balanced claims of justice and mercy, shine forth as nowhere else, even in holy writ—much less in uninspired writings of men. It may be regarded as the New Dispensation’s contribution to views of the Atonement of Christ, for it is to be found nowhere else except in the New Dispensation literature. But there, in the chief summary of the things the Church of the New Dispensation believes, it is written: “We believe that ⟨all⟩ men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression” (A of F 2).³

(2) *The free and complete redemption of little children.* From the foregoing distinction in the application of the Atonement of Christ, there arises another, viz., if redemption from the consequences of Adam’s “Fall” in Eden is to be absolutely unconditional, and universal, and that entirely through the Atonement of the Christ, and without any cooperation on the part of man, then it logically follows that if man himself remains absolutely without sin, he would stand in need of no satisfaction being made for his personal sin, and no forgiveness of **personal** sins would be necessary, since in that case sins would have no existence; and therefore the atonement of the Christ for the sin of Adam would be all-sufficient to redeem man from the power of death

³See summary in the Prophet Joseph Smith’s Letter to Mr. Wentworth. Smith *History of the Church* 4:540.

and restore him to union with God. It follows that if any part of the human race die in this state of personal innocence, then they are redeemed by virtue of the Atonement of Christ without any other consideration whatsoever. Children dying in infancy are in this status, and therefore the host of them so dying are saved by virtue of the Atonement of the Christ for Adam's transgression. In view of this splendid truth listen to the words of the Christ himself to one of the ancient American prophets:

Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them. . . . Little children need no repentance, neither baptism. . . . Little children are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world. (Moro. 8:8, 11-12)

No less explicit is the word of the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith:

But behold, I say unto you, that little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through mine Only Begotten; Wherefore, they cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable before me. (D&C 29:46-47)

(3) *The redemption of those who die without law: "The heathen" nations and races.* Moreover it appears that mercy has especial claims upon the nations and the races of men who have not known the gospel, the so-called "heathen" races. The first Nephi [*sic*; Jacob is speaking] in speaking of the Atonement of Christ and its effects where ~~proclaimed and rejected~~, *no law exists*, says:

Wherefore, he ⟨God⟩ has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation; and where there is no condemnation the mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement; for they are delivered by the power of him ⟨the Christ⟩. For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them, that they are delivered from that awful monster, death and hell, and the devil, and the lake of fire and brimstone,⁴ which is endless torment; and they are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel. (2 Ne. 9:25-26)

⁴The torments of the ungodly sinners are likened unto a lake of fire and brimstone by this writer, Nephi [*sic*]. Not that the sinners are plunged into a lake of fire and brimstone as so-called orthodox Christians teach. Indeed, in the above passage

And again: “For the power of redemption cometh on all them that have no law” (Moro. 8:22). To this also agree the teachings of St. Paul: “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law” (Rom. 2:12). I venture the assertion, basing it upon the sense of the whole passage, that the above passage should read “shall be judged without law.”

In the adjustment of things connected with the placing of men and nations and races in and during the first resurrection, it is declared in modern revelation that it shall be tolerable, at that time, for the heathen, meaning those who lived and died without law or knowledge of the gospel: “Then shall the heathen nations be redeemed,” saith the Lord; “and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them” (D&C 45:54). Not that these will rise at once to the full height and perfect glory of God’s celestial kingdom; but they shall be “heirs of salvation” (D&C 76:88). They are not irredeemably lost, as false teachers and their falser creeds, though regarded as Christian and orthodox, hold. On the contrary they will come forth in the first resurrection as stated above, as also again declared in the great revelation on the various degrees of glory to which men shall attain in and through the resurrection from the dead,⁵ and to them will be accorded the advantages of “the everlasting gospel,” the gospel which endures through all the ages to bless with opportunity of progression, the children of God.

(4) *Salvation for the dead.* The principles of the immediately preceding paragraphs bring us to the fourth great distinctive feature of the Atonement peculiar in modern times to the New Dispensation of the gospel, viz., the application of the Atonement and the whole gospel scheme to all who may not have heard it, or even heard of it; or who having heard of it in their blindness or semi-blindness, or ignorance have rejected it. This in the New Dispensation literature is generalized as “salvation for the dead.” It has its inception first in the fact that the gospel is an “everlasting gospel”; one that endures through the ages,

there is a definition of what the lake of fire is—it is “endless torment,” which “endless torment” ever exists for the punishment of impenitent sinners—each one partaking of it to such a degree and for such time as is necessary to satisfy the demands of justice. In this very chapter above quoted Nephi says of the wicked: “And their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames ascend up forever, and have no end” (cf. 2 Ne. 9:16; see also Alma 12:17).

⁵This *is* one of the greatest revelations of the New Dispensation, and is one of the greatest monuments to the inspiration of the Prophet Joseph Smith; see Doctrine and Covenants 76.

and that to bless and save men, when they shall turn to it for its saving grace and power. Second, in the fact that the revelations of God give warrant for the belief that there is provided such a means of salvation for those who may have missed fair opportunity to understand and receive the gospel. Fuller development of this doctrine however, belongs to a place in a future chapter (chapter 47, below) where the discussion of it takes place.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church* 4:497-508; Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 4:134-60, esp. "Anselm's Theory of Satisfaction"; and William Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine*, vol. 2, bk. 5, chs. 1-7. In preparation for this chapter, Roberts encouraged extensive scripture reading and noted that the references he gives "may be greatly extended by the student." He also commented that Neander's "great work" on the history of Christianity contains "a fine treatise on the Atonement," and that the "seven chapters devoted to Soteriology" in a work by Shedd "are very illuminating in a general way on the Atonement, but do not deal with the topics of this chapter."

The Atonement VI— The Efficacy of Vicarious Atonement

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 Jn. 4:10).

The law of righteousness. All sin against moral law is followed by suffering. At first glance that statement may not be accepted without qualification; but it is true. "Sin is [the] transgression of the law," is [the] scripture definition of sin (1 Jn. 3:4; Rom. 4:15). No difficulty will arise from that definition, but there might arise difference of opinion as to what constitutes the "law," which to violate would be sin. Of course moral law, or the law of righteousness, varies among different races and nations; and indeed varies in the same race and nation in different periods of time; but no matter how variant the law may be among different races or nations; or how variant it may be among individuals, the principle announced that suffering follows sin will hold good. Of course between the Christian whose conscience is trained in the moral law of the doctrine of Christ, and the heathen, "who know not God," there is a wide difference. Many things which are sin to the Christian conscience are not sin to the heathen races, unenlightened by the ethics of the Christian religion; but, nevertheless, what I say is true; and if heathen peoples do not have the same moral standards that prevail in Christian lands, they have some moral standards; and whenever they violate what to them is the "rule of righteousness," it is followed by chagrin, by sorrow, by mental suffering for them; and so with the Christian people who are instructed in the high, moral principles of the Christian religion. When they fall below their ideals, when they consciously violate their "rule of righteousness," it is followed by suffering, by *a* sense of shame, by sorrow; and indeed, the great volume of the sorrows of this world springs from sin, the transgression of the moral law.

~~*Possibility of the Spirit suffering.*~~ It is just as real, this suffering of the spirit for the violation of the moral law, as the suffering of physical pain. The mind no less than the body may be hurt, wounded as deeply as the body, and carry its scars as the evidence of its wounds as long. “And it often happens,” says Guizot, “that the best men, that is, those who have best conformed their will to reason, have often been the most struck with their insufficiency, the most convinced of the inequality between the conduct of man and his task between liberty and law”; and therefore have they suffered most. It is possible, and men do suffer for their own sins.

Men suffer because of the sins of others. This we know, also, it is possible for men to suffer because of the sins of others, and they often do. You can scarcely conceive of a man being so far isolated, so far outside the sympathies of the world, that it can be said of him that he lives unto himself alone; that his sinning and his suffering concerns only himself. Men are so knit together in a network of sympathies—not seen, but *real* nevertheless—that they suffer *because* of each other. It is easily proven. Take the case of an honorable father and mother who have led, we will say—and there are such fathers and mothers—ideal lives. They have lived in honor; they have met their obligations to the world with reasonable fidelity; they have lived lives of righteousness; they have set good examples to their children and neighbors; they have taught the Christian truths at the fireside; they have surrounded their family with every advantage that would prepare them for honorable stations among men. They have taken pride as they have seen their children grow from infancy to manhood, and their souls have hoped that a sort of immortality would subsist in the perpetuation of their race through their children. Then out of this family group, over which the parents have watched with such anxious solicitude, there comes forth a reprobate youth, in whom there seems to be scarcely any moral sense. He violates all the conventions of society, and of moral living; he destroys all his prospects by his excesses, and he becomes a vagabond and outcast among men, a degenerate; perhaps finds his way through the sewers of sin, into the prison house, and at last, perchance, may go to the very gallows itself.

And what is the condition of that righteous father and mother the while, when they look upon this sad mischance in their household? Sorrow! The one who has led this shameful life, though he may suffer somewhat for his sins, has not suffered the one-thousandth part of the shame and humiliation and disgrace that has been experienced by this father and mother. They suffer because of the sins of this wayward son.

They illustrate in their experience the fact that men can suffer because of each other; the innocent are involved in the sins and crimes of the guilty.

From this confessedly extreme case all down the line of human experiences and relationships in constantly varying degrees men suffer because of each other.

Men suffer with each other on account of sin. Again: men suffer with each other on account of sin. An outsider, looking at this scene I have presented—I mean one not a member of the grief-stricken family—witnessing the sorrow in the father, and the inconsolable grief of the mother; the mental distress and shame experienced by brothers and sisters; the outsider, the near friend, or neighbor, witnessing all this is distressed with the sorrowing father and mother; he suffers *with* them through common, human sympathy.

Willingness of men to suffer for each other. There is still another phase of this suffering on account of sin, and one that draws very near to the point I am trying to establish. There is among men, and especially among men of highly sensitive natures, a willingness to suffer *for* others. Take the case, for instance, of David and Absalom. Absalom was the most worthless of all David's sons; he had planned rebellion against the old king; he would have clutched the crown from the hoary head of David and put it upon his own. In every way he had warred against the honor and the interests of his father. Yet when news was brought to the king that the worthless young man had been caught in the battle and slain, the old king was stricken with sorrow, and gave vent to the father-cry that rings through all the ages—"Oh Absalom, my son! Would to God I had died for thee!" (cf. 2 Sam. 18:33). In this experience of David's we see the willingness of one to suffer for another. Nor is this willingness confined to parents alone who would so often and so willingly take upon themselves the consequences of their children's sins, though those consequences involved death. The same willingness exists on the part of the children, but perhaps is less frequently manifested, to suffer for their parents. The same is true also as to brothers and sisters, and among friends, where no tie of consanguinity exists; and even among strangers, on the occasion of great, imminent danger, this impulse in man, this willingness to risk his own life for others is frequently manifested. Such experiences make up the history of heroism, which is the chief glory of our human race.

The pity of it, if—! Here let it be understood that I am not introducing the question as to whether men can suffer one for another in

breaches of the moral law. I am inclined to doubt that, as it might lead to the thwarting of ~~in~~justice rather than to the promotion of it in our human life; but I am discussing the evident willingness of men to suffer for the sins of others if they could, up to the point of laying down their lives for them; and with Browning I hold that, “Tis not what man does which exalts him, but what man would do.”^a I am pointing out the existence of such an impulse, inclination or principle in men, in human nature, in order to argue from what we know of this well-attested fact, ~~(and the reader will observe that our old method of earlier chapters abides with us still)~~ that there being such a disposition in man, it may be reasonably concluded that such a disposition *but* more abundantly, and more perfectly, and more intensely, and quite effectively—~~the same willingness and innate disposition~~ will be found in the divine intelligences, or gods; and who at need, as in the case of redeeming man from the “Fall” through ~~an~~ Adam, and from the consequences of personal sins—would, through love, make the necessary sacrifice for the sins of a world, as did the Christ. For if this disposition exists more intensively in gods than in men, what an infinite pity it would be should there be no means in the moral economy of things for such expression of self-sacrificing love!

Vicarious suffering necessary to supreme love-manifestation. “Vicarious suffering,” says some now forgotten author, “seems supremely unjust, yet it is blessed and glorious; for in no other way can love so intensely be expressed—that one suffer for his friend through love.” And I will add the suffering victim being himself innocent, would make his sacrifice all the more impressive. ~~and effective.~~

“Hereby perceive we the love of God,” said the apostle, “because he laid down his life for us” (1 Jn. 3:16). And again: “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God ⟨had⟩ sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn. 4:9-10).

It is through this means, self-sacrifice, that love gets expressed, and this leads to manifestations of mercy in the divine moral and spiritual economy; and in no other way can they become expressed—this love and mercy! But a divine moral and spiritual economy cannot exist without the manifestation of them. Therefore, to make the scheme of things perfect, there must be place and means of bringing in these two brightest and best elements of such economy, else both a reign of law

^aRobert Browning, “Saul,” 13.9.

and the attributes of deity stand broken and inharmonious in our consciousness. From the very nature of things, then, there must be a means of expressing love, and of expressing it supremely, by sacrifice, else mercy shall not appear, for mercy springs from love as wisdom rises from knowledge.

It is from the above basis of thought that the poet Browning, worked out his conception of vicarious suffering in his "Saul." The poem is the story of David's love for the melancholy, obsessed king of Israel, and David's willingness out of this love, to suffer for the king, even to die for him if only that would restore Saul to his best and maintain him there.

"Could I help thee my father, inventing a bliss," says David, "I would add to that life of the past" (which he had just glorified in song), "both the future—and this; I would give thee new life altogether, as good ages hence as this moment, had love but the warrant, love's heart to dispense."

And then the thought: If he, David, being but a man would do this for the restoration of Saul, would not God do as much? Or, as the poet makes David say, do I find love so full in my nature that I doubt God's own love can compete with it? "Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this man, dare doubt he alone shall not help him, who yet alone can?" Would I suffer for him that I love? So would God he concludes—"so wilt thou! . . . See the Christ stand!"¹

Intimations of great possibilities. Does this fact of willingness to suffer for others, so abundantly attested in human experiences, bear witness to the existence of no great and eternal principle, that may be of incalculable benefit in the moral economy of the universe? Is it meaningless? I think not. On the contrary it suggests the existence of a great and effective truth, namely, that divine intelligences of the universe are so bound together in sympathetic relations that at need they can suffer for each other, as well as with each other, and because of each other. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down

¹I commend the whole poem to the reader. It is too long to insert here and less than the whole would do an injustice to a masterpiece of thought and composition. It will richly repay the half-score readings that will be required to master it. [Robert Browning's poem "Saul" is based upon the Old Testament story of Saul and David. David narrates the story of his returning to the tent of Saul to sing and play his harp in an attempt to alleviate Saul's fits of madness. His songs have the desired effect, but David realizes that although he loves Saul with his whole soul, he cannot give Saul permanent rest and salvation. At this dramatic moment, David receives a vision of the Christ, recognizing that salvation is only through him.]

his life for his friends” (John 15:13). The same would doubtless be true of God. Shall those intelligences we must needs think of as divine, as making up David’s “congregation of the mighty,” the gods among whom God, the greatest of intelligences, stands and judges (Ps. 82:1)—shall these be denied the privilege of love-manifestation which goes with this giving of all? And shall this suffering for others in such cases have no benefitting effect upon those others for whom the suffering is endured? Shall this love-force of divine intelligences be mere waste of the highest and most refined of all forces—spiritual love-force? Not so, if reason answers the question. Certainly not so if the scriptures answer it. The scriptures abundantly confirm the declaration made that divine intelligences are not denied the power of giving the highest love manifestation for others by suffering for them; and in that love manifestation giving all they can give, even to taking upon themselves the consequences of the sins of others and making effective atonement for them; suffering that others might have placed within their reach the means of eternal progression, and escape the eternal consequences of sin if only they would accept such means as are provided for such escape. Otherwise, of course, the sinners themselves must suffer all the consequences due to their sins; for nothing is clearer in the revealed word of God, developed in this treatise, than that satisfaction must be made to justice whenever the domain of law and justice is trespassed upon, else all is confusion in the moral government of the world; so that if men will not avail themselves of means which love provides for their redemption, then they themselves must meet the inexorable demands of justice.

Vicarious suffering: Its reality and its effectiveness the doctrine of the gospel. This, then, is the especial doctrine of the gospel on which the earth-life mission of the Christ is based. One divine intelligence at need can suffer for others, and ~~for such an one to stand responsible for another; and~~ vicariously endure suffering for another’s sins; make a satisfaction to justice, and bring the quality of love, and mercy its consequent, into the moral economy of the world, and give it legitimate standing under a reign of law, softening somewhat the otherwise harsh aspect of things in this God’s world.

The reign of law and love. To this then our inquiry and discussions lead us; to recognize in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the central truth of which is the Atonement, a reign of law and love; and that to preserve this law, and to manifest this love was the purpose of the earth-life mission of the Christ. To teach and to demonstrate, first of all, God-love for man, by a sacrifice that tasks God that man might be saved; and

second, to inspire man-love for God, by the demonstration that God first loved man, and how deeply God loved him; and third, to teach man-love for man. “(For) Beloved,” says the apostle, ~~whom Jesus loved pre-eminently~~—“if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another” (1 Jn. 4:11). In this love for one another the children of God are manifest, he contends.

Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. . . . We know that we have passed from death (into) [unto] life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. . . . Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 Jn. 3:10-11, 14, 16)

It is not to be marveled at that this same apostle declared that “he that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” (1 Jn. 4:8) or that Paul, accepting the same principle, should say, “he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. . . . Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom. 13:8-10).

Jesus, however, teaches the matter most perfectly. Accepting the love of God for man as assured, then the great commandment for man is:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matt. 22:37-40)

“Love is the fulfilling of the law.” Love exists in the earth-scheme of things, in the moral government of the world, in harmony with the universal reign of law. It is not born of some caprice, or mere impulse, howsoever beneficent; but interwoven it is into the very web and woof of things. It is immanent in them, an indestructible presence. It is because love reigns in harmony with law that we mortals can be so sure of it; and rest so secure in it. For as it was not born of caprice, so, too, it will not depart from the world, nor from individuals on caprice; but will endure as space itself endures—from the very nature of it; as truth abides; as law itself subsists; as God lives; for it is of the eternal things—the things that do not pass away.

[Except for pages 451-52, this chapter is nearly identical to *Seventy's Course in Theology* 4:129-33.]

Departure from “The Way”

Breaking of the covenant; changing of the ordinances. In part we have already shown how men who had accepted the revelations of God—the Jew and the Christian—left the Christ as the revelation of God, and went after the vain philosophies of the Greek and Roman and the Egyptian Gentiles, denying even the Lord that bought them. Now that a surer knowledge is given of the whole Christian plan of things, it becomes necessary to point out how there was a departure, not only from a true conception of God, from the right idea of creation, from the knowledge of the origin of man, and right apprehension of the purpose of God in the earth life of man—but they have departed from the Way of life as revealed in and through the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ. Things became, as Isaiah predicted they would, viz., that it would be the same with master and servant, the buyer and seller, the priest and the people (cf. Isa. 24:2); the earth would mourn and fade away as to spiritual knowledge and spiritual power, until the earth itself would become

defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance(s), broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. (Isa. 24:4-6)^a

It should be observed that this prophecy of the great Isaiah could have no reference to the law of Moses that had been given to Israel. It is an “everlasting covenant” that the prophet refers to as being broken and the ordinances thereof changed. The blood of the Christ is spoken of as “the blood of the everlasting covenant” (Heb. 13:20). Hence it is the “covenant” sealed by the blood of the Christ that men would break. It is the ordinances of the “everlasting covenant”—or the “everlasting gospel,” that they would change; and this the Christians, even in apostolic times, began to do.

^aIn Hebrew, the word for “ordinance” is singular.

Disagreement among the leading officers of the primitive church. It is a mistake to suppose that the primitive *Christian* church was removed from such a possibility as this by reason of any sanctity that obtained in its membership. On the contrary, they supplied the elements for such a departure from the faith of the “everlasting covenant” predicted by Isaiah. Even the apostles were early engaged in controversies. The question which arose as to the relationship of the gospel to the Jews, who regarded themselves [as] still under obligations to keep the law of Moses, received authoritative and amicable settlement to the effect that observance of the law of Moses should not be required of the new converts from among the Gentiles, and such was the drawing together under the spirit of that council’s decision that St. Peter went down to Antioch and at first mingled unreservedly with both gentile and Jewish converts without distinction; but when certain ones came down from James, who resided at Jerusalem, then Peter suddenly withdrew his social fellowship from the gentile converts; other Jewish brethren did the same, Barnabas, a friend of Paul was among the number. Whereupon Paul withstood Peter to the face directly charging him before all the brethren with “dissimulation;” saying, “If thou, *being* a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews” (Gal. 2:14). Yet this same Paul, notwithstanding his loyalty to the gentile converts on that occasion, his zeal for the decision which had been rendered by the council at the church at Jerusalem, and notwithstanding his usually strong moral courage, subsequently showed by his conduct that he, too, was not beyond the weakness of “becoming all things to all men”; for a short time after the incident with Peter at Antioch, when in the Province of Galatia, and desiring Timothy to be his companion in the ministry, Paul took him and circumcised him; for it was well known that while his mother was a Jewess his father was a Greek; and all this for fear of the Jews (Acts 16:1-4).

Law and gospel controversy. This question continued to be a cause of contention even after this sharp disputation at Antioch, for though the discussion of the council at Jerusalem was against the contention of the Judaizing party, yet they continued to agitate the question, and in Galatia, at least, succeeded in turning the saints of that province from “the grace of Christ unto another gospel . . . perverting the gospel of Christ” (cf. Gal. 1:6-7). This question in fact continued to agitate the church throughout the apostolic age and was finally settled through overwhelming numbers of Gentiles being converted and taking possession of the church, rather than from any respect for the decision of the council at Jerusalem.

The withdrawal of John Mark from the ministry while accompanying Paul and Barnabas on their first mission in Asia Minor, and which withdrawal grew out of a faltering of his zeal or a misunderstanding with his companions,[†] will be well remembered (Acts 13:13). Subsequently when Paul proposed to Barnabas that they go again and “visit the brethren in every city where they had preached” (cf. Acts 15:36 [36-39]), while on their first mission, a sharp contention arose between them about this same John Mark. Barnabas desired to take him again into the ministry, but Paul seriously objected; and so pronounced was the quarrel between them that these two friends and fellow yokemen in the ministry parted company. It is just possible also that in addition to this misunderstanding about John Mark, the severe reproof which Paul administered to Barnabas in the affair of dissimulation at Antioch had somehow strained their friendship.

Status Character of church membership in apostolic times. Turning from these misunderstandings and criminations among the leading officers of the church, let us inquire how it stood with the members. The epistles of Paul to the church at Corinth disclose the fact that there were serious schisms among them; some boasting that they were of Paul, others that they were of Apollos, others of Cephas, and still others of Christ; which led Paul to ask sharply, “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you?” (1 Cor. 1:13). There were endless strifes as well as divisions among them, which caused Paul to denounce them as “carnally minded” (cf. 1 Cor. 3:3-4). Among them also was such fornication as was not named among the Gentiles, “that one should have his father’s wife”! (1 Cor. 5:1). And this shameful sin had not humbled the church at Corinth, for Paul denounced them for being puffed up in the presence of such a crime, rather than having mourned over it (1 Cor. 5:1-3). They were in the habit of going to law one with another, and that before the world, in violation of the teachings of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 6:1-20). They desecrated the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper by their drunkenness, for which they were sharply reprovved by the apostle. They ate and drank unworthily, “not discerning the Lord’s body;” for which cause many were sickly among them, and many slept (that is, died) (1 Cor. 11:20-22, 29-30). There were heresies also among them (1 Cor. 11:18-19), some denying the resurrection of the dead, while others possessed not the knowledge of

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve cautioned: “The cause of John Mark leaving the ministry, questioned.” Reporting to President Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith added: “This statement also, is not necessary to the argument.”

God, which the Apostle declared was *to* their shame (1 Cor. 15:12-34). It is true, this sharp letter of reproof made the Corinthian saints sorry, and sorry, too, after a godly fashion, in that it brought them to a partial repentance; but even in the second epistle, from which we learn of their partial repentance, the apostle could still charge that there were many in the church who had not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they had committed (2 Cor. 12:21). From this second letter, also, we learn that there were many in the church at large who corrupted the word of God (2 Cor. 2:17); that there were those, even in the ministry, who were “false prophets, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ” (2 Cor. 11:12-14).

Of the churches throughout the province of Galatia it is scarcely necessary to say more than we have already said concerning the invasion of that province by Judaizing Christian ministers who were turning away the saints from the grace of Christ back to the beggarly elements of the law of carnal commandments; a circumstance which led Paul to exclaim: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that *<had>* called you *<unto>* [into] the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:6-7).

Two parties in the church of the first century. That there were two distinct parties in the church at this time (Apostolic age) between whom bitter contentions arose, from thirty A.D. to the close of the first Christian century, is further evidenced by the letter of Paul to the Philippians. Some preached Christ even of envy and strife, and some of good will. “The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely,” says Paul, “supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel” (Philip. 1:15-17). “Beware of dogs,” said he again to the same people, “beware of evil workers, beware of the concision” (Philip. 3:2). “Brethren, be followers . . . of me,” he admonished them,

and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is [in] their shame, who mind earthly things.) (Philip. 3:17-19)

To the Colossians, Paul found it necessary to say:

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. . . . Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility

and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. (Col. 2:8, 18)

Evidence of early dissensions among primitive Christians. But it is in Paul's pastoral letters that we get a deeper insight into the corruptions threatening the early church, and even beginning to lay the foundation for the subsequent apostasy which overwhelmed it. The apostle sent Timothy to the saints at Ephesus to represent him, that he might charge some to teach no other doctrines than those which he had delivered to them; "neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith," for some had turned aside from the commandment of charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, unto "~~vile~~ [vain] jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (cf. 1 Tim. 1:3-7). Others concerning faith had made shipwreck, of whom were Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom Paul had delivered unto Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme (1 Tim. 1:19-20). Others had "erred concerning the faith" and had "given heed to babbling, and opposition of science falsely so called" (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20). In his second letter to Timothy, Paul informs him that all the saints in Asia had turned away from him, of whom were Phygellus and Hermogenes (2 Tim. 1:15). He admonished Timothy again to shun "profane and vain babblings: for," said he, "they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:16-18). Demas, once a fellow laborer with Paul, had forsaken him, "having loved this present world" (2 Tim. 4:10). At Paul's first answer, that is, when arraigned before the court at Rome, no man stood with him, but all men forsook him; he prays that God will not lay this to their charge (2 Tim. 4:16). Paul admonished Titus to hold fast to the faith, for there were many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision; who subverted whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake; and were giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men and turning from the truth (Titus 1:9-14).

St. Peter's prophecies on apostasy. Peter also had something to say with reference to the danger of heresies and false teachers which menaced the church. He declared that there would be false teachers

among the saints, “who privily . . . 〈would〉 bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many,” said he,

shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the *way of* truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now 〈for〉 [of] a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For . . . God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. (2 Pet. 2:1-4)

He argued that the Lord would not spare these corrupters of the gospel of Christ, who, like the dog had turned again to his own vomit, and the sow who was washed to her wallowing in the mire (2 Pet. 2:1-22). He charged also that some were wresting the epistles of Paul, as they were some of the “other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (2 Pet. 3:16).

Testimony of St. John on apostasy. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, also bears testimony to the existence of anti-Christ, false prophets, and the depravity of many in the early church. “It is the last time,” said he, “and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us . . . that they might be [made] manifest that they were not all of us” (1 Jn. 2:18-19). “Try the spirits,” said he, in the same epistle, “whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 Jn. 4:1). Again: “Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver [and] an antichrist” (2 Jn. 1:7).

Jude also is a witness against this class of deceivers. He admonished the saints to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For,” said he, “there are certain men crept in unawares, . . . ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:3-4). The rest of the epistle he devotes to a description of their wickedness, comparing it with the conduct of Satan, and the vileness of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Purpose of this review. We have given this review of the condition of the church of Christ in the apostolic age not with the intention of establishing the idea that the church at that time was in a complete state of apostasy; nor have we dwelt upon the weaknesses and sins of the early saints for the purpose of holding them up for contempt. Our only purpose has been to dispel, first of all, the extravagant ideas that obtain in many minds concerning the absolute sanctity of the early Christians; and secondly, and mainly, to show that there were elements

and tendencies existing in the early church, even in the days of the apostles, that would, when unrestrained by apostolic authority and power, lead to its entire overthrow.

We have no good reason to believe that there occurred any change for the better in the affairs of the church after the demise of the apostles, no reason to believe that there were fewer heresies or fewer false teachers, or false prophets to lead away the people with their vain philosophies, their foolish babblings, and opposition of science falsely so called. On the contrary, one is forced to believe the prediction of Paul, viz., that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13). For who, after the apostles were fallen asleep, would stand up and correct the heresies that were brought in to the church, rebuke the schismatics, the false teachers and false prophets that arose to draw away disciples after them? If false teachers insinuated themselves into the church, brought in damnable heresies “by reason of *<which>* [*whom*] the way of truth was evil spoken of” (cf. 2 Pet. 2:2), and the pure religion of Jesus Christ corrupted even while inspired apostles were still in the church, it is not unreasonable to conclude that all these evils would increase and revel unchecked after the death of the apostles.

The effect of early persecutions on the church. Running parallel with this rise of false teachers and multiplication of heresies was running the effects of persecution of the church during the first three centuries of its existence. Let no one attempt to minimize that effect of successive persecutions upon the Christians.^b True they endured much and many died faithful in their devotions to what they regarded as the true religion of Jesus Christ, but heretics as well as true Christians suffered in these persecutions and some of the heretics with equal heroism to those who were true martyrs to the Christian faith. Suffering martyrdom in a cause does not always mean that the cause itself is true; a fact of which the history of all persecutions abundantly attests. Meantime, the effect of these early persecutions of the Christians by the Jews, and later by the Roman emperors, had the result of breaking down the faith and constancy of many, until it can be truly said that the saints were worn out (cf. **Daniel 7:25**), or so nearly so that only weak and timorous men were left to ineffectually resist the paganization of Christianity and the destruction of the real church of Christ. That the

^bFor a general survey of early Christian history, see William H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); on early persecutions, see William H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964). See also *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* 2:671–74.

Roman emperors considered the destruction of the Christian **church** completed by the Diocletian persecution (beginning 303 A.D. and lasting through ten years) is witnessed by the inscriptions upon monuments and medals. Two pillars in Spain erected to commemorate the reign of Diocletian bore the following inscriptions:

Dioclesian, Jovian, Maximian Herculeus, Caesares Augusti, for having extended the Roman empire in the East and West, and for having extinguished the name of Christians, who brought the Republic to ruin. . . .

Dioclesian, etc., for having adopted Galerius in the East, for having everywhere abolished the superstition of Christ, for having extended the worship of the gods.

And on the medal of Diocletian this: “The name of Christians being extinguished.”¹

We know it will be said that this supposed triumph over Christianity announced on these monuments was almost immediately followed by the triumph of Christianity under Constantine, called “the Great,” and then the Christian religion became practically the state religion of the empire; but was it the Christian religion that thus triumphed, or a merely paganized form of religion bearing that name? We are sure that prophetic history and the truth of history will sustain the view that the Christianity of the early decades of the fourth century and through all the centuries following the fourth was no longer the gospel of Jesus Christ; nor the churches that survived—Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic and the Protestant sections of Christendom, with all its subdivisions, were not, and are not the church of Jesus Christ. A sweeping declaration we know, but an extensive inquiry into the subject, running through many years of study and writing upon that branch of history, has led to the conclusion so positively drawn,² namely: that there was a universal turning away or apostasy from the religion of Jesus Christ as established in the dispensation of the meridian of times. It has also been noted in this writing that a dispensation posterier to the meridian dispensation—“The Dispensation of the Fulness of Times” would follow the age of the Christ and his apostles (Eph. 1:10).

¹See Milner, *Church History* 2:6-7.

²See the writer’s account of the “Apostasy” from the gospel, and also the “Destruction of the Christian Church” in his *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History* (1893), that is ~~now (1924)~~ in its fourth edition (1924); also his introduction to Smith, *History of the Church*, vol. 1. Also a treatise on the same theme in his *New Witnesses for God*, 1:45-136. [Another draft of this footnote was appended to the end of this chapter 46.]

Paul's great prophecy on universal apostasy. We shall only pause here to introduce one great testimony concerning this **universal** apostasy which, however, while brief, is complete and conclusive on the subject. It is found in the second epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians and consists of a prophecy which, if the apostasy of so-called Christendom has not been complete and universal, proves beyond all question that the great apostle of the Gentiles was a false prophet. On the other hand if fulfilled, then it proves that the church of Christ, so far as its existence in the earth is concerned, was to be destroyed; that another church, one founded by men, was to usurp the place of the church of Christ; a worldly church, dominated by the very spirit of Lucifer, who, under its rule, would oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God; and sit in the temple of God; showing himself—so far as this world is concerned—that he is God. Moreover Paul declared in this very prophecy we are about to quote, that the forces which would ultimately bring to pass this universal apostasy from the Christian religion—“the mystery of iniquity”—was already at work even in his day. With this introduction, which is also to be considered as our comment upon, and interpretation of the prophecy, we quote Paul's great prediction on the universal apostasy from the true Christian religion:

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (hindereth) will let (hinder), until he be taken out of the way. (i.e. the true servants of God, the apostles of the Church—the true priesthood of God resisting the encroachments of the evil power—until they should be taken out of its way by persecution and death.) And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2 Thes. 2:1-12)

If prophecy be regarded as history reversed, then here is an important historical as well as prophetic document, all which tends to prove what is contended for in this chapter.

The sum of the matter contended for: The sum of the matter stands thus: When the appointed time was come, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, came and made the appointed atonement for the transgression of Adam and the sins of the world, and brought men under the dominion of love and its consequent, his mercy. He taught the gospel; he brought life and immortality to light; he brought into existence a church, and then ascended on high to his Father.

For a time the gospel in its simplicity was preached in the world by the chosen apostles, though even in their day men began to mar it with their vain philosophies, their doctrines of science falsely so-called; and when the apostles passed away in death—then corruptions ran riot in the church; doctrines of men were taught for the commandments of God; a church made by men was substituted for the church of Christ; a church full of pride and worldliness; a church, which, while it clung to the forms of godliness, ran riot in excesses and abominations—until spiritual darkness fell like a pall over the nations; and thus they lay for ages—called the “Dark Ages.”

In vain men sought to bring about “Reformations,” and through them bring back the religion of Jesus Christ, and the church of Christ. To do that, however, was beyond the power of these men, however good their intentions. The gospel taken from the earth, divine authority lost, the church of Christ destroyed, there was but one way in which all this could be restored, namely: by reopening the heavens and dispensing again a knowledge of the gospel; by once more conferring divine authority upon men, together with a commission to teach all the world, and reestablish the church of Christ on earth. In a word, to bring in the promised “Dispensation of the Fulness of Times,” which shall unite into one all former dispensations and “gather together in one all things in Christ, . . . even in him” (Eph. 1:10).

~~The account of bringing in such a dispensation is to be the subject of our next chapter.~~

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Hopkins, *The End of Controversy Controverted*, esp. vol. 1, ch. 5; Milman, *History of Christianity from the Birth of Christ*; Milner, *End of Religious Controversy*; Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, chs. on “Adverse Events” and “Schisms and Heresies”; Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*; Priestly, *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* (“a most scholarly and masterful treatise”); Talmage, *Great Apostasy*.

Renewal of “The Way”

The testimony of prophecy on renewal of “the Way.” (a) St. Peter—the time of restitution of all things. St. Peter to a multitude of Jews in Jerusalem excited by the healing of the impotent man at the gate of the city, testified that the healing was a manifestation of the power of God through Jesus Christ, and then went on to say that the God of their fathers had glorified Jesus whom they had delivered up to a false judgment and denied the Holy One, and the Just, and had killed the Prince of Life, whom God had now raised from the dead, whereof he and his brethren were witnesses. “Repent ye therefore,” were his words to the multitude,

and be ⟨ye⟩ converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21)

We emphasize by repeating in substance, namely: there is to be, subsequent to the days of Peter and his associate apostles, a “time for the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouths of the holy prophets since the world began.” A “time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,” when there may be hope for Judah’s eyes to be opened to the fact that their Messiah was Jesus of Nazareth, whom they and their rulers had crucified. A time when God would “again send Jesus Christ who before had been preached unto them”; but whom, meanwhile, the heaven must retain until this time of the “restitution of all things.”

(b) St. Paul—The coming of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. And so St. Paul, evidently on the same subject says: God

hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of

the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and . . . 〈in〉 [on] earth; even in him. (Eph. 1:8-10)

It has already been set forth in these pages that a dispensation pertaining to the gospel is a giving out by revelation of the things of God; giving out knowledge concerning this plan of salvation; bestowing divine authority upon man to act in the name of the Lord, both in teaching and administering the ordinances of the gospel; and it has also been shown that there have been many such dispensations from the days of Adam until the days of the Christ. And now in this prophecy we have a promise that there shall be a “dispensation of the fulness of times” which can only mean a dispensation of which all others we have considered so far are but parts. And now comes this “dispensation of the fulness of times” which shall include them all in one, and that dispensation is undoubtedly the “time of the restitution of all things spoken of by the prophets”; a dispensation in which God will again send Jesus Christ to the earth, fulfilling the predictions concerning him; fulfilling the words of the angels who appeared to that group of friends watching the receding form of the Christ from the earth, and who put the question to that group: “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner” (Acts 1:11).

And again St. Paul,

The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. (2 Thes. 1:7-10)

Surely the voice of prophecy requires us to believe in the incoming of this dispensation subsequent to the meridian dispensation.

(c) *St. John: Vision of a restoration of the gospel in the hour of God's judgement.* Among many visions given to St. John on Patmos was this masterful one:

I saw another angel fly(ing) in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgement is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. (Rev. 14:6-7)

This vision is to be realized in the hour of God's judgement. A period that connotes with St. Peter's “times of the restitution of all

things,” when Jesus Christ, whom the heavens are retaining now, will be sent again to the earth and in judgement; also it connotes with St. Paul’s “dispensation of the fulness of times,” in the which all things shall be gathered together in one in Christ, things both in heaven and in earth. And let it be observed that the emphasis in this message given to St. John on Patmos comes on the part where the men of all nations, kindred, tongues, and people are called back to the worship of the true God, he “that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of water,” implying most strongly that the whole world in the hour of God’s judgment would not be worshipping the true and the living God, Creator of heaven and earth. Also since this gospel restored to the earth by the ministering of an angel in the hour of God’s judgment is to be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, *it* strongly implies that all nations, kindred, tongues and people would be without the gospel, hence it is restored to the earth to be universally proclaimed. None are to escape the warning voice of it. It shall be preached as the Christ himself declared,

for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. . . . And he shall send his angels with \langle the \rangle [a] great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. . . . Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (Matt. 24:14, 31, 35-37)

What a unity there is in all this voice of prophecy upon the incoming of this “time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,” these “times of the restitution of all things,” the incoming of a “dispensation of the fulness of times,” the restoration by angelic ministration of “the everlasting gospel” to be universally preached as a witness and then the end to come with the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ unto judgment!

The opening of the New Dispensation. The opening of this “dispensation of the fulness of times” came by the opening of the heavens to the prophet appointed of God to stand at the head of it. This prophet was Joseph Smith. He was born in Sharon, Windsor County, state of Vermont, U.S.A., in the year of our Lord 1805, on the 23rd of December. His childhood and early youth knew but poverty and hardships. At the age of ten his family moved and settled in Palmyra, in what is now known as Wayne County, state of New York. When about fourteen years

of age, a religious excitement arose in the vicinity of his home and his mind became intensely engaged upon the question of religion. A neighborhood revival participated in by several churches disclosed how much at variance the different sects were in relation to questions of religion. And these dissensions, together with manifest jealousy and ill will towards each other, excited the wonderment of the youth, Joseph Smith, and led him in the midst of the war of the words and tumult of opinions to frequently ask himself the question: "What is to be done? Who of all these parties is right?" At this juncture his attention was called to the golden text in the Epistle of St. James:

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, <who> [that] giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like <the> [a] wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. [For] let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. (James 1:5-7)

The first vision of the New Dispensation. Upon this scripture he pondered frequently until ~~at last~~ it became as the voice of God in his soul, and at last he resolved on putting this inspired message from St. James to the test. Having selected a place in a grove upon his father's farm, he retired to it and endeavored to pray for the wisdom that he felt of all persons he most needed. It was while engaged in this prayer that the heavens were opened to him, a glorious light, surpassing the brightness of the sun at noonday surrounded him, and in the midst of that intense light appeared two glorious personages, glorious beyond any power he possessed to describe them. They were alike, for although Father and Son, age writes no wrinkles upon the ever youthful face of immortals. They were alike, but one said, [pointing] to the other, "(Joseph,) This is My Beloved Son, Hear Him!" (cf. JS-H 1:17).

And then to this second person the youth addressed in substance his question: which of all these contending sects is true, which is thy church; and which shall I join?

It speaks well for the steadiness of the temperament of this youth that in such a presence he could clearly hold in mind the object that had brought him to his first verbal prayer. He gives the message he received from this second personage, the Son of God, to whom he was directed by the Father, in the following language:

I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in His sight: that those professors were all corrupt; that "they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts

are far from me; they teach for doctrines the commandments of men: having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.” He again forbade me to join with any of them: and many other things did he say unto me, which I cannot write at this time.¹

In a subsequent statement the Prophet added the following as part of what had been said to him *in addition to the direct message above*: “I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation.”²

The second vision of the New Dispensation: The Book of Mormon revealed. Three years after this *first* revelation an angel of God named Moroni was sent to the Prophet to reveal the existence of an ancient volume of scripture known as the Book of Mormon, a book which gives an account of the hand-dealings of God with the people whom he brought to the continents of America from what we now call the “Old World.”

(a) *The Jaredites.* The first colony came from the tower of Babel at the time of the dispersion of the people from the Euphrates Valley; they were called Jaredites, after their leader, named Jared. They occupied the land located in the southern part of Central America and founded a nation which existed for about sixteen centuries, and then were overwhelmed at last in a series of wars which ended in their complete destruction, on account of their great wickedness. This about 600 B.C.

(b) *The Nephite colony.* It was about the time of the destruction of the Jaredites that a small colony was led from Jerusalem, under divine guidance, to the western continents, where they too developed into a great people and into national life. This colony was made up of Israelites of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, and later augmented by a second small colony *made up* of Jews. They continued in occupancy of the land—chiefly in North America—until about 400 A.D. Then came their destruction because of their rebellion and wickedness against God. They lost touch with faith and righteousness until their civilization was overthrown, and they survived only in the tribal relations such as existed at the advent of the Europeans.

(c) *Summary of the book and its translation.* This record discloses the hand-dealings of God with these ancient people through the prophets and teachers God sent unto them, and also gives the

¹Smith, *History of the Church* 1:6; see also JS-H 1:19-20. [In the Roberts typescript, this quote was entirely in capital letters.]

²Smith, *History of the Church* 4:537, from a letter to John Wentworth.

account of the visits of the risen Christ to them, the introduction of the fulness of the gospel by his ministry, which established a true church of Christ in the western world, with all the principles and the ordinances of the gospel necessary to salvation. Therefore it contains the fulness of the gospel.

In this record God has brought forth a new witness to the truth of the things whereof the Hebrew scriptures, the Old Testament and the New also bear witness. Thus an angel came bringing the everlasting gospel which is to be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. This American volume of scripture, God's new witness to the old truths of the everlasting gospel, Joseph Smith was commanded to translate, and was given the power and means by which he could translate the unknown language of these ancient American peoples. The "means" provided was a "Urim and Thummim." This consisted of two transparent stones set in the rim of a bow, a divine instrument used in ancient times for obtaining knowledge from God. This instrument for translation was found with the gold plates on which the above record was engraven. Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon, and through a century now, it has been published to the world. ~~It~~ ***It is translated into*** fifteen of the world's languages.

Third vision: The restoration of the Aaronic priesthood. While engaged in the work of translating the Book of Mormon, and in answer to earnest prayer for light—and this time upon the subject of baptism—Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were visited by a messenger of God, no other than John, the Baptist, now raised from the dead, who in addition to giving them the needed instruction on baptism laid his hands upon their heads and said unto them:

Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness. (D&C 13)³

This occurred on the 15th of May, 1829.

Having given to these men the authority from God to baptize, they at once baptized each other in the clear water of the beautiful Susquehanna river at the point where the visitation had taken place, the angel—John, the Baptist—standing upon the banks supervising it. Surely the manner of it, and the purpose of it, would be correct when introduced under such supervision.

³Compare Smith, *History of the Church* 1:39–43 and footnote.

Fourth vision: The restoration of the Melchizedek priesthood. Later, most likely in the month of June following, and in fulfillment of a promise made by John the Baptist, when conferring upon these young men the Aaronic Priesthood, viz., that a higher authority than he conferred would later be given to them. In fulfillment of this promise, Peter, James and John, three apostles of the meridian dispensation, came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood, a priesthood after the order of the Son of God—even the apostleship;⁴ and bestowed upon them the keys of the kingdom under which plenary power they were authorized to proceed with the preaching of the gospel, organizing the Church, and doing whatsoever might be necessary to bring it in and establish the New Dispensation of the gospel, and prepare the world for the glorious coming of the Lord Jesus, and the founding of his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

The development of the New Dispensation. This fulness of the priesthood restored, Joseph Smith guided by further and almost continuous revelation organized the church of Christ to be known finally as the Church of Jesus Christ and to distinguish it from the church of Christ in more ancient times, the phrase was added “of Latter-day Saints,” “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” The church of God and the church of the people. A compound title representing a most beautiful possession of this institution, the church of God and the church of the people.

~~Gradually~~, Under the direction of revelations from God, bishops were chosen, with priests, teachers and deacons, grouped into quorums bearing these names, and constituting a complete organization of what is known as the “Lesser” or “Aaronic Priesthood” of God’s church. This division of the organization is charged chiefly ~~in~~ **with** administering in the temporal things of the church—the outward ordinances of the gospel and the administration of the details of the financial affairs of the church, in gathering tithes, and accounting for them and distributing the charities of the church. All this, however, under the supervision of the presidency of the other division of the priesthood, namely the Melchizedek Priesthood, which presidency presides over the whole church and all its affairs.

The higher or Melchizedek priesthood consists of ~~the~~ high priests, apostles, seventies, and elders, clothed with authority to act for God,

⁴The exact date of the restoration of this order of the priesthood is not definitely known, but the approximate date can be fixed as of this time named in the text. The matter is considered at length in Smith, *History of the Church* 1:40–42.

more especially in the spiritual activities of the church: preaching the gospel and administering in all its ordinances ***including the ordinances in the holy temples***; in teaching and expounding its truths; warning the nations of judgments to come, and of the approaching time when the Son of Man shall again appear on the earth and open up the promised reign of righteousness and peace.

The spirit of priesthood government. All this administrative work, both in the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods, is to be in the spirit of unfeigned love for, and interest in, the people of the world. It is part of the law given unto this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that no power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood—authority derived from God—only by persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness, by meekness and by love unfeigned, by kindness and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul, without hypocrisy and without guile, reproving betimes with sharpness when moved upon by the Holy Ghost to do so, and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love towards those who have been reprov'd that they might know that the faithfulness of God's priesthood is stronger than the cords of death (cf. D&C 121:41–44). In this spirit the Church government, which is purely moral government, is to be administered.

The Church so organized brings back the same organization though somewhat amplified, as that which was established by the ministry of Christ and his apostles in the great meridian dispensation. It has two great functions to perform, this Church: viz., To teach God's revealed truth to all the people; to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. And second, to perfect the lives of those who accept this proclamation of God's message, the everlasting gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ—the Truth.

The organization of the Church. This organization in its humble first forms,[†] began its existence on the sixth day of April, 1830, in Fayette township, Seneca county in the state of New York, and thence has passed through its century of existence until now knowledge of it

[†]On Roberts's statement about the "humble first forms of the Church," the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve wished to avoid any implication that the early Church was not fully organized by the Savior himself: "We think that this expression may be misunderstood and the thought may be conveyed that the forms of the Church have been changed, rather than developed." Of this concern Roberts handwrote **non-sense!** Reporting to President Clawson, George Albert Smith suggested: "Some other word [than "humble first forms"] could be used."

has spread over all the earth, and through it is restored to the world the Way, meaning by that a full and complete restoration of the everlasting gospel, uniting in one all the previous dispensations of it, and expanding toward that fulness of knowledge through the revelations of God yet future until it shall indeed gather together all things in Christ both things which are in heaven and in earth, “even in Him.”

Enlargement of the New Dispensation over others: Visions in the Kirtland Temple. As showing the enlargement of the New Dispensation over all other dispensations that have preceded it, attention is called to several important administrations that took place in the Kirtland Temple in 1836.

(a) Vision of the Savior. First, following the solemn dedication of the temple on the third of April, the Savior appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the temple proclaiming the acceptance of the house, and of the people who had erected it; the latter as his church, then struggling into existence, and blessed them. The description of our Lord’s appearance was worthy of the occasion:

We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of ~~many~~ **great** waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying: I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. Behold, your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me; therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice. Let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name. For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house. . . . And the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands; and this is the beginning of the blessing which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people. Even so. Amen. (D&C 110:2-7, 10; see also Rev. 1:12-18)

(b) Of Moses. After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened and Moses appeared before them and committed unto them the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and of the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north (D&C 110:11). Thus the way was opened for the restoration of Israel to his proper place in God’s plan of things. For the restoration of Israel to their lands and to the favor of God are among the things to be achieved in the New Dispensation.

(c) Of Elias. This vision closed, one Elias appeared, and committed “the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham,” saying that in these

brethren and their seed all the generations after them should be blessed (D&C 110:12). This personage was one it appears who had been associated with Abraham, and he came to deliver the keys of the dispensation held in the earth in the days of Abraham, and since he was the one chosen to deliver such keys, he undoubtedly stood at the head of that dispensation; and most probably was Melchizedek, the great High Priest of Abraham's time, who even blessed Abraham, and to whom Abraham paid his tithes; and as St. Paul suggests, undoubtedly the lesser is blessed of the greater (Heb. 7:7). Also it is to be noted that he restored something of patriarchal power and blessing since he said unto the brethren that in them and their seed all generations after them should be blessed and this is of patriarchal character, that would be fittingly delivered by a patriarch, whom we have already identified tentatively with the patriarch Shem, the son of Noah.

(d) Of Elijah. Following this vision *of Elias* came one which is characterized by those who received it as "great and glorious," for Elijah, the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death stood before them and said:

Behold, the time has fully come, which \langle is \rangle [was] spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he (Elijah) should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse—Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors. (D&C 110:14-16)

From the keys of knowledge which Elijah restored great light is thrown upon the plan of salvation showing it to be of more extensive application to the human race than was ever dreamed of in the conceptions of men previous to this visitation of Elijah.

Brief allusion to this extension of the application of the Atonement, and of the whole plan of the gospel, to those who had not had opportunity to learn of it in this life, or who having heard it, failed to avail themselves of its sovereign grace—as in the case of those who lived in the days of Noah (1 Pet. 3:18-20; 4:6)—has already been made in chapter forty; but the importance of the subject requires that further details be added here.

It is learned from the keys of knowledge which Elijah restored that the hundreds of millions who have died without a knowledge of Christ or of his gospel, including all the so-called heathen races, together with those who have been misled by the teachings of pseudoministers of Christ, are not eternally lost, but that, since the spirit of man when

separated from the body retains all the faculties of mind, the gospel is preached in the spirit world to the disembodied spirits, and that on condition of their accepting the gospel, and living according to the laws of God in the spirit, they may be saved on condition of the outward ordinances of the gospel being administered vicariously for them upon the earth by their agents—their relatives, or chosen friends.

The message of Elijah—salvation for the dead. That the gospel is preached to departed spirits is evident from the scriptures:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. (1 Pet. 3:18–20)

The plain, simple statement here is that the spirit of Christ, while his body lay in the tomb, went and preached to the spirits which were disobedient in the days of Noah. Turning again to the subject in the chapter following the one just quoted, the apostle says:

For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pet. 4:6).

That the ancient saints also knew something about performing ordinances vicariously for the dead is evident from this remark of the apostle Paul: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” (1 Cor. 15:29).

And we ask, if there was no such thing among the ancient saints as baptism for the dead, why, then does Paul refer to it in such positive terms?

Other ordinances for the dead. If baptism may be performed vicariously for the dead, it stands to reason also that other ordinances associated with securing salvation for man may also be vicariously administered on behalf of the dead: confirmation into the Church of Christ, and to baptism of the Spirit; ordination to the priesthood; marriage, eternal marriage—by which the parties to the marriage covenant are married as men and women are married who are in the flesh, who are alive: married in the bonds of an eternal covenant of marriage, not merely “until death do us part,” but married for always, “for time and for eternity!” For such is the nature of the marriage

covenant under the authority of the holy priesthood, the power which binds on earth and it is bound in heaven; which looses on earth, and it is loosed in heaven. This the power Jesus bestowed upon St. Peter when he gave unto him “the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” saying: “And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:19). So that while it may be true, as saith Christ it is, that in the resurrection they “neither marry, nor are given in marriage” (Luke 20:34-37); that means no more than that earth-life and the earth are the time and place of marriage, as it is also the place and time of baptisms, and confirmations, and ordinations, and all ordinances and ceremonies pertaining to the earth-life of man and his salvation; and not that the marriage status does not obtain in the eternal worlds—in our world when it shall become a sanctified and glorified sphere—a celestial world—a heaven, inhabited by the redeemed of this world and shall be their heaven.⁵

The gospel of Christ is not limited, then, in its power to save to this earth-life, or this world alone. Its powers enter into the spirit world. And by its proclamation in the world of spirits the fathers will learn that they are dependent upon their posterity still in this world for the performance of the outward ordinances of the gospel; hence, their hearts will be turned to the children. The children on earth will learn that it is within their power to attend to ordinances of the gospel for their progenitors; hence, the children will be turned to the fathers and the two worlds will be linked together in sympathetic relations. It is because of this, because of the knowledge restored by Elijah, that the Latter-day Saints, wherever they have planted their feet, have sought, even in the days of their greatest poverty, to build a temple, the proper place in which to attend to these ordinances for the dead; and they thus witness to the world that the hearts of the children are turned to the fathers and “that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors”! (D&C 110:16).

Thus has been brought to pass the renewal of the Way—the restoration to earth of the everlasting gospel in the New Dispensation of it—the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, in which all things will be gathered together in one—*even* in Christ—and consummated; completed by the coming, at last of the kingdom of God on earth, and the doing of the will of God on earth even as it is done in heaven. ~~Even so, O God, the Eternal Father, may it come, and come quickly!~~

⁵See chapter 55 of this work for further treatment of marriage in the New Dispensation.

If the successive events stated in this chapter be considered, the volume of them, and the glory of them, they will of their own force carry a weight of conviction to the open mind that will go far in establishing their truth. This method of considering them will be a fine illustration of a mind-principle much relied upon by the prophet of the dispensation who brought them forth. “Every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of \langle God, \rangle Jehovah,” he said, “has such an influence over the human mind—*the logical mind*—that it is convincing without other testimony. Faith cometh by hearing.” His trust in the absoluteness of truth is further illustrated by his continuing remarks on the above occasion: “If ten thousand men testify to a truth you *know* would it add anything to your faith? No. Or will ten thousand testimonies destroy your knowledge of a fact? No.” Then concluding his remarks he said: “I don’t want any one to tell I am a prophet or attempt to prove my word.”⁶ Which is to say that he relied upon the innate power of the truth in that word he spoke—that message he delivered—to be the convincing power of it. He had been taught of God to regard the mind of man as native to the truth and possessed of power to cognize it. “Man was in the beginning with God,” is his doctrine, revealed to him of God.

Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. . . . Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifested unto them, and they receive not the light. And every man \langle who \rangle [whose spirit] receiveth not the light is under condemnation. For man is spirit. (D&C 93:29-33)

And being spirit, in the chief fact of him, he has power by reason of that fact to cognize the things of the spirit, for his spirit is native to the things of the spirit, and he is under condemnation when he does not receive them. Hence our Prophet, shortening up Paul’s phrase, and making it more direct, frequently cried aloud in his discourses: “Faith cometh by hearing the word of God” (cf. Rom. 10:17). And upon that “hearing of the word of God,” the Prophet of the New Dispensation relied for the convincing power of its truth. And in that same spirit and confidence of its innate power of convincing men of the truth, we submit this brief account of the restoration of the Way of eternal life to the children of men.

⁶Remarks at Nauvoo, August 6th, 1843, Smith, *History of the Church* 5:526; italics in original.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: “Epistle of Kallikrates”; Roberts, *Deseret News*, April 28, 1928; Roberts, *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, pt. 4, 295-450; Huidekoper, *Christ’s Mission to the Underworld*, esp. p. 49; Pratt, *Remarkable Visions*; Smith, *History of the Church* 1:40-42 and notes; L. Smith, *Joseph Smith*; Widtsoe, *Restoration of the Gospel*; and D&C 1; 20; 110; 127; and 128:20.

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PART III

The Life

“I am . . . the Life.”

Jesus to his Disciples (John 14:6)

The Life: Manifested in the Christ

Jesus the Life. “I am . . . the life” (John 14:6).

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4).

“I am the light and the life of the world” (3 Ne. 9:18).

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

Just as Jesus proclaimed himself to be the Truth and the Way, so also he proclaimed himself to be the Life in God’s plan of things for man’s earth existence. But just what does that mean? We know that he is proclaimed in the revelations of God as being “the resurrection, and the life,” and that though men were dead, yet in him should they live. This is followed by the singular statement, “whosoever liveth and believeth [in me] shall never die” (John 11:25–26). Also in his Gethsemane prayer he said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). It would appear, then, that “eternal life” comes through “belief,” through a “knowledge of God,” and that would lead us to believe that these scripture references to Jesus being “the Life” had a broader scope and meaning than the securing of physical *immortality* through the resurrection from the dead.

From what has gone before throughout these pages, we have already learned that death has two phases: first, spiritual death, second, physical death. The Lord Jesus, the “Anointed One,” came “to seek and to save” that which was lost; and as what was lost was spiritual life, dependent upon union with God; and physical life, dependent upon union of spirit and earth element, this we have already concluded, is what Jesus came “to save” by restoring the spiritual and the physical life of man. A noble mission indeed, comprising a redemption of the world, the salvation of a race, a task worthy of Deity, whatever the sacrifice might be, and Deity’s shame had it not be performed, since Deity alone could achieve such a work.

And yet there is something more than this in the mission of the “Anointed One.” He is the Truth respecting the things of God. He reveals

God in his own person, for he is declared to be the very image of the Father's person, and the brightness of his glory (cf. Heb. 1:1-3). In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead, bodily (cf. Col. 1:19; 2:9). He is God manifested in the flesh, and in respect of being the revelation of God, and the fullness of that revelation, he is the whole truth of it; and that becomes the very heart of all truth in the world, the knowledge of God, the highest knowledge, and the heart of all truth that may be learned and realized by the intellect and the heart of man. It will lead to the solving of all mysteries, to the attainment of all knowledge of that which is, or has been, or shall become; and our Lord Jesus is the complete manifestation of that truth. He is the Truth!

Also, as we have seen, he is the Way. No man can come unto the Father but through him—meaning that no man can come to the knowledge of God and into fellowship with God but through him; and no man cometh unto the Christ, “except the Father . . . draw him” (cf. John 6:44). The Father and the Son work together, they are in cooperation; and the Holy Ghost is in the union also, in the way of being the witness to the truth. And “no man, speaking by the Spirit, calleth Jesus accursed, and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Cor. 12:3).

And yet, magnificent as all this is, it is not the whole of the story. There is still to be accounted for “I am . . . the life,” and “The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment” (John 14:6, Luke 12:23). We are told in the scriptures that in the Lord Jesus was life; and the life was the light of men; and though the light shineth in darkness, the darkness ~~may not~~ comprehendeth it **not**, and though he that was the Light coming to his own yet he was rejected of them. Nevertheless, we are assured, to as many as received him—to as many as will receive him—to them gave he power, and to them he will give power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name. To those that were born of him, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men—“but of God” (cf. John 1:1-14). He gives his promise that whosoever will follow him, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have “the light of life” (John 8:12).

No wonder that when contemplating his mission the Master said to his followers: “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (John 6:35).

The gospel must be a life. All this means that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not only a plan, a way, it must be a Life. The gospel must be a life to be understood—to be realized. God must provide, in order to complete his plan, not only a theory of living, an outline, verbal or written,

and frequently repeated, and by such repetitions reveal it from many angles—but it must be set forth by example, and the example must be perfect. Men may not be able in this our mortal life to live up to its perfections, but the perfections must be seen, the one perfect life must be lived so that men shall know what it is they are to strive for. As the paschal lamb, the symbol of the real sacrifice had to be without spot or blemish—foreshadowing that the one making the real atonement, *would* be without blemish—so this “Life,” which is to be the type-life under God’s plan—the gospel—must be perfect; without blemish, or spot, to stand out above the horizon of the world forever present in man’s vision as the perfect life aimed at in gospel-living. Or as Jesus, the anointed, stands in the foreground of all history, as the complete and perfect revelation of what Deity is, God completely revealed, so, too, must the perfect life stand out revealed clearly to the consciousness of men, so that there can be no question as to either Deity revealed or the perfect life portrayed to the consciousness of men, and there must be no possibility of doubt in either case. Two splendid words: God! Life! And these are revealed in Jesus Christ that men may know both the one and the other.

And now as to this life. Let us go back to the starting point to find out what it is to be. God in the council of Gods—divine personages—archangels, angels, and spirits of men, said:

We will make an earth whereon these may dwell; And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; [And] they who keep their first estate ⟨that preexistent spirit estate in which they would accept the proposed plan of Deity for their advancement⟩ shall be added upon ⟨i.e., shall be put in the way of progression⟩; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate ⟨the estate of their earth life, and in that estate of earth life will do “all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them”—they⟩ shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ⟨for⟩ ever. (Abr. 3:24–26)

From this prelude to the opening chapter of man’s earth life we learn that ~~it~~ *said earth life* is to be the trial period, the testing field for man. God “will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them.” The test is to be obedience; the submission of man’s will to God’s will—to God’s law. The will must learn to control all other qualities of mind. It must be the master quality of mind, acting upon intelligence after intelligence has surveyed the whole field and submits report to consciousness as

to what is evil, what is good, and better, and best. Then the “will” must at the last pronounce the determination as to what shall be done, that is the all important matter—what shall be done? Upon the right answer to that hangs the salvation of every soul of man in the world. Happy is he who learning the truth and finding the way comes to that point where he conforms his “will” to law, to the will of God. Whatsoever God saith unto him that will he do; for that will be the highest manifestation of wisdom that men can anywhere or anyhow arrive at; for in doing that, men but submit to the highest possible wisdom, wisdom that arises from perfect knowledge. All things then will be done in “the wisdom of him who knoweth all things” (2 Ne. 2:24), and there will be no mistake. Man’s faith and action will find sure foundation at last if he will say with Joshua: “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh. 24:15).

The keynote of the Life. Now again, “the Life,” the keynote of it. The Life that was lived, the one perfect Life. ~~the Life of Jesus.~~ Thought of it takes us back again to the Council preceding the creation of the earth. After all things had been explained and God had made his covenant with men to give to them eternal life—spiritual life, and physical immortality, it became known that a sacrifice would have to be made in order to restore that which would be lost by the breaking up of the harmony of things, and the question arose, “Whom shall I send?” That is, to make the sacrifice and bring to pass the necessary redemption of man. The approved answer by the Son of God was, “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). And the keynote thus struck in that council became the keynote of the life that the Son of God lived in the earth. This was the chief characteristic of him repeatedly expressed. In youth it was: “wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49). Later: “I seek not \langle to do \rangle mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me” (John 5:30). Again: “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). It followed him, this principle, to the very last phase of his mortal, earth life. If it were possible he would have been pleased to have had some other way taken to the accomplishment of God’s purpose: “O [my] Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me”—the cup of his bitter suffering and his approaching *humiliation and* crucifixion—“if it be possible, let this cup pass from me”; but then and instantly, as if he feared he had asked too much; instantly—“nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matt. 26:39); No answer coming, he bowed reconciled to the inevitable. Afterwards he said to the assembled Nephites to

whom he appeared on the Western Continent—and now triumphantly, since he had endured the cross and gained the crown—“I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning” (3 Ne. 11:11). Later still, to the Prophet of the New Dispensation, in referring to his passion, he said:

Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, . . . Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, [and] I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men. (D&C 19:18-19)

Here was one (the Lord Jesus) who proved beyond all human imagining that he would do whatsoever “the Lord his God would command him.” And that is the ensample, the perfect ensample, of what God would have men to do: Be obedient. “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matt. 19:17).

Type of the Life: “Prodigal son” or the Christ? The prodigal son, made so much of in emotional religious appeal, as exhibiting God’s power in redemption, is not the type of what God would have men to be. True, since there are those—and many of them—who among the children of men will be prodigal sons, it is a glorious reality that they can repent and through repentance find their way back to their father’s home and receive royal welcome and start anew in the way of keeping the commandments after the terrible experiences of folly and sin; but that is not the type that God would have upheld before men as an example to follow. The Christ-type is the divine ideal, the mould and form, God would have followed by men—the perfect life. This the Christ emphasized when he said to his Judean disciples, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). And to the Nephite disciples the Christ made this clear by putting to them the question, “what manner of men ought ye to be?” answered, “Verily I say unto you, even as I am” (3 Ne. 27:27). “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience ⟨through⟩ [by] the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them ⟨who⟩ [that] obey him” (Heb. 5:8-9);^a even as he, of course, obeyed the Father.

^aThe Joseph Smith Translation explains that Hebrews 5:7-8 is a parenthetical comment referring to Melchizedek, not Christ.

In all his life, as we have said, the Christ was dominated by this master conception of duty—obedience to God. He was here to do the will of the Father that sent him. And in all the events of his life and his dealings with men, this principle gave a noble graciousness to all that he did. Truly his chief apostle could well say of him: “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:38). And not only was God “with him,” but “in him.” “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor. 5:19); and he was revealing God at work.

Accessibility to “the Life.” How richly the incidents of his life unfold the principle upon which the Christ worked, we may not know, but by contemplation of it! The value of the life will be in proportion to its accessibility to mankind; and how accessibly was and is the life of the Christ to the world! To the rich, to the poor, to the sorrowful and to the joyous. To the unfortunate, the cripples, the sick, the lepers, the halt, dumb and blind. To the rulers and the magistrates, the despised Samaritans, the publicans and the sinners; the beggar by the wayside, the widows—of which she of Nain was typical. To those grateful for his administrations, and to those ungrateful; to the penitent thief on the cross; even to those who crucified him, he could say, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). To Nicodemus, who for fear of the Jews would only come to him under cover of the night—to him he could teach the mystery of being born again; to the dwarfed, waddling Zacchaeus, who must needs climb a tree to behold him above the heads of the crowd—in his house he would dine! To the woman taken in adultery and dragged to his feet by her accusers—to her he could be gracious, refuse to accuse her, but bade her *to go her way but to* “sin no more” (John 8:11). To schyster lawyers, seeking to entrap him into inconsistency of utterance, even with them he could be patient. What a heterogeneous mass had full access of him! And none who came turned he away!

All this reflects the graciousness and majesty of God the Father, who “maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45). That scorns to love only them that love him—for the publicans do so—but the divine love for our example is extended to even those who mock and revile God. ~~for he knows that they know not what they do.~~

The graciousness of “the Life” to disciples and friends. To his close adherents and friends, how benign and sweetly benevolent

the Christ could be and was! ~~to~~ **St. Peter**, the oldest man of the group of his immediate followers, ~~St. Peter~~ rough and tempestuous as he was, the Master corrected with firmness; but loved and trusted him beyond *expected* measure. What a world of feeling there is in that soul-cry of his over this apostle when he said: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:31-32). This man Peter boasted that though all men should be offended at the Christ yet never would he be offended with him. But Jesus said to him: “Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.” To which Peter answered, “Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee” (Matt. 26:33-35). But Peter fulfilled the master’s prediction, that night he denied him thrice and with cursing! And what was the punishment? Nay, rather the correction? The Master after the resurrection forced Peter to a three-~~time~~ **fold** declaration of his love. St. John tells the story: “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more then these?” Referring to the other disciples present—lovest thou me more than these do?^b For Peter is already designated as the head of the church, to whom had been given in a special way the keys of the kingdom; and therefore more may be demanded of him than of the others. Also both the Christ and the other disciples must know the soundness of Peter’s mind and love for the master, the supreme thing both for the disciples and the one to be entrusted with the very keys of the kingdom. Hence—“Lovest thou me more than these?” And Simon answered: “Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.” And the Christ said, “Feed my lambs.” Again, the second time, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?” And the answer, “Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.” And the Christ said unto him, “Feed my sheep.” Then the third time, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?” Perhaps Peter was beginning to see the drift of the master’s purpose, that three-fold denial was being replaced by a three-fold declaration of love and loyalty. Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, “Lovest thou me?” And doubtless in tears Peter said, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.” Jesus saith unto him, “Feed my sheep”

^bThis is an unusual interpretation of this scripture. The original Greek is ambiguous, as is also the English translation. Any of the following are a possible translation: “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than (you love) these (people)?” “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than (you love) these (things)?” “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these (people love me)?”

(John 21:15-17). And the apostle who had denied the Christ thrice, and with cursing, was after three times affirming his love, reinstated with trust and confidence, and with commission to be the feeder of the lambs and of the sheep, to be the chief shepherd of the flock, the head of the church on earth in that dispensation, so long as he lived, holding the keys of the kingdom, having power to remit whosoever sins he would remit, and retain whose-soever sins he would retain (cf. John 20:23).

“The Life” more than morality. Dealing with the gospel-life, there are those who misapprehend it. ~~And~~ It becomes with some a tangent that leads away from the truth in that they would reduce the whole of the gospel to merely right moral living—a system of morality—what men call human or natural righteousness, and so they say “doctrine does not matter”; forms, ceremonies, symbols, ordinances, right conceptions of truth, right mental attitude towards existence, *towards God* does not matter. ***Practical righteousness is what counts.*** The gospel is not a “power of God unto salvation”; has nothing to do with being born again, born of the water and of the spirit; nothing to do with knowing the only God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, as being necessary to eternal life. That which is recognized as plain, human, morality will be sufficient for salvation, with the logical result that God and Christ with plans of salvation, atonements, and redemptions through love, may be ruled out of the reckoning except as the moral life of the Christ may be taken as an ideal. It is true also that from one point of view the gospel may be regarded *chiefly* as a life; but to be complete and perfect, it must be a life founded on truth and on a system of truth that requires right conception of true principle and doctrine and the satisfactory gospel life must be a *lived-out* consequence of that truth and system of doctrine. The gospel has a history, and “the Life” required in it is based upon the facts of that history. “The Life” also must be lived with a view of conforming it to the purpose of God in the creation, and the purpose he has in making possible the earth life of man. Religion is more than mere morality; it is a new birth, a spiritual power; it is a conformity to the purpose of God, a spiritual union with God, and a submission to his will, and a careful performance of all that he has ordained as necessary to the completion of “the Life!” Let no one therefore attempt to displace God’s gospel plan by a substitution of humanitarianism, by which is here meant a system of morals based upon what is recognized as contributing to human welfare, the basis merely of social relations and individual well-being. Truly the gospel

is expressed in a life, but it is a life, in harmony with God's purposes; ~~and~~ **with** fellowship, and complete union with ~~him~~ **God, established** through spiritual birth and consciousness of **a** one-ness with God's life.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson:

All the citations of scriptures in this lesson, and their context; I can recall no other works that may be referred to with advantage, except that a more exhausting research of the four books of our scripture may be made than is represented by the citations used in the texts and footnotes of this chapter.

The Life: Under Commandments of God

The crux of “the Life”—obedience. “The Life” as we have seen is the Lord Jesus, and the thing emphasized in that Life is obedience; and that obedience contemplated by the gospel is obedience to the commandments of God: the keynote of which is expressed by God the Father when he said: “We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abr. 3:25). That declaration presents the whole case. It was restated by the inspired writer of Ecclesiastes when he said: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of men” (Eccl. 12:13). All that follows can only be by way of illustration and commentary. But for the purpose of making this central truth of “the Life” impressive, let us contemplate it through illustrations.

To Adam this law made its first appearance when God said to him and his spouse, and blessed them, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over . . . every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Gen. 1:28). This, from that time on, became the commandment of God to ~~him~~ **Adam**, and through him to the race, since only through those who were born of him, following in the same commandment and responsibility, could this commandment be carried out.

The next development of the duty of man by receiving commandments from God was the edict against eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A commandment with a penalty attached “Thou shalt not eat of it: [for] in the day [that] thou eatest thereof thou

With respect to this chapter, Roberts commented: “These references to the scriptures may be greatly multiplied. All four books of the scripture—Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price—Book of Moses and Book of Abraham passim, on the various subdivisions given in the analysis of this lesson.”

shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:17). The circumstance of man’s transgression of this law with its developments has already been considered, and it is not necessary to reiterate or amplify what was then said.

The institution of sacrifices—the symbol of the Life. Then came the commandment of the Lord through Adam to his posterity, that “they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord” (Moses 5:5). This sacrifice was to be a perfect lamb, without spot or blemish. It was to be slain and offered upon an alter as a burnt offering unto the Lord: “And Adam was obedient unto the commandments [of the Lord]. And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me” (Moses 5:5–6). The commandment was given as an arbitrary direction, no explanation made, no reason given for such a sacrifice at that time; or the purpose of it; but Adam, having received the commandment from God obeyed it, and taught his children to make the sacrifices. From this arises a very effective and beautiful lesson in obedience. “Blind obedience,” some would call it; but Adam’s obedience was not blind. He doubtless perceived by reflection that to follow God’s commandment would be following the highest wisdom which arose from perfect knowledge, and therefore his obedience was intelligent obedience, and an act of trust in the knowledge and wisdom of God.

The sacrifice expounded. The visiting angel now offered the following explanation: “This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore” (Moses 5:7–8). This was now the law of God unto Adam, and obedience to it became the measure of his duty. With this came also the law of baptism by water and baptism of the Holy Ghost, and continued adherence to laws of righteousness as they were developed by continuous revelations from God, whose commandments were always in all ages the moral and spiritual law unto those who came into allegiance, though faith, with God. In this patriarchal period, in which all the patriarchs wrought from Adam to Enoch and Noah and Shem and Abraham, it was so; and this period, as we have already seen, was characterized by the continuation of the revelations of God unfolding the duties of men.

The testing of Abraham. Abraham’s experience with reference to offering up his son Isaac gives an important lesson on this principle of

obedience. He received a commandment to offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice unto God upon an altar, and since the commandment was of God, Abraham prepared himself and his son to make such a sacrifice, notwithstanding it seemed to wreck all the hopes that the Patriarch had regarded as being centered in this son of promise, and as the one through whom he and all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. But Abraham was one of those spirits who stood amid the hosts of spirits who were characterized as being “great” and “noble” and “good”; one, who before the creation of the world was to illustrate the great testing process on which loyalty to God is founded—and “we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abr. 3:25). And so the offering was prepared and would have been consummated, but when the Patriarch had demonstrated his faith and implicit trust in God, and his integrity to God, he was relieved of the burden of slaying his son as a sacrifice. A substitute was found in the ram in the thicket, which was offered instead of Isaac.

Moses and the law. So, too, with Moses, who came to Israel first with a dispensation of the same gospel which was had among the patriarchs, both in antediluvian and postdiluvian times, but the people, brutalized by their bondage of four hundred years of captivity in Egypt, were not equal to fulfilling its requirements, and so a lesser law, the law of “carnal” commandments was given to them with a labored ritual of types and symbols which should be followed by the reality which would finally come in the Atonement and sacrifice of the Son of God with its influx of spiritual forces and powers.

Yet attending upon even this, the “lesser law,” made heavy with its burden of ceremonials, came also the great moral law which belongs to the gospel in every dispensation of it. This found expression at Mount Sinai in the “ten words” of God, or the “Ten Commandments.” Those commandments now became the law to Israel. They constituted a noble outline of Israel’s duty toward God and toward men.

I.

“I am the Lord thy God. . . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

II.

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . .
Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.”

III.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

IV.

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

V.

“Honour thy father and thy mother.”

VI.

“Thou shalt not kill.”

VII.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

VIII.

“Thou shalt not steal.”

IX.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

X.

“Thou shalt not covet.”

These “ten commandments” (Ex. 20:2-17), while directly given to Israel, may well be taken over by all races and nations of men as fundamentals in universal righteousness, so excellent are they; and especially as expounded and modified by the Son of God, during his ministry in the meridian dispensation.

The voice from the wilderness. These “ten commandments” and performance of the ceremonials of types and symbols of “the better things to come,” constituted the obligations of Israel to God and to each other until the coming of the forerunner of the Christ, who to Israel, then a long time wandered from “the path direct,” marked off by the great law given to Moses, came with a serious message of repentance, and a prophecy of the coming of the Messiah with the greater things of the gospel, and the higher spiritual life that it had to introduce, and a somewhat new basis from which to fashion man’s attitude of mind towards God. John the Baptist’s shrill cry of repentance, which attracted the attention of Israel, and his baptism in water for the remission of sins, became then the law of the Life to the people of God:

Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . *<There>* [He that] cometh after me *<one that>* is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge *<the>* [his] floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he *<shall>* [will] burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. (Matt. 3:2, 11-12)

The teaching of the Christ. When Jesus came, he continued John’s message of repentance. And throughout his ministry he not only preached the gospel but lived its life, and unfolded the law and the gospel as no other teacher or prophet in Israel ever unfolded it.

Let us contemplate his doctrine of “the Life” in his teaching, as we have already considered it in his living.

The Christ’s restatement of God’s law.

Lawyer: “Master, which is the great commandment in the law?”
(This the question of the lawyers who came tempting Jesus.)

Jesus: (1) “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it,”

(2) “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”
(Matt. 22:36-40)

From negative to positive form. It is to be observed that this restatement of the commandments is a statement which is all-inclusive of what is written in the law and in the prophets, and also it reinstates all the moral and spiritual law of the patriarchal dispensations, for it must be remembered that running all through the ages there is but one law of righteousness which attaches to the one gospel, and this generalization hit off by the Christ in answer to the lawyer’s question, is a full restatement of the whole law of righteousness.

Two things should be noticed in respect of this restatement of the law as compared with the ten great words of God to Moses: namely, (1) that the Christ changes the basis of the statement from the negative to the positive form.^a Except for two commandments out of the ten, the negative form is used by Moses. The two exceptions are, first; the imperative commandment, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8); and the second is like unto it in form, “Honour thy father and thy mother” (Ex. 20:12). Undoubtedly the affirmative form of statement as given by the Christ in his summation of the law, is more impressive than the “Thou shalt not” style of the ten commandments. (2) That the Christ’s generalization is based upon “love” as the motive force in God’s law. That is to say, obedience to God’s law properly comes, and can only properly come, from love of God, not from fear of him. We

^aIn restating and epitomizing the Law, Christ uses two quotations from the Old Testament: “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deut. 6:5), and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Lev. 19:18).

note the saying of the Psalmist: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”^b (Ps. 111:10); but we also remember that the scriptures teach that “⟨the⟩ fear ⟨of⟩ the Lord ⟨is to⟩ [and] depart from evil” (Prov. 3:7).^c And “the fear of the Lord is to hate evil” (Prov. 8:13). Martin Luther’s translation of the passage in the Psalms, “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” appeals as more nearly true than the translation in our authorized version, namely, “Reverence for God, is the beginning of wisdom.” “Fear of the Lord” places the approach on the lower plane. It may not be doubted that men do many things and refrain from doing many other things from “the fear of the Lord,” but it adds something to human dignity to think of men as keeping the commandments of God because of “reverence” for him, rather than to be moved thereto by fear. Better yet, and rising to the plane on which the Christ would have us work, that men keep the divine commandments from love of God.

Love of God. First, however, there stands the question, how can we love God and be obedient to him through love? There is but one way: men must learn to know him; and if men can only learn to know God, love will follow as natural consequence. And in order that we mortal men might know God, and by that means love him, he has given the sublime manifestation of himself through our Lord Jesus, our elder brother. He is God’s manifestation in the flesh. “Without controversy,” says St. Paul, “great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest ⟨“Manifested” is the suggested marginal translation, see Oxford S.S. Edition of the Bible⟩ in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Tim. 3:16). All this in plain allusion to the Christ. Again, the testimony of Paul:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb. 1:1-3)

^bRoberts’s argument, although based on Luther’s German translation instead of on the original Hebrew, is valid. The Hebrew word translated “fear” in the King James Version can have the meaning “fear of God, reverence, piety.” F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951), 432.

^cRoberts changed this text from a command to a description of cause and effect.

“The brightness of his ⟨God’s⟩ glory,” and the “express image of his ⟨God’s⟩ person,” is an averment that Jesus Christ was the revelation of God the Eternal Father. The scriptures are replete with iteration and reiteration of the truth: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, ⟨even⟩ the glory [as] of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14). This our Lord Jesus. This God manifested in the flesh.

Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus [saith unto him], Have I been so long [time] with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words [that] I speak [un]to you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. (John 14:8-10)

In other words, Christ is the revelation of Deity. The revelation of all that can be called God, both in personality and in attributes, and therefore representatively, he is the Father as well as the Son. He is, and represents all that can be thought upon or conceived of as God. “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” And again “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 1:19; 2:9). God, then, is manifested for us men in the flesh through Jesus Christ; and with the “Spirit of God” that proceeds forth from his presence, to fill the immensity of space and in our modern revelations called “the Light of Christ” (cf. D&C 88:6-12), he becomes truly God manifested as personage in the flesh; and by his Spirit he is also imminent in the world, by which we mean, everywhere present by his Spirit, and everywhere present with all the attributes of God, not only as creative force, **but also as world sustaining power** intelligence-inspiring power, the “light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (D&C 93:2); also the vital force—life-giving power, “in him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4); and preeminently Jesus is the love-manifested power of God in the world.

We learn God, then, through the revelation he has given of himself in Christ Jesus our Lord; and knowing him as the very Son of God, and the complete revelation of all that can be thought upon as God, who can withhold love, or refuse to obey God when God is revealed in Jesus Christ? Thus revealed it is not difficult to accept and obey the first part of the great commandment, namely, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all they heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matt. 22:37); for it is but a question of knowing him, **and then** love will follow as effect follows cause.

Love of man. “And the second **⟨commandment⟩** is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matt. 22:39).

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Just how comprehensive is this? Who is my neighbor? In the incident of the man who fell among ~~the~~ thieves enroute from Jerusalem to Jericho and was stripped of all, and passed up by the Priest and the Levite but helped by the Samaritan—***one of the outlawed from fellowship with Israel***—as related by the Christ, the idea is conveyed that he who is helpful to us in our misfortunes is truly our neighbor, a friend in need. But that is only half the story, he who needs our help is also our neighbor; and if this interpretation be accepted, then it would go far towards bringing all men within the definition of “our neighbor”; and indeed, that is undoubtedly intended to be the law. It is not merely those who help us that fulfill the law numerically ***as neighbor***; the great principle is love of man, sympathetic interest in all men, so that the great generalization of the Christ as to the greatest commandment in both parts of it would be, love of God, and love of man, without limitation. This being true, we are confronted at first glance with a law extremely difficult to comply with—love of man, love of men—love of all men! It was pointed out in our treatment of the first part of this law, that it was easy to fulfil it, in that it only required a knowledge of God as revealed in Jesus Christ to have love follow as a matter of course. For to know God is to love him. But when it comes to loving men—and meaning by that love of all men, the obstacles seem insuperable. How can we love all men, when so many of them are repulsive? Repulsive both in person and in the nature of them—vile, many of them, in every way; filthy in apparel and in their bodies; vicious by nature, thieves, drunkards, liars, deceitful, treacherous, riotous, boisterous, revengeful, stupid, hopeless in depravity, contemptible, without natural affection, lecherous, and if there is any other thing that makes for badness, some of them have it, and have it all! How shall we love these? Is it not unreasonable that the law of God should require us to love them? And if such characters be included in the commandments to “love men,” how can we live the law? Undoubtedly God loves them, but not their vileness, not their sin, for the scripture informs us that he “cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance” (D&C 1:31). The scriptures represent him also as abhorring sin, and yet while condemning the sins, he may nevertheless, and does, love the soul even of the sinner. And why? And how? Because God looks into the depths, and knows while men are sinful and vile, yet they can depart from sin, they can repent, and have created in them a new heart and a new mind; they can be born again, and change their attitude in relation to the whole ***of*** life. They may be

washed clean and stand upright in justice, in righteousness, in truth. So God loves them, not because of their sin, nor in spite of their sin, but because of what they may become. He views them in the light of their possibilities. There are values within them that are hidden from their fellowmen, hidden from themselves even; but clearly seen of God. The outside, aye, and most of the inside, may be utterly vile and repulsive, but within it all there is that which, if only it can be reached and awakened, may start a life that will work from within outward, sloughing off the vileness of both inside and outside, until it shall cleanse itself, even as rolling water by movement and sunshine and atmosphere, purifies itself; and out of the chrysalis of sinful man may at last evolve a regenerated man, a sinner born again and made a child of God. God all the while sees these possibilities, he sees his own image, his own divine nature under all that mass of accumulated unrighteousness and moral filth, and sees and loves his image even there.^d And God's task through the gospel is to call that image forth and develop it.

The end of the argument is that man, if he would keep the second part of the great commandment, and love his neighbor, he must learn to look upon his fellowman as God looks upon him; and view him in the light of his possibilities, and extend the neighborly hand that shall draw him out of his fallen state and make him realize that he is a son of God. Let those who are converted assume no pose of self-righteousness in their attitude of mind towards those who may be esteemed as fallen, and too frequently as hopeless. Rather let this be the attitude: "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32). Remember, too, the case of the pharisee and the publican, and know that the sinner, conscious of his sins and struggling by confession to abandon them, may be more acceptable to God than the more righteous person, proudly conscious and over-conscious of his few virtues, and extolling himself into a smug self-righteousness.

Identity of principle in love of God and love for man. The same principle is at work in this second part of the Christ's summary of the law as in the first, namely: first, to love God, it is necessary to know him, and knowing him, love follows: and second, love of man—the race—will come by knowing him, and knowing him in the light of

^dRoberts seems to miss an important point in his discussion of why God loves all people. Certainly God sees the potential they have for becoming like him, but more importantly they are his children, and he loves them as any parent loves even the most wayward child. God's love extends even to Lucifer and his other children who fell from their first estate, although they have forfeited their potential to become like their Father.

his possibilities, what he may become; love will follow, accompanied, too, by a determination to do the neighbor-act; namely, to assist in his redemption, work with the Christ in the salvation of men, remembering that Christ died for sinners. And “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation ⟨of⟩ [for] our sins” (1 Jn. 4:10). And the fullness of the law is “he who loveth God loveth his brother also” (1 Jn. 4:21). That is to say, coming to know the first part of the law and living it, will lead to knowing the second part of the one law, and living that, too. For surely it would be a solecism to affect love of God, and then not love the things God loves. And so the conclusion of the whole matter is: those who would be sons of God, saints of God, must learn to go the whole distance with the law—love of God, and love of man; otherwise there would be a halting by the way. On these two commandments, united as parts of one law, hang all the law and all the prophets. Hence the scripture: “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” As St. Paul so well puts it:

Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, [Thou shalt not bear false witness], Thou shalt not covet; and if there **be** any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Rom. 13:8-10)

The Life: ~~Under~~ The Sermon on the Mount I

The Sermon on the Mount: St. Matthew's version. The next great document to the Christ's summary of the gospel law is the Sermon on the Mount; and this is but an extension into detail, and a commentary on the statement and summary of the law already considered.

I shall follow the sermon as set forth in St. Matthew, as it is there in the completest form among the New Testament writers. St. Luke is the only other writer in the Gospels who gives any considerable part of this sermon, and he divides it really into two parts, and gives it in two widely separated chapters, the sixth and the twelfth. The first part, Luke 6:17-49, seems to be a different occasion, and a different setting from that given on the mount according to St. Matthew. For Luke's setting is in a "plain" in the presence of a great multitude out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon. Many came to be healed of physical infirmities. To this mixed multitude the Master delivered a discourse which includes a large part of the principles set forth in Matthew chapters five, six and seven; but greatly curtailed, extending only from verse seventeen to forty-nine of Luke's chapter six. Another part of the sermon, a fragment, is found in Luke 12, which seems more especially directed to those whom *the Master* had called to be his disciples—more especially the Twelve (see Luke 12:22).

The Beatitudes. The Beatitudes with which the Sermon on the Mount **opens** (following from now on St. Matthew) might well be regarded as statements of the results growing out of acceptance of, and living in harmony with, the Master's all-inclusive one "Great

For the two lessons on the Sermon on the Mount, chapters 50 and 51, Roberts recommended readings in Matthew, Luke, 3 Nephi, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the "whole of the four gospels passim. Also Doctrine and Covenants passim." In chapter 51, he also refers the reader to his 1909 work on the Book of Mormon, *New Witnesses for God*.

Commandment”—love of God and love of man. For love of God and love of man is the “fulfilling of the law,” and reaching its complete fruition shall mellow man’s nature and his life to the Beatitudes combined. The Christ was all the Beatitudes express.

Discipleship: The glory and responsibility of it. Having closed his exordium on the Beatitudes, the Savior directly addressed the disciples as to their responsibilities as disciples, destined to follow his doctrines: “Ye are the salt of the earth.” Salt, the preservative element; the symbol in man’s thought of wholesomeness; that which renders tasteless things palatable. The symbol also of wisdom, but best regarded as the preservative element. How gracious the characterization: “Ye are the salt of the earth”; but what a tremendous responsibility runs parallel with that asseveration! “But if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it ⟨the world⟩ be salted?” The salt “is thence[forth] ⟨found⟩ good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” (Matt. 5:13). Discipleship means nothing unless it holds first to the doctrine and the example of the Christ, both in form and substance; unless disciples do this, they are as salt that has lost its savor and good for nothing, and become despicable!

~~The disciples of Christ, “The light of the world: And Again~~ *the Christ* to his disciples: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house” (Matt. 5:14-15). Again, noting the exalted place granted to his following and with that exaltation comes again an equal responsibility; hence the admonition: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). Then comes a most important statement, linking up the true and pure system of ethics the Christ is unfolding with the righteous law of God of previous dispensations, he said:

Think not that I [am] come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy ⟨it⟩, but to fulfil. . . . Till heaven and earth pass, one jot ⟨and⟩ [or] one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, ⟨referring to the previous law of God’s system of righteousness⟩ and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:17-19)

Solidarity of the righteousness of God’s law through all dispensations is here affirmed, and the duty of his disciples is to adhere unto that law of righteousness both ancient and in his own times, which were the

modern times then; and it shall be true of all times and dispensations, this solidarity of God's law of righteousness.

In illustration of the relationship of his teaching to the law the Master proceeds to intensify the law of the ancients and reveals the spirit of the law which the teachers in Israel were reducing to the mere letter of the law, and losing sight of its spirit, hence a series of apparent changes in the law, but really an amplification to set forth their spirit and intensify their power. So ~~he~~ *the Christ* proceeds:

Anger and hatred without cause. It was said by them of old, "Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto \langle thee, \rangle [you, That] whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: \langle and \rangle [but] whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" (Matt. 5:21-22).

This treatise has to do with the beginning of those emotions of anger and hatred in which murderous thoughts have their inception. The Christ's teaching would stop this murderous spirit at its source, and therefore eliminate ~~the development of~~ hatred and anger and the expression of them which may lead in the ultimate development to murder. As he would have men avoid the appearance of evil, so would he have them eliminate the possibility of anger and hateful thoughts. And if these be eliminated there will be no possibility of murder. So important did the Christ esteem this lesson that he bade his disciples that if men bringing a gift to God's altar they there remembered that a brother had ought against them, they should leave their gift and go their way and become reconciled to their brother, "then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5:24).

As in a way supplementing this instruction the Master counseled sapiency in dealing with adversaries. "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him;" lest at any time the adversary getting advantage should deliver thee to the judge and the judge to the officer and thence to prison, whence there may be no release until the utmost farthing is paid (Matt. 5:25-26). Reconciliation, conciliation with adversaries, is the part of wisdom, to follow which the Christ gave the foregoing as his advice.

The sin of adultery. Again to the law and its intensification. Thou shalt not commit adultery. We have already in an incidental way (see ante chapter [49]) pointed out the Master's intensification of this part of the law, which demanded the elimination even of lustful desires, and we

need not repeat that here, but include this addition with it, that the Master pointing out the importance of eliminating lustful contemplation and desires remarked in his striking manner in way of illustration, “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members [should] perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” And the same as to the right hand, if it offend thee, cut it off, and cast it away, with the same end in view, viz., entering heaven (Matt. 5:29–30). In the Book of Mormon version of this same sermon, this particular matter is put in this form:

⟨Behold⟩ [But] I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart. Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart; For it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell. (3 Ne. 12:28–30)

If this be taken as the commentary of the Christ on his principle, how beautifully clear this principle of purity in thought is set forth, and surely relieves the principle of that implication that has been read into it by fanatics which lead in some cases to self-mutilation in order to comply, as was supposed, with the admonition “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee.”^a

Divorcement. Closely connected with the matter of the above paragraph is the law of divorcement, “It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.” Such was the law of Moses: “But I say unto you,” said the Master, “That whosoever shall put away his wife, ⟨save⟩ [saving] for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery” (Matt. 5:31–32). Observe in passing, that under the Christ’s exposition of the law, so far from being destroyed it is intensified, at each touch. It is quite clear, that God “hateth putting away,” as was said by Malachi: “Let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away” (Mal. 2:15–16). But one sin may justify the “putting away,” the sin of breaking the marriage covenant; the sin of high treason on the part of man or wife, the sin of adultery, that is the law of Christ. It is doubtful, however, if this statement of the law is to be understood as applying to the innocent parties to divorcement. For example: here

^aThis reference to self-mutilation refers to the early Christian Father Origen, who took literally the Lord’s saying “There be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake” (Matt. 19:12) and emasculated himself. See Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6, 8, 2.

is the case of a young wife, not guilty of the offense that would justify her husband in putting her away, but blameless. Her husband, however, has become weary of her, she no longer pleases his fancy, he may already have found someone more desirable to him, and so puts away his wife that he may marry the creature of his lust. Of course, in effect he commits adultery, and the woman he marries, having guilty knowledge of his course, might well be thought to participate in his guilt of adultery. But in the case of the innocent, cast-off wife, where does she appear in blame or guilt? Not at all if she remain unmarried, of course. But is the law in her case to be so interpreted that, though innocent, she must be condemned to this sort of widowhood, perhaps, through a long period of life, or if she marry be adjudged guilty of adultery, together with him who marries her? Here would be manifest injustice; and it may be followed as a safe rule of interpretation of our Lord's precepts, that that interpretation which would result in manifest injustice is not the law, nor the right interpretation of it. For God's law must be held to be in harmony with God's attributes, of which justice is equal to the others; and that which is not justice is not law. The statement of this divorce law as found in St. Mark may be nearest the truth, being the Christ's statement and his interpretation of what he had said to the Pharisees on the subject. For when the disciples were entered into a friend's house, they questioned him as to what he had said to the Pharisees outside. "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery" (Mark 10:11-12). This limits the sin of adultery to those who are the guilty parties to the "putting away" *and of course to the putting away* for other causes than that which the Master recognized as a justification for divorce. They are the parties of adultery, under this divorce doctrine of Messiah, not the innocent parties, those who were sinned against in the transaction.[†]

Perform to the Lord thine oaths: The better way. Again to the law, "Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths" (Matt. 5:33). So strictly was this law regarded in Israel, that Israel's chieftain Jephthah, having vowed that if God would give him a victory

[†]The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve noted: "The question of divorce does not seem clear to us as here stated, and in harmony with the words of the Savior." On this final comment of the committee that reviewed the manuscript, Roberts noted: **nothing more to be said.** Reporting to President Clawson on October 10, 1929, George Albert Smith explained: "Some things in the argument on divorce were questioned, as appearing in conflict with the revelations."

over the Ammonites, he would offer as a burnt offering whosoever shall come forth from his house to meet him. And when his only daughter, came forth with timbrels and dancing to meet him, she became the sacrifice for the oath's sake! This matter of keeping oaths crystallized for Israel in this formula: "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" and the answer is, "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not" (Ps. 15:1, 4). But the Master pointed out a more excellent way than all this:

Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. [But] let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. (Matt. 5:34-37)

How excellent the teacher that moveth stumbling blocks from our path! "Thou shalt not forswear thyself . . . perform unto the Lord thine oaths!" "Swear not at all."

"An eye for an eye." "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" (Matt. 5:38). The law of vengeance, supposed to be of exact, stern, inexorable justice. Pay me what you owe me to the last farthing, there shall be no mitigation, there shall no circumstances be considered, the pound of flesh is due; the pound of flesh exactly shall be paid. Now on this law of exaction of an "eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," "I say unto you," said the Christ,

That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if $\langle a \rangle$ [any] man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. (Matt. 5:39-42)

"Utterly impracticable!" would cry out your man of affairs, and especially your modern man of affairs. "Utterly out of the question, this course of procedure, unfair; it would produce a race of mollicoddles, of nonresisting, unaggressive simpletons." But let us not be too quick in judgment on these sayings of the Sermon. Let us regard them as setting forth, not so much the precise things that shall be done in the respectively given cases, but as setting forth in these few bold strokes, the spirit in which men should live; holding in mind that the letter killeth, but ~~it is~~ the spirit ~~that~~ giveth life. And here may be shown the spirit of the Life in which men should live; not stressing the "eye for an eye" and "tooth for a tooth" doctrine so far as not to admit into our

personal economy of life the willingness, so far as possible to live in peace with all men; but living in the spirit that “a ⟨mild⟩ [soft] answer turneth away wrath” (Prov. 15:1), and so a willingness to mitigate the stern demands that justice alone might warrant as to bring forth a spirit of conciliation and reconciliation into the affairs of life, by living in the unaggressive and unexacting spirit that the Master here enjoins.

Of loving and hating.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them ⟨that⟩ [which] despitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matt. 5:43-44)

A difficult undertaking, possible only when the mind is capable of immense vision, conscious of the truth respecting God and man, especially conscious of one's own soul, having knowledge also of man's mission in this earth life, with right apprehension as to immortality and eternal life. Only then can one hope for a man to attain to this nobility of soul which shall put aside the things of evil and live only in the spirit of the things that are great, and noble, and good. Also being able to view men, not as they are, but in the light of their possibilities, as eternal intelligences on their way to progress—men in the making! Fortunately the Christ in his commentary on the principle here stated, cites God in his graciousness towards things wicked and ungodly, and points out with what liberal hand he bestows blessings, not only upon the obedient, but upon the disobedient, admonishing his disciples to pursue the course indicated, that “ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45). He would have the children to be even as the Father. He would have the disciple to be as his Master, and then the argument: “For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?” (Matt. 5:46-47). Already he had served notice upon his disciples in a previous paragraph (see Matt. 5:20) that unless their righteousness should exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the pharisees, they should in no case enter the kingdom of heaven. It is equally true of the Master's discipleship today.

“Be ye perfect”: *The ideal.* And now the climax, the setting forth of the ideal, and sternly demanding its achievement: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48).

And our Book of Mormon version of the same discourse delivered to the Nephites on the continent of America, makes this variation. “I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect” (3 Ne. 12:48).

At this point in the Book of Mormon version of the discourse, and closing out the references to the things which had been said in former times *the Christ* adds: “Therefore those things which were of old time, which were under the law, in me are [all] fulfilled. Old things are done away, and all things have become new” (3 Ne. 12:46–47).

Almsgiving: The spirit of. The next instruction has to do with almsgiving and the spirit in which helpfulness shall be imparted to the needy.

Do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. (Matt. 6:1–4)

Nothing can be added by way of amplification that will add to the beauty of the spirit of this injunction.

Prayer: “The Christian’s vital breath.”^b Now the instructions on prayer, opening with a warning that the disciples must not pray as the hypocrites do, who prayed standing in the synagogue and in the corner of the streets that they might be seen of men. In that they had their reward in the praises of men. “But thou,” said the Master, “when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” (Matt. 6:6). Then the warning against vain repetition, as was the custom of the heathen, who thought they would be heard for their much speaking. “{But} [Be] not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye.”

The Lord’s Prayer.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this

^bRoberts quotes here from the hymn “Prayer Is the Soul’s Sincere Desire,” fourth verse.

day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (Matt. 6:8-13)

Such the prayer the Master outlines for them (*disciples*) and this his commentary on the more salient point of forgiveness: “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive \langle you \rangle [your trespasses]” (Matt. 6:14-15).

This prayer was not given as a set form to be always followed, and used on every occasion, but rather as an illustration of the spirit in which prayer should be offered and also as illustrating the admonitions preceding it as to simplicity and directness in which one should pray, and in these respects how excellent it is! It has been much praised by writers who love it for its literary merit, and its pure spirituality; its sweet spirit of trust and faith, and for its appropriateness as an address of the soul to the heavenly Father. Dean Paley in his “Christian Evidences” says of it, “for a succession of solemn thoughts, for fixing the attention upon a few great points, for suitableness, . . . for sufficiency, for conciseness without obscurity, for the *weight and real* importance of its petitions, it is without an equal or a rival.”

A defect in St. Matthew’s version of the Lord’s Prayer. All this in the main may be allowed; but as the prayer stands, in St. Matthew, it may not be said to be quite without fault. The phrase, for instance, “Lead us not into temptation.” Is it conceivable, quite, that a God of infinite goodness and wisdom would lead men into temptation? Knowing *man’s proneness to evil, and his weakness under temptation and knowing* that in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases in a thousand men yield to temptation? Would it be like God to do a thing of that kind? There is in this petition also—“lead us not into temptation”—the contradiction of another scripture: “Let no man,” says St. James,

say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (James 1:13-15)

There is named the source of temptation, and the death it brings. “God tempteth no man!” Then why pray, “lead us not into temptation,” since that is something God will not do? The inconsistency of that sentence in the beautiful prayer as it stands in Matthew is evident; and so our

Prophet of the New Dispensation, in correcting many things that are erroneous in the imperfect reporting or translation of the Master's words, corrected this utterance, and makes it *to* read in his version, "suffer us not to be lead into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (JST Matt. 6:14) With that correction made on it, the praise and admiration expressed by Dean Paley can be accepted.

Of fasting. In fasting, the Master again warns his disciples against the practices of the hypocrites, who in their fasting went about with sad countenances and disfigured faces, that they might appear unto men to fast. "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward," was the Master's comment. "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which \langle seeth \rangle [is] in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6:16-18). This presents the thought of cheerfulness in fasting, light-heartedness and joy, for the keynote in which these several duties of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting shall be done; not as if they were burdens hard to bear, but pleasant duties, sweet responses of the soul to God, and not for worldly fame or glory or a reputation for piety, but as so many dear and unseen approaches into the fellowship and communion with God. Let men's sacrifices, if sacrifices they be considered at all, be held dear, as showing a willingness to give an offering of the soul for the re-action of fellowship with God: laying up of treasure in heaven, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves \langle can \rangle [do] not break through \langle and \rangle [nor] steal" (Matt. 6:20); and with the confidence that where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. "The light of the body," said the Christ, continuing this sermon, "is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if \langle the \rangle [thine] eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matt. 6:22-23).

Singleness of service: *No serving of two masters.* There must be singleness of purpose also in the service of God. For on this the Master said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Herein we may see the so-called "jealousy" of God. Those who would serve him, must serve him wholly, with singleness of purpose. Acceptance of God as God Almighty, admits of no divided allegiance. Loyalty must be wholly given else service is not acceptable. Through this Sermon on the Mount comes up the consciousness, the truth of the whole law: "Thou shalt

have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3). All images of God are “verboten.” Men cannot serve two masters, there must be singleness of mind and purpose in this. Men “cannot serve God and Mammon.” They may not worship the “golden calf” and Jehovah; neither worship the gold of the calf, and the Christ. There must be no divided allegiance in the services of God.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: *Latter-day Saint Hymns*, “Prayer Is the Soul’s Sincere Desire”; *Four Gospels* (passim); 3 Ne. 12-14; and *D&C* (passim), esp. 42 and 45.

The Life: ~~Under~~ The Sermon on the Mount II

Division of the Sermon on the Mount. And now we come to a part of the great sermon which lays it open to criticism, and that has been criticized perhaps more severely than any other part of it. The Christ is represented as saying: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your ⟨bodies⟩ [body], what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body ⟨more⟩ than raiment?" The fowls of the air are represented as not sowing or reaping, nor storing, yet the heavenly Father feedeth them. "Are ye not much better than they?" And why take thought of raiment? "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin," yet in raiment they outshine Solomon in all his glory. If God will so clothe the grass of the field, shall he not much more clothe you? "O ye of little faith" (Matt. 6:25-30). And hence, as is generally thought, men are admonished to take no thought of what they shall eat or what they shall drink or wherewithal they shall be clothed. After these things the Gentiles seek, but the followers of the Master are admonished to "seek [ye] first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," to take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:33-34).

"An impossible manner of life," men cry out; and they cry out thus from practical, human experience. Men may not live as the birds live, nor expect to be clothed as the lilies of the field in beauty and in glory. Civilization can not be established and perpetuated by taking no thought of tomorrow. Civilization has its beginning by man taking thought for tomorrow; by planning for the future. The sacrifice of today which shall provide for the future day is the beginning of the creation of capital, the means through which great things are achieved, and is the process by which civilization advances. So this admonition as it stands in Matthew, advising men to live as the birds live, and to trust for clothing as the lilies do for beauty and glory, and to take no thought for tomorrow as to what

they shall eat or drink or where withal they shall be clothed, seems like folly, and wholly at variance with true economic principles and the stern requirements of common sense.

The Book of Mormon version of ~~this part of the Sermon~~: “Take no thought.” Here, however, by what has come to light in the New Dispensation of the gospel through the Book of Mormon version of this matchless sermon, there comes a sidelight which removes every objection to this part of the discourse of the Christ, and destroys all the force of infidel argument against it in this: that this part of the sermon on “take no thought” etc. is not addressed to the multitude before the Savior, but having delivered the admonitions concerning almsgiving, prayer and fasting, and emphasizing the importance of singleness of purpose in the worship of God to the multitude, then:

And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words he looked upon the twelve whom he had chosen, and said unto them: Remember the words which I have spoken. For behold, ye are they whom I have chosen to minister unto this people. Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. (3 Ne. 13:25)

And then follows consecutively the admonitions that they go forth in their ministry wholly consecrated to the service of God, and he will provide for their temporal needs. Closing this portion of his discourse with these words, “Take therefore no thought for ⟨tomorrow⟩ [the morrow], for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient is the day unto the evil thereof” (3 Ne. 13:34).¹

This admonition then of taking no thought for food or raiment, or any of the material things of life can be safely addressed to twelve men who have been chosen to make an absolute consecration of their lives to the accomplishment of the special spiritual things of God’s kingdom; but not expanded to cover the general economic principles of a whole community, or nation, or the world.

The thought struggling for expression here is that if this part of the sermon was especially addressed to the Twelve when the sermon was delivered in America, may it not be that it was likewise limited when delivered in Palestine.

¹Note the difference in the closing of this division of the Christ’s sermon as given in Matthew and as given in the Book of Mormon. In Matthew it stands: “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matt. 6:34), but in the Book of Mormon more logically it reads: “Sufficient is the day unto the evil thereof” (3 Ne. 13:34).

Judge not. I resume now my quotation from St. Matthew: “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matt. 7:1) said the Christ, pointing out how inadequate men are to judge each other, because of their inability to see clearly the mote in their brother’s eye, while perhaps a beam is in their own. How shall such an one judge righteously? It is reserved to God alone to so judge. To judge righteously one must know all; not only what is done, but has been resisted; the hungering and thirsting and striving for righteousness will enter into just judgment, as well as the lapses in the midst of those strivings. The sum of the matter is, then, to leave judgment to one who knows all and seek the whole and not part only. And this warning is given with the admonition “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Matt. 7:2). Sufficient the warning surely to lead one to abstain from judgment of his fellow men. For us men, the heart and mind of our fellows is something of a sealed book, and we are incompetent to judge with righteous judgment: hence, Judge not!^a

Sacredness of holy things. Then comes the admonition in the sermon to hold sacred the holy things—“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast [ye] you[r] pearls before swine”—these sacred things will not be appreciated by the “dogs” and the “swine,” and they may trample precious things under their feet and turn and rend you (Matt. 7:6).

Of asking. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; . . . every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth” (Matt. 7:7–8). Again appears the truth, men shall have according to their desires, inasmuch as that interferes not with the general purposes of God, both in particular cases and in the general scheme of things; for we must remember that we live in a world of broken harmonies from which men are to learn certain great and important things; and some of these can only be realized through disappointments and suffering. So our asking must be in wisdom, and not in petulant selfishness, but always in the spirit of the Master, who, let us remember, when he asked that the bitter cup of his suffering might pass if that were possible or be consistent with the will and purposes of God, yet though asking for the passing of the cup, that petition was quickly followed with “not my

^aRoberts here does not note that Joseph Smith modified this verse to read, “Judge not unrighteously, that ye be not judged: but judge righteous judgment” (JST Matt. 7:2).

will, but ⟨thy will⟩ [thine,] be done” (cf. Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42). So he would have his disciples pray, for his own actions are to be taken as the illustration of his doctrine. But the Master gave encouragement on this point of asking by trying to convince those who heard him that the heavenly Father would be as reasonable in giving, surely, as earthly fathers would. So:

What man is there of you, whom if his son ask ⟨for⟩ bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts [un]to your children, how much more ⟨will⟩ [shall] your Father which is in heaven give good ⟨gifts⟩ [things] to ⟨him⟩ [them] that ask him? (Matt. 7:9-11)

And here I might add: If the wisdom of parents sometimes prompts them to withhold the gift that would be injurious to their children, considering their age, and their circumstances, and the effect upon their lives of granting an unwholesome wish that might be mischievous, shall not our Father in heaven do likewise?

The Golden Rule. Now comes a new summary of all the truths the Master is reaching: “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12).

This is called, and worthily called, the “Golden Rule.” Its essence will be found in love of God and love of man, it is the Master’s generalization of all law and of all prophets. A generalization in fact, even of the Christ’s generalization when he said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matt. 22:37-39). This is the great commandment, and he made it inclusive of all the law and all the prophets. And now all this is again condensed into this “Golden Rule,” the rule which bursts into an act of doing. Doing to others as you would have them do unto you.

It detracts nothing from this great rule of supreme Christian conduct, because others catching a glint of the same glory have said something akin to it. Confucius for instance, long before Christ (551-478 B.C.) is credited with saying: “Do not to others what you would not wish done to yourself.” But this is negative in form and only half the truth of the Golden Rule, the Chinese chief teacher only went so far as to say, do not those things to others that you would not have them do to you. But the Golden Rule admonishes not only to refrain from doing evil that you would not have done to yourself; but by putting it into the positive form it bids you to do unto others what you would wish might be done unto and for you, under like circumstances.

So with the saying accredited to the good Rabbi Hillel, when a would-be proselyte demanded to be taught the whole law while he stood upon one leg, the Rabbi answered, and won a proselyte by saying: “What is hateful to thyself, that do not thou to another. This is the whole law, the rest is commentary.”² But this saying, excellent as it is, has the same defect that the negative statement of Confucius carries.

Aristotle, the subtle Greek philosopher approached the summary of the Golden Rule most nearly of all the ancients, when he said in answer to the question: “What should one’s conduct be towards one’s friends?” He replied: “As we would that they should act towards us.” Here again is a defect, for his statement of principle is limited to “our friends.” Not so the Golden Rule of the Christ. There it stands in all its perfection: “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them” (Matt. 7:12).

Closing Admonitions. We are hastening to the close of the Sermon, and hence we find admonition predominant, and warning: “Enter ye in ⟨to⟩ [at] the ⟨straight⟩ [strait] gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because ⟨straight⟩ [strait] is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:13-14). Let those who cry there are many ways leading to the one place, the kingdom of heaven, and it matters not by what route we may elect to make the journey—let them *know that* their theory is contradicted by this teaching of the Divine Master. There is a unity in truth, there is a one-ness of way, there is one-ness of the gospel life. Straight is the gate, narrow the way, that *leadeth unto Life* and but few find it, because wide is the gate, devious and many the paths that lead to destruction and many find them, since both gates and ways lead along lines of least resistance.

“Beware of false prophets,” rings out the warning of the Christ, “⟨they may⟩ [which] come [to you] in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matt. 7:15). He gives as an invariable sign for their detection: “Ye shall know them by their fruits”; and then the pertinent inquiry, “Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” (Matt. 7:16). A tree is known by its fruit. A good tree bringeth forth good fruit; a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit, and the reverse can not be true. And the end of evil trees and false prophets, of course, will be destruction.

And now against mere pretensions of sanctity and pretensions of following the Master: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my

²Dummelow, *Commentary*, on Matthew 7:12.

Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21). The utterances of prophecies in the name of the Christ, casting out of devils, and doing many wonderful works in the name of the Christ, may not sanctify those who are influenced by mere pretensions, by show of sanctity, and religious fervour. To such he represents himself as saying in finality, “Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you” (cf. Matt. 7:23).

And now the Master’s peroration to the master sermon of all ages. Referring to all subdivisions of the discourse, the closing it up in one splendid utterance:

Exordium.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. (Matt. 7:24-29)

The living Sermon on the Mount. The best part of this sermon is not expressed in the words of it, however gracious, or apt, or profound, or splendidly placed, or true. The best part of the sermon consists in the fact that he who delivered it, LIVED IT! The Christ’s Sermon on the Mount is but the blue print of the Christ’s earth life; and he lived his life according to the blue print—the plan.

Thus the Christ meets us at every point of the way. Considered directly as the example of what God would have revealed as the one perfect Life—the ideal of all ages—Behold the CHRIST-LIFE!

Considered as fulfilling the law given to Moses: Behold the Christ!

Considered as the founder of the church in the meridian dispensation, revealed God in his own person, and the love of God in the Atonement, and in expounding the ethic of the gospel, shifted from the negative to the positive form, and basing it on love of God and love of man, re-enforcing it by living it—Behold the Christ!

Considered as setting forth a universal ethic without limitations of age or place—timeless, eternal, and exemplifying every precept of it in his life—again, Behold the Christ!

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Roberts, *New Witnesses for God* 3:432-40; compare Matt. 5-7 and Luke 6 and 11 to 3 Ne. 12-14.

The Christian Character: The Teachings of the Apostles I

Apostolic literature. (a) The Gospels. The four Gospels of the New Testament may be said to represent a Life, and the teachings exclusively of the Christ. They contain the facts of the development both of his doctrine and of his life, and may be said to be exclusively his. The book of Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles contain the doctrine of the apostles which doctrines are but reflections of the teachings of the Christ through their minds. They represent the efforts of inspired men to put into practical application the doctrines of the Christ, and make them doctrines woven into character.

It is surprising to find how few of the apostles attempted this work in writing. The Acts of the Apostles may properly be regarded as an historical document, the extension of the gospel according to St. Luke, for it is quite generally conceded that he wrote both books. The Acts, being historical, deals with Christian character-development of the several active agents in the work of founding the church. Mentioning briefly the early action of the apostles and some few associates as a body cooperating together; then of Stephen, and Phillip [*sic*], and Barnabas, James, brother of St. John, and also John Mark, cousin of Barnabas, and author of the Gospel which bears his name. After the sixteenth chapter the book resolves itself into a narrative of the missionary activities of St. Paul; and others pass out of the picture.

All the Epistles together with the Apocalypse or Revelation may be referred to St. Paul, St. Peter, St. John, and St. James. The authorship of St. Jude is somewhat doubtful.^a

^aDoubt about the authorship of the Epistle of Jude dates back at least to Eusebius, who includes the Epistle of Jude in what he calls “the disputed” books. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3, 25, 3. Elder Talmage refers to this passage in Eusebius in *Articles of Faith*, 246–47. Elder Bruce R. McConkie maintains that the author is indeed Jude, one of Christ’s brothers; *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1965–73), 3:416. The *LDS Bible Dictionary* says under the entry “Jude” that he is the “probable author of the epistle of Jude.”

(b) *The Epistles.* One other thing may help to a right understanding of the New Testament and to its interpretation; namely, the fact that the Epistles and not the four Gospels are the earliest Christian documents; and that the Gospels, coming later, may be regarded as the more seasoned statements concerning both the facts of the life of the Christ and his doctrines. To show what is here meant, we may take for example the facts about the resurrection as set forth by St. Paul in his fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. If when writing that chapter St. Paul had had the four-fold account given in the four Gospels on the subject of the resurrection, and Christ's very definite appearances not only to the apostles, but to the women among his disciples, Paul would have been able to have given a much fuller account of that great central Christian event than he did in the aforesaid chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians. And so in respect of many other things. But even so, the doctrine of the apostles in their epistles very admirably bring forth those doctrines and give admonitions concerning ethical principles of the gospel as to plainly set forth the Christian character to be striven for, and which alone will both represent and vindicate the doctrines of the gospel of Christ as applied to human lives; and underneath all doctrinal exposition, and admonitions to right living, we shall find at work that great primary principle which from the beginning has ever been present in God's plan for the mortal life of man, namely: "We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them" (Abr. 3:25).

The primacy of St. Peter. Emphasis upon obedience was manifested in the opening of the mission of the apostles to the world. In obedience to the injunction of the Master, the apostles remained in Jerusalem until endowed by power from on high—the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon them. This in the visible manifestation as tongues of flaming fire, when the multitude at Pentecost overwhelmed by the visible presence of God's power cried out in great anxiety, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). In answer to that question they were required first of all to give evidence of the first great law of the gospel, they must render an act of obedience to the message sent to them. Hence St. Peter as chief of the apostles, said to them: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," and then he gave the promise to them of a baptism also of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38).

We must regard St. Peter as the head of the church after the departure of the Christ, and in close association with him St. James, and St. John; for to them throughout the New Testament is accorded a

certain primacy which admits of no doubt as to their being the selected ~~head~~ presidency of the church on earth. To St. Peter the Lord himself said: "I [will] give unto ⟨you⟩ [thee] the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever ⟨you⟩ [thou shalt] bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19). This primacy follows him throughout the Christian documents, and in connection with him is the special association of James and John, observable even during the public ministry of the Master.

The doctrines of St. Peter: (a) The deity of Christ. Because of the primacy of St. Peter, we follow him first in the development of those doctrines and admonitions in which he gives practical instructions to be woven into character and life.

In this part of his ministry described in the Acts of the Apostles, we note him as the chief witness of the Divinity of our Lord, saying to the multitudes assembled in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost; "Let all the house of Israel know [assuredly], that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). He taught repentance and baptism for remission of sin as preparation for reception or baptism of the Holy Ghost. He ~~scorned and~~ severely reproved those who thought the Holy Ghost and its spiritual gifts could be purchased with money (Acts 2:38-39; cf. 8:14-23). He rebuked those who dealt deceitfully in matters of consecrations of moneys to the common interests of the church, and charged them with lying unto God when they lied unto the Holy Ghost. The instant death of the offenders emphasized his reproofs.¹ He taught that men ought to obey God rather than man, when human and divine jurisdiction were in conflict (Acts 5:29). St. Peter also introduced the gospel to the Gentiles, through the household of Cornelius as detailed in the tenth chapter of the Acts. He sat in council ~~of~~ *with* "the apostles and elders" afterwards held in Jerusalem to determine the question of ~~extending the gospel to the Gentiles~~ *including the Gentiles within the gospel covenant*, and was the chief witness to the grace of God being extended to the Gentiles; his testimony with that of St. Paul and Barnabas, being the determining factors that induced the favorable decision of the council in the behalf of the Gentiles (Acts 15).

After that St. Peter's activities are no further recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and we may know him as an expounder only through his epistles.

¹Acts 5, the case of Ananias and Sapphira.

In these St. Peter is true to himself and his own experience in laying the foundation of his knowledge of the Truth, and the Way, and the Life, on the complete acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God, true deity in himself, as well as in what he derived from the Father.

(b) *The life of the Christ to be reflected in his disciples.* This is the foundation of his doctrine and admonition not only in the first Epistle, but in the second also. From this ground he urges the striving of the saints for the end of their faith, “even the salvation of their souls,” and hence his admonition to them:

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. . . . Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. . . . Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. (1 Pet. 1:13-19, 22, 23)

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and [all] guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. (1 Pet. 2:1-2)

Again he said to them,

Ye are *a* chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. . . . Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that . . . good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. (1 Pet. 2:9-12)

He admonishes them to be subject to the civil authorities and announces it to be “the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness. . . . Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king” (1 Pet. 2:15-17).

He also gave instruction on the domestic relations, urging that husband and wife so live “as being heirs together of the grace of life,” and urged the community to be all of one mind, having compassion one of another, loving as brethren, being pitiful and courteous, not “rend[er]ing

evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing” (1 Pet. 3:7-9); “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it” (1 Pet. 3:10-11).

(c) Spirit of the Christian ministry. And so on practically though all the virtues; and towards the close of the first Epistle, he gives out the following as the spirit in which the church government is to be exercised. To the elders among the churches:

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. (1 Pet. 5:2-3)

He advised the younger to submit unto the elder; that they be clothed with humility, “for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” He gives them assurance that God careth for them—even for the humble. “Be sober, be <diligent> [vigilant]” he admonishes them (1 Pet. 5:5-8).

The Second Epistle: Summary of Christian virtues. In the second Epistle, addressed, it is generally conceded, to the same people, he points out the unerring way by which those who have undertaken the Christian life may be “partakers of the divine nature,” and who have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; and now:

Beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. . . . If ye do these things, ye shall never <fail> [fall]. (2 Pet. 1:5-10)

Building with theses foundation stones here enumerated, together with the other admonitions of this apostle—*living* in strict harmony with all this—what a desirable character a true Christian ~~character~~ would be! What a Life, coming in sequence of a knowledge of the Truth, and a knowledge of the Way, both through the doctrine of the Christ, the example of his life and the harmonious instruction in the doctrines of this, the chief apostle!

St. Paul: The deity of the Christ witnessed by his resurrection. Following St. Peter in setting forth the Christian life and character,

and second only to him in that work, is St. Paul. We may not follow even in outline the personal history of this remarkable man, nor relate the adventures of his missionary journeys, nor seek to point out in detail the doctrinal development to be found in his Epistles. It will be enough to say that like St. Peter, St. Paul founded his conception of the gospel upon the reality of Deity being revealed in Jesus Christ, as the very Son of God. For Paul the truth of this is upheld by the fact of the Christ's resurrection from the dead. He closes his great testimony on the deity of the Christ in Mars Hill by saying: "Whereof he ⟨God⟩ hath given assurance unto all men ⟨that Jesus will judge the world—hence Deity⟩, in that he ⟨God⟩ hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). Throughout his work *we* may say that St. Paul is as much the apostle of the resurrection as he is of the Gentiles.

What is here stated briefly as to Paul's acceptance of the deity of the Christ is clearly and more emphatically stated in *a* number of other places in his writings, but in none clearer perhaps than in the letter to Timothy, wherein he says:

Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh ⟨marginal rendering manifested⟩, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (1 Tim. 3:16)

All this in reference to the Christ whom Paul accepted as God and the very revelation of God.

In Hebrews (and I make no question but Paul is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews), Paul reaffirms the doctrine of the deity of the Christ:

God, who at sundry times and *in* divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers ⟨through⟩ [by] the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir ⟨to⟩ [of] all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his ⟨the Father's⟩ person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. (Heb. 1:1-4)

And through the rest of this first chapter of Hebrews he reaffirms in a number of forms, the deity of the Christ.

St. Paul's doctrine of obedience. This the foundation of Paul's doctrines as well as of St. Peter's, and he recognizes the gospel as God's plan and covenant of granting eternal life to man, declaring in his letter

to Titus that he himself lived in “hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Titus 1:2).

While Paul greatly stressed faith as the means of approach to that form of doctrine which would bring salvation, and producing righteousness as an effect, he stressed nevertheless that principle which underlies that whole gospel plan and which received its impetus in that pre-earth council with the spirits designed to live upon the earth, announced by the Father: “We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abr. 3:25). And this finds echo in Paul’s teaching in the following passage introducing it with reference to the Christ as the Son of God. “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation [un]to all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:8-9).^b

The ethic of St. Paul. The teachings of St. Paul as affecting and building up the Christian character, ~~for~~ doctrine which would mould a Christian life, may really be summarized from his letter to the Ephesians. In this letter he reminds the Ephesians that as Gentiles, now brought into the faith of the gospel, they have received the gospel as a peculiar gift of grace from God, and most earnestly he prayed that God would grant unto them

according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that <they> [ye] might be filled with all the fulness of God. (Eph. 3:16-19)

Later on he admonishes them that henceforth they

walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness <and> [with] greediness. But ye <he triumphantly exclaims> have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new

^bIn the Joseph Smith Translation, verse 8 refers to Melchizedek and verse 9 refers to Christ.

man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man \langle the \rangle truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed \langle from \rangle [out of] your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (Eph. 4:17-32)

Final admonition: "Be ye followers of God."

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes \langle in \rangle darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the \langle effect \rangle [fruit] of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.) (Eph. 5:1-9)

Much more might be gleaned from Paul's writings and admonitions tending to outline and establish Christian character, but what more can be needed then this? And how excellent it all is! Think of a life founded in this faith and sanctified by these admonitions until the life becomes realized in the character! What could be desired more? It is merely filling in the detail of the admonition of the Christ, "be ye perfect, even as I, or your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (cf. Matt. 5:48; 3 Ne. 12:48). Surely the Christian character molded under Paul's instruction would be all that could be desired and represents truly the life founded upon the gospel.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: 1, 2, and 3 Nephi; Mosiah 4-5; D&C 42 and 45.

The Christian Character: The Teachings of the Apostles II

St. James: The apostle of “works.” St. James somewhat stands in antithesis to St. Paul in his conception of the gospel in that whereas Paul stresses faith as an approach to the Christian life, St. James emphasizes works as the essential thing to the forming of a Christian character. His epistle urges the things to be done, and the excellence to be attained by doing. “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves,” is the keynote of his message.

If any ⟨man⟩ be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in ⟨the⟩ [a] glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso⟨ever⟩ looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. . . . Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (James 1:22-27)

And so he argues it out to the end of his message. It amounts to the same thing all the way through. “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well” (James 2:8). This an echo from the generalization of the “law and the prophets” given by the Christ. “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” (James 2:19). Let it be understood however, that while St. James stresses works, he would have faith combined with works. “What doth it profit, my brethren, ~~that~~ **though** a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?” And now he puts his principle to a practical illustration:

If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and ~~fed~~ **filled**; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to

the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (James 2:14-18)

The Epistle sets out in bold form the richest of the Christian doctrinal standards that characterize the epistles of St. Peter and St. Paul; and the Gospel and Epistles and Revelation of St. John. It is the practical application of the principles of the Christian faith that constitutes the uniqueness, and gives value to the Epistle of St. James as a contribution to Christianity.

Things of special value: (a) Men not tempted of God. Two things above all others make the Epistle of value: one is the admonition which forbids men saying when they fall into divers temptation[s] that they are tempted of God; for “God cannot be tempted (of) [with] evil,” says St. James, “neither tempteth he any man.” Then with a master stroke he points to the source of man’s temptation: “Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Then in antithesis to this the solemn averment: “Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:13-17). Solid ground, this. God [is] not the source or cause of evil, neither is God the cause of men’s temptations.

The other thing of high value in the Epistle of *St.* James is the counsel which places men, so to speak, next to God, immediately in contact with him, as the source of wisdom and guidance.

(b) The golden text: The key to wisdom.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven (by) [with] the wind and tossed. [For] let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. (James 1:5-7)¹

If this principle be applied in the practical spirit *of* ~~which characterizes~~ the Epistle of St. James, then we have for the ~~fashioning and~~ molding of the Christian character and ~~the Christian~~ life the ~~very~~ ~~counsel and~~ guiding hand of the Lord himself; and what could be

¹It was this text, be it remembered, that led Joseph Smith, the Prophet, to seek for wisdom by asking God for it, that led to the open vision of God, with which the work of the Lord in these last days began.

better than that for ~~the~~ fashioning ~~of~~ the Christian character and ~~the~~ **Christian** life?

St. Jude's warning and promise. Of St. Jude, the minor writer in the New Testament, it need only be said that his Epistle contains a warning and a promise. A warning against false teachers, who are always evil, that had crept into the church to work mischief: "Spots" in the Christian feast of charity are they, "clouds <that> [they] are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 1:12). There let them lay!

The promise of St. Jude is concerning the glorious coming of the Lord, of whom Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied; saying,

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 1:14-15)

The ethical value of St. Jude's Epistle consists of his denunciation of evils, gross self-indulgences of certain church members by which it is to be understood that the attainment of the opposite virtues to the vices denounced by Jude is the Christian objective: This, and his solemn admonition that those whom he addresses "earnestly contend for the faith . . . once delivered unto the saints."

St. John: His place in the apostolate and in the church. St. John was one of the earliest of the apostles to come into contact with the person of the Christ, and to enter into the spirit of his mission. It is generally thought that he was of a family in rather better worldly circumstances than the families of the other apostles. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome,^a and had some connection with members of the Sanhedrin, though the father, Zebedee, and his two sons, James and John, followed the vocation of fishermen. It was while engaged in this

^aThat Salome is the mother of James and John is inferred from a comparison of the crucifixion accounts in Matthew and Mark. Matthew 27:56 says that the women present at Christ's crucifixion were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and "the mother of Zebedee's children." In the account of the same event in Mark 15:40, "Salome" is found instead of "the mother of Zebedee's children." John's connection with members of the Sanhedrin is inferred from John 18:15, "And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple [John] was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest."

pursuit that the two brothers were called by the Master to become his followers. St. John who was of a deeply pious mind, had previously come in contact with John, the Baptist, forerunner of the Christ; and had already given evidence through his association with the Baptist of the profoundly religious nature which so characterized him in his associations with the Christ, and afterwards through long years with the church.

His great influence in the church is to be traced to his association with the Christ, all which is set forth in his marvelously spiritual Gospel, in his Epistles and in the rather mysterious, yet wonderful book, known as the Apocalypse, or the Revelation of St. John. His Gospel, which stands fourth in the series of the accounts of the life of the Christ, is supposed to be the last written of the New Testament documents. It is generally thought that in writing his gospel he had before him the writings of the three other evangelists, and therefore his own account of events took on its supplementary character, mentioning many things omitted by the earlier writers, and probably omitted many things which he perhaps thought sufficiently stated by them. It is quite clear that the object of his writing the Gospel was to emphasize clearly (1) the deity of Christ, and (2) the power of love, as the means by which men ~~were~~ **are** to be brought to acceptance of the truth and obedience to its laws. We shall find the emphasis placed upon these two things in the written contributions made by this apostle to the literature of Christian origins is distinctively characteristic.

Distinctiveness of St. John's doctrines. The deity of the Christ, his relation of one-ness with the Father, the new birth into fellowship by union with these—the Father and the Son—and the indwelling of God in the human soul—these with love of God and man as the solvent of all duties, constitute the ground plan of the ethic of St. John: “the Life.” “Except a man be born again,” he records the Christ as saying, “he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). But so born? Then what?

Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. . . . If we say that we have fellowship with him (God—the Christ), and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 Jn. 1:3, 6-10)

The doctrine of St. John's Gospel and ~~the~~ Epistles. This is the doctrine of St. John's Gospel: “That they might know thee the only

true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). And this the doctrine of the First Epistle: “Hereby we [do] know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 Jn. 2:3-4).

Again: “Whoso keepeth his ⟨God’s⟩ word ⟨*i.e.*, lives in harmony with God’s law⟩, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.” And now the test: “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he ⟨the Christ⟩ walked” (1 Jn. 2:5-6). Also again: “The darkness is past, and the true light ⟨the Christ⟩ now shineth”; and again the test: “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him” (1 Jn. 2:8-10).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” And should one ask what is “the world” that one must not love, save at the sacrifice of his fellowship of the Father, the answer is immediate: “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust [thereof]: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 Jn. 2:15-17).

Again, and harking back to the premise of St. John’s ethic—the birth into fellowship with God:

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: who[soever] doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ⟨we have⟩ [ye] heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. (1 Jn. 3:9-11)

Further he saith, “he that keepeth God’s commandments dwelleth in God, and God in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us” (cf. 1 Jn. 3:24).

Exposition of St. John’s chief ethic. There is much iteration to that same effect, but this is sufficient to make “the Life” apparent according to St. John: the true disciple of the Christ is born of God, and by that birth men participate in the divine nature, and that nature abiding in men (and so long as that relationship obtains) men will not sin, but will be righteous. Here, of course, must be recognized the fact that the full attainment of righteousness is a matter of growth as well as of birth.

In this our mortal life, even disciples of Christ are but men and women in the making; and perfection in righteousness is an attainment reached by slow degrees and by painful striving. It is a matter of character-building under God's guidance and helpfulness, in which there may be many lapses, many failures, and much discouragement; but the spirit into which one has been born, according to St. John's ethic, will impel the renewal of the struggle. There will be no permanent yielding to evil so long as that spirit remains alive in the soul. There will be no silencing his demand for the renewal of striving for righteousness until a complete victory has been achieved. I adjudge this to be the attitude of St. John himself; for he says: "These things write I unto you (the church), that ye sin not." And yet, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation (of) [for] our sins" (1 Jn. 2:1-2). And again:

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin [not] unto death. (1 Jn. 5:16-17)

In the light of St. John's view of the Life, that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his (God's) seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 Jn. 3:9), the doctrine must be understood within such relative lines as those defined above, and in no absolute sense. But how noble the conception of St. John (and of all the apostles whose testimony is of record—only he has stressed it more than the others) that the disciples of Jesus have been born of God, and hence have partaken of the "divine nature," and as that is righteous they too must ultimately become righteous. There has been planted in them a spiritual life by the "rebirth" contemplated in the gospel, and that spirit born in them must develop according to the great law of life—*each* "after its kind." It must and will develop according to type, after the type of the God-life, and with this we may bring to its climax and glory the ethic of St. John.

Men as the sons of God.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. (1 Jn. 3:1-3)

And here St. John's ethic joins the Christ's: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Revelation 1-3; sources mentioned in books referred to in the footnotes to this chapter.

The Ethic of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times

“The Life” under the New Dispensation. As the New Dispensation is but a renewal of the Way after the world’s departure from it, and is the “everlasting gospel” (Rev. 14:6) restored in a final dispensation, it can not be otherwise than that its ethic—what we call its “Life”—must be the same as “the Life” or ethic of the other dispensations of the same gospel. The only change to be looked for would be in the direction of clarification, and perhaps of emphasis; and in this there is no disappointment. For instance: increased emphasis in the New Dispensation is placed upon the law of chastity by saying that those who persist in unchaste looking upon women to lust after them not only commit adultery in their heart, as the Savior taught, but they “shall deny the faith”; and “shall not have the Spirit” (i.e., of God), and if they repent not “shall be cast out”—disfellowshipped from the Church (D&C 42:23).

The same fate is to befall those who kill, steal, or lie; and the murderer is to die (of course, under the law of the land, and when condemned under due process of law). And also it is written of the murderer that “he . . . shall not have forgiveness in this world, nor in the world to come” (D&C 42:18-21).

Evil speaking is condemned: “Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor, nor do him any harm,” and “he that sinneth and repenteth not shall be cast out.” “All things” are to be done in “cleanliness” before the Lord. “Idleness” is condemned: “Thou shalt not be idle,” says the word of God in the New Dispensation; “for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer” (D&C 42:27-28, 41-42). And “the idler ⟨is to⟩ [shall] be had in remembrance before the Lord” (D&C 68:30). That is idleness is just cause of complaint against the idlers before the Church and its tribunals: for, as it is written, “the idler shall not have place in the church, ⟨unless⟩ [except] he repent and mend his ways” (D&C 75:29). Also if “any man”—or person—rob, lie,

or steal or commit murder he is to be delivered up unto the law of the land for punishment, when proven guilty according to the laws of the land.¹ The Church may not shield those who become criminals under the law of the land.

Treatment of the sick. Special sympathy is enjoined in behalf of the sick. The ordinance of administration for the sick, as given in the Epistle of St. James, is revived in the New Dispensation: the elders of the Church are to be sent for, who shall anoint the sick with oil, and pray over them, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise them up; and if they have sinned they shall be forgiven (see James 5:14-15). As given in the modern revelation, it also says that if the sick “have not faith to be healed, but believe,” they “shall be nourished with all tenderness, with herbs and mild food(s). . . . And if they die they shall die unto me,” saith the Lord, “and if they live they shall live unto me.” “And it shall come to pass that those that die in me shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them.” Referring again to the sick, who are to be administered to as above set forth: “he that hath faith in (the Christ) [me] to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed.” The blind, “who hath faith to see shall see”; and so following with the deaf and the lame. “And they who have not faith to do these things, but believe in me,” saith the Lord, shall “have power to become my sons; and inasmuch as they break not my (commandments) [laws] thou (the Church) shalt bear their infirmities” (D&C 42:43-52). How excellent and merciful, O Lord, are all thy ways!

The law for physical salvation—the Word of Wisdom. Better yet than provisions made for healing the sick is the revelation of the Lord on the preservation of health, God’s law of health and physical well-being, known as the Word of Wisdom, showing forth “the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days—Given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints” (D&C 89:2-3). This revelation to be sent [by] “greeting,” “not (however) by commandment or constraint, but by revelation and the word of wisdom” (D&C 89:2). It was given also in consequence of “evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days.” “I have warned you, and forewarn you,” said the Lord, “by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation” (D&C 89:4).

¹The great body of all that is here set down as the moral law of the New Dispensation is found in D&C 42, given to the Church as revelation February 1831.

“The Word” as warning. The date of this revelation was February 1833. It was about three quarters of a century before a national pure food law was enacted in the United States;² and during the interim of three quarters of a century, adulteration of, and misbranding of poisonous and deleterious foods, drugs, medicines, wines, malt products, and liquors, and the transportation and sale of these adulterated and mislabeled products to the people ran riot in America to the disgrace of our country and to its civilization. The long list of adulterations at which the national law is leveled is a terrible indictment against the manufacturers of the country and its commercial integrity.

That period of three quarters of a century of food, medicine, drug, and liquor adulteration, clearly vindicated the prophetic spirit of the Word of Wisdom for it was given “In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of ⟨designing⟩ [conspiring] men in the last days, I have warned you” (saith the Lord), “and forewarn you, by giving [unto] you this word of wisdom by revelation” (D&C 89:4).

How valuable the warning was can be appreciated when the Word of Wisdom itself is considered.

The negative phase of the Word of Wisdom.

Inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him. And, behold, this should be wine, yea, pure wine of the grape of the vine, of your own make. And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies. And again, tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man, but is an herb for bruises and all sick cattle, to be used with judgment and skill. And again, hot drinks ⟨having in mind, those say who have interpreted the law from the beginning, tea and coffee as the hot drinks⟩ are not for the body or belly. (D&C 89:5-9)

This is the prohibitive part of the law; and when considered with reference to that riot of adulteration through which our country passed ~~from~~ ***shortly before*** the date of the revelation to the passage of the

²The first national pure food law went into effect on the first of January, 1907, see 34 U.S. Statutes 768 (June 30, 1906). It was declared to be an act for “preventing the manufacture, sale or transportation of adulterated or misbranded or poisonous or deleterious foods, drugs, medicines, and liquors, and for regulating traffic therein.” Then throughout its many sections it enumerates the various articles and ***classes*** of them that have been subject to adulteration, also of misbranding and sale under these false brands endangering the health and life of the people. A fine synopsis of the National Pure Food and Drugs Act will be found in the *World Almanac* for 1908, 187-88. Also U.S. Statutes for same year (1908).

first pure food law—three quarters of a century—the value of God’s “warning” appears; for it was upon the articles whose use is forbidden to the saints, that the heaviest adulteration fell. But apart from adulteration these forbidden things in themselves are quite generally recognized as evil in their effects upon the constitution and health of man.

The positive phase of “The Word.” On the positive side of the Word of Wisdom, that which recommends things for the use of man, rather than dealing with prohibition of things, the “wisdom” of God is also manifest:

And again, verily I say unto you, all wholesome herbs God hath ordained for the constitution, nature, and use of man—Every herb in the season thereof, and every fruit in the season thereof; all these to be used with prudence and thanksgiving. Yea, flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air, I, the Lord, have ordained for the use of man with thanksgiving; nevertheless they are to be used sparingly; And it is pleasing unto me that they should not be used, only in times of winter, or of cold, or famine. All grain is ordained for the use of man and of beasts, to be the staff of life, not only for man but for the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, and all wild animals that run or creep on the earth; And these hath God made for the use of man only in times of famine and excess of hunger. All grain is good for the food of man; as also the fruit of the vine; that which yieldeth fruit, whether in the ground or above the ground—Nevertheless, wheat for man, and corn for the ox, and oats for the horse, and rye for the fowls and for swine, and for all beasts of the field, and barley for all useful animals, and for mild drinks, as also other grain. (D&C 89:10-17)

A whole chapter in commentary would be insufficient to point out the dietetical value, and health-promoting wisdom of these suggestions. Such commentary we may not indulge here, nor is it imperatively necessary since the reasonableness of it all, and the simple phraseology in which it is couched *in the revelation*, leaves nothing to be desired in the way of clearness, and makes its high value as a hygienic law obvious. From it may easily be arranged the dietetical program for the invalid, the athlete, or the student. All modern science of dietetics and hygiene will approve and applaud its soundness.

Psychological phase of “the Word.” And now to its psychological value—its spiritual reaction—how great it is!

And all saints who remember to keep [and do] these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, (that is, honoring all the law of God by obeying it, and not confining one’s self to just obedience to these Word of Wisdom precepts, but in addition thereto walking in

obedience to the commandments, they) shall receive health in their naval and marrow to their bones; And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures; And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint. And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them. (D&C 89:18–21)

What an encouragement for striving for attaining perfection in observing the whole law of God!

Provision made for the poor. As a sympathetic attitude toward the sick and the afflicted is enjoined in the New Dispensation, so too is there sympathy and a policy of helpfulness enjoined towards the poor. For in this New Dispensation as in former ones, it is the poor that have had the gospel preached unto them; it has been the common people who, so far, have heard the message of the Lord gladly; and as the meek, who are also usually the poor, since the meek are to “inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5) the Lord’s plans in the New Dispensation contemplate provisions for the achievement of their welfare. Hence the words of the Lord to the Church: “Thou (shalt) [wilt] remember the poor, and consecrate of thy properties for their support. . . . And inasmuch as ye (do) impart of your substance unto the poor, ye [will] do it unto me” (D&C 42:30–31). For this and other Church uses for revenue the law of tithing is instituted, the payment of the Lord’s tenth, or tithing, one-tenth of one’s interest annually; for general Church expense purposes, which includes “care of the poor.”

This is the present arrangement for meeting the Church’s need of revenue. The revelations of God in the New Dispensation, however, contemplate a broader provision for the betterment of the material welfare of the membership of the Church than this, and especially for the humble and poor, and those who lack initiative in the creation of wealth by developing the world’s resources, or directing the application of capital to industries, commerce and trade. In outline the plan contemplates men regarding the earth and all that is in it as belonging to the Over-Lord who created it—land and sea, and air, and all that comprises it; all wealth of life, and all its wealth of resources in soil fruitfulness, in forests, in grass covered plains, in mountains underlaid with coal beds—the stored-up sunshine of past geological ages; the mountains seamed with silver lodes, and honey-combed with gold-bearing quartz; plains, again, underlaid with oil lakes; deeper reaches of the ancient gravel beds where lie the precious gems for adornment; the power of the waterfall—all the force and power of gravitation; all animal power, all chemical forces—everything that is wealth or can be transmuted

into wealth—all these things are God's. His by right of proprietorship unquestioned and unquestionable; for he created them, man did not. In the larger provision of the law, then, yet to be accepted by those who recognize God, not only as creator of all that is in the world, and of the world, but as sustaining and perpetuating Power of the world, proprietor and rightful Over-Lord of it. These will desire to give outward manifestation of this inward faith by confessing themselves stewards merely of that portion of God's wealth that comes into their hands, and will hold themselves responsible to him for the administration of that stewardship committed to them by the providences of God. Hence the contemplated fuller development of the law of God, governing material economic relations, among those who accept the New Dispensation, will yet lead them to accept the principle and live the law of consecration and stewardship. This means:

The law of consecration and stewardship. 1. An acknowledgment of the proprietorship of God in the world and to all that is in it; an acknowledgment of him as its creator and the sustaining power of it; and its Over-Lord. This acknowledgment on the part of man being made by a solemn consecration of all he possesses of wealth or wealth creating powers; this consecration will include all lands and their equipment; all mines and their output; all industries, trades, professions; all special gifts to develop natural resources, or to direct labor to develop resources—all which are wealth-creating powers—of all this men in their respective places, and possessions, and callings, and natural gifts for the creation of wealth and its distribution, not for selfish, personal ends, but for the common good and welfare of all. Men, I say, will consecrate all this and themselves with it as stewards unto the Over-Lord of the created world.

2. The second part of this law of consecration and stewardship contemplates that after such a whole and complete consecration on the part of the believer and disciple of the New Dispensation, the disciple shall receive as permanent steward, his allotment in the economic scheme of things. That which shall be his to have and to hold and develop according to his own initiative and judgment, and in perfect freedom, but under consciousness of responsibility to God for the faithful management of the stewardship received as from God.

3. And then, as perpetuating the remembrance of both the consecration and the stewardship, the steward will deliver into a common fund or "storehouse," not as now, "the Lord's tenth" or tithing, but all his surplus—perhaps annually—arising from the management of his stewardship and in turn having claims upon the common storehouse

(known in the New Dispensation parlance as the “Lord’s storehouse”) for capital, with which to enlarge his stewardship, better stock the farm, enlarge or re-equip the factory, improve the shipping facilities, drain the mines or explore for new ore bodies, improve efficiency in professions by making possible extension work at institutions of technology; and to inventors and explorers in pursuit of new knowledge, grant opportunity for research work. All this, but of course much more, is contemplated in the New Dispensation economics for its membership. What is here set down is in barest outline and at present in the Church no formative steps are taken to realize the ideals of the law of consecration and stewardship contemplated by the revelations given in the first decades of the existence of the Church.³

An effort was made by the Church to put into practice the law of consecration and stewardship in both Jackson County, Missouri, and in Kirtland, Ohio, in the first decade of the existence of the Church; but such were the disturbed conditions in which the Church existed in those years, so frequent and violent the persecutions which followed the Saints, that it was impossible in these disturbed conditions to carry out the new economic scheme and God-given principles for the

³These revelations begin with a commandment respecting the consecration of property for the poor “with a covenant and deed (that) [which] cannot be broken,” also that every man shall be made accountable unto the Lord a steward over his own property, etc. (see D&C 42:30–39). Revelation given in February 1831, Ohio. Also D&C 51 (all of it relates to this subject), given in May 1831. D&C 58, given in August 1831, gives direction for the allotment of several stewardships of lands in Jackson Country, Missouri, to certain elders who had gathered there to that land. Instructions on stewardship in D&C 70; 82; 104; and other revelations passim. A brief treatise on this whole subject will be found in the author’s *New Witnesses for God*, chapter 28 on “The Evidence of Inspiration” (of the Prophet Joseph Smith), 1:392–405, derived from the wisdom in the plan proposed for the betterment of the temporal condition of mankind.

Also a later treatise prepared for the section of Columbia University’s (N.Y.) economic library, which received the following acknowledgment by Harry J. Carman, dated December 22, 1924:

This is a long delayed note to express to you my thanks for your article entitled “Economic Aspects of the Career of the Mormons,” which you so kindly prepared for our library more than a year ago. I have just completed a chapter of a projected work entitled “Pioneers and the Transmississippi” in which, among other things, I especially stressed the economic system of the Mormons and their influence as colonizers of the West. Your manuscript, which was very helpful to me, I have had catalogued and placed on the shelves of our college study.

[A copy of this study was found at Cornell by Gordon Thomasson.]

betterment of the conditions of the people in their temporal affairs; and in July, 1838, the present law of tithing was given under which the Church [members], then assembled in Missouri, were required to place all their surplus property in the hands of the bishop of the Church in Zion (Missouri), for the building of a “house of the Lord”—then under contemplation—and the settling of the indebtedness of the Church; and after that they were required to pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this has been the law under which the Church has lived since that time, and which is now the law of the Church under which her membership live.⁴

Concluding reflections: The one law of righteousness. The foregoing items brought forth in chapter 54 ~~and 55~~ are some of the respects in which the Life in the New Dispensation of the gospel is deepened, a little enlarged, and emphasized over and above what is to be found in other dispensations. But the thing which most of all affects the life in the New Dispensation and makes it to abound most with influence for the founding of God’s one and only universal law of eternal righteousness, the same through all ages, and in all places and making the duty of man under the gospel comprehensive, consists in bringing over into modern knowledge the passage from the pronouncement of God in the great council held before the world was: “We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abr. 3:25). This makes the commandments of God the law of man’s moral life, the law of his

⁴See D&C 119. Undoubtedly the requirement as to all “surplus property” being “put into the hands of the bishop of Zion” for the building of the house of the Lord (the temple at Far West), etc., “as the beginning of the tithing of my people,” was a commandment especially directed to the Saints then assembled and assembling in Missouri, to alleviate the immediate distresses then existing both as to the Church as an organization, and many of the Saints sorely in need. It was a temporary commandment, and not designed as a perpetual requirement for all time to come upon the Saints as the payment of one-tenth of their income annually was. I judge this to be the case because at no time since the Missouri days have the Saints, or converts on entering the Church, been required to put all their surplus property into the hands of the bishop of the Church. It has been considered all sufficient, apparently, if members from their entrance into the Church have paid their tithing, which is one-tenth of their interest annually.

In the later years of President Brigham Young’s life an effort was made in various settlements in Utah and Idaho to institute what was called “The United Order,” involving some of the principles of consecration and stewardship—but not all of them. After a few uncertain years of precarious life, the experiments were abandoned. (See **B. H. Roberts**, “**The Economic Aspects of the Career of the Mormons**,” **Columbia [N.Y.] University Library [J115], Economic Sec.**)

progress, the measure of his duty, and the manifestation of his love for God: “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1 Jn. 5:3; cf. John 14:15); “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is [the] transgression of the law,” and “all unrighteousness is sin” (1 Jn. 3:4; 5:17). The law of God then, made up, of course, of the commandments of God, is the universal gospel ethic, common to all its dispensations. And hence, when the final dispensation—the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times was ushered in—there came with it the whole law of eternal righteousness, based upon the commandments of God.

Hence all the law of righteousness of the patriarchal dispensations, of the Mosaic dispensation, and the law under the prophets of Israel—all this enters into the New and Final Dispensation of the gospel. The Ten Commandments, and especially as generalized by the Christ into the two all-inclusive commandments, love of God and love of man; all the precepts of the Christ in the Sermon on the Mount—these are reinstated as the Law of God. The Sermon on the Mount taught in the precepts of the Master and exemplified in his life, is the law of God in the New Dispensation. That dispensation is characterized by a fullness of the law of righteousness, as it is by a fullness of ordinances, of authority from God, or priesthood; of a fullness of events that will restore all things to the order that God has decreed for them, completing both the salvation of men, and the redemption of the earth itself, to the status of a celestial world, the habitat of immortal and glorified Intelligences.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: Taylor, *Government of God*.

The Marriage Institution of the New Dispensation

The unit of society—the family. Hitherto we have considered “the Life” mainly with reference to the individual only. “The Life” would be incomplete, however, if it were not considered with reference to the unit of society—the family; man and woman united, and offspring as the result of their union. In a word, marriage, and what comes of it; the relations it creates, the duties it imposes, the things it designs to achieve, the society it brings into existence, the civilization it creates.

It is evidenced as much in the nature of man as it is clearly written in the revelations of God, that “it is not good ⟨for⟩ [that the] man ⟨to⟩ [should] be alone” (Gen. 2:18); the nature of both man and woman cries out aloud—each needs the other for completion. Completed man is man-woman. Each is but half of a necessary whole; both—and together—are needed for perpetuation of human life—of race. Hence in this story of the creation, when it is proposed that man be made, God said: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”; and then:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. (Gen. 1:26-28)

In the second story of the creation, where the mystery of procreation is veiled under the story of the “rib,” woman is derived from man (and also, though it is not written, man is derived from woman), the mutual need of man and woman and their union is further emphasized. In all the animal creation brought to the lone Adam to be named by him, according to this story, there was not found a helpmeet for Adam. God had observed before that it was not good for man to be alone, and hence he declared the creation of a helpmeet for him; and so brought one forth, not from the animal creation to which Adam had given names, but one derived from the same nature and race as Adam himself,

from man, and brought her to Adam, who recognized in her “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she is taken out of Man” (that is, derived from the same race, and is of the same nature); and “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen. 2:23–24).

Thus was “man” completed; the family—the **community** unit, the unit of civilization—was made possible; two great, necessary things provided for; true companionship for man and woman; and the lawful perpetuation of the race.

What is achieved through marriage? Much has been written upon this institution of marriage as above set forth in Genesis, much in high praise of it, and worthily. An old English writer says of it:

Marriage is the mother of the world and preserves kingdoms and fills cities and churches and heaven itself. Like the ⟨fruitful⟩ [useful] bee, it builds a house, gathers sweetness from every flower, and labors and unites into societies and republics and sends out colonies and feeds the world with delicacies and obeys and keeps order and exercises many virtues and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good to which God hath designed the present Constitution of the world.¹

And I might say, for those who accept the New Dispensation of the gospel, as set forth in this work, the constitution of all worlds. Marriage does all that is described above, and more. It constitutes the true community unit—the family—which is the source of national life and civilization; both depend upon the maintenance and perfection of this institution.

Its purposes: *Companionship, offspring, family, society, and civilization.* It will be observed that two major things are provided for in the Bible account of the marriage institution. These are (a) companionship: “it is not good for man to be alone” (nor for woman either); and (b), man and woman in the marriage relation must perpetuate the race. God’s commandment: “Multiply and replenish the earth”; and together subdue it.

The marriage relation is associated with the tenderest sentiments, the strongest passions (I use the word in its best sense), and the deepest interest of human life. It has to do with human love, and sex, and offspring—the perpetuation of life—the family, the home, and the

¹Jeremy Taylor [newspaper clipping in Draft 1].

race. It is the chief cornerstone in the temple of human existence. From the family comes the home, and it has become something of a fixed conviction with thoughtful statesmen, and others who give serious attention to the welfare of society and of nations, that no state can rise higher than its homes; and no church can be more righteous or influential than the firesides from which its members come. It follows that the stability of the home and its perpetuation become, nay, are, major factors in the concerns of society, of church, of state, and of humanity itself. The importance of marriage demands that every solemnity and stability that can be fused into it shall be claimed and secured for it. The great strength of marriage consists in the fact that it is an institution founded of God; that it is a religious institution—sacrament would be the better term—a relationship established by the law of God, and its purposes and obligations are determined by that law.

It is to be observed, in passing, that when instituted in Eden, marriage was a relationship that was established before death appeared in the Adamic race; and had not death been thrust into the scene, the relation of marriage between the first pair would have been perpetual—eternal. The question suggests itself—why, in view of the assured resurrection from the dead—the renewal of individual life in immortality, why should the passing incident of a temporary death break the eternity of the marriage covenant? More on this later.

The modern world's departure from the marriage institution. All the foregoing in relation to marriage, however, its solemnity, its sacredness, its perpetuity, the probability of the eternity of the relationship it establishes, all this is widely being departed from in modern life, until the whole fabric of the institution as it has hitherto been known, is menaced by the so-called march of recent progress—the trend in modern thought and action to divide the marriage purpose, companionship and offspring, and make it chiefly and in many cases entirely “companionate” with satisfaction of sex desire **without** offspring as a result of sex relation, eliminated; thus cancelling one of the two major features of the marriage institution. Perhaps in nothing in our modern life has there been such a wide departure from established moral standards both of the recent past and more ancient times than in the Christian, modern view of marriage.

Recent discussions on marriage. The subject has been discussed of late (1928-29) in some rather pretentious books; also in both the monthly and weekly magazines. It has been discussed from the lecture platform, also from the pulpit, in the daily press, and has

been made the theme—pro et con—of movie picture films. It has been the subject of discussion in very important church conferences, conventions and congresses.²

(a) *Book treatment.* The books that have treated this subject are quite numerous. I shall refer only to two of these, and this because they are quite typical of the spirit, in large part, of the others.

The first is under the title *Our Changing Morality*. It is edited by Freda Kirchwey, and is in the nature of a symposium. This book has fifteen writers of considerable prominence both in our own country and also in England; each contributes a chapter. Some of the subtitles in this book are: “Styles in Ethics”; “Modern Marriage”; “Changes in Sex Relations”; “Women—Free for What?” “Can Men and Women Be Friends?” Under such subtitles, sex relations, love, and marriage are discussed with extreme frankness. The trend of thought throughout the symposium may be judged from a few typical quotations.

First, it is held, “That all sexual intercourse should spring from the free impulse of both parties, based upon mutual inclination and nothing else.” “The cramping of love by institutions (the family and churches for instance) is one of the major evils of the world.” Again: “Every person who allows himself to think that an adulterer must be wicked adds his stone to the prison in which the source of poetry and (purity and love) [beauty and life] is incarcerated by ‘priests in black gowns’!”³

²As an indication of how far-flung the discussion is, attention is called to the fact that Italy’s dictator, his Excellency Benito Mussolini, has contributed a pretentious article to one of the popular American magazines on “Marriage,” dealing with some of the modern problems arising in connection therewith. (See Hearst’s *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for October 1928.) One paragraph is of first-rate importance and worthy of consideration as it fittingly rebukes a too-common evil of levity in relation to the marriage state:

The marriage contract should be engaged in with due care for its importance and due regard for the high purpose of its function. Marriage is not a travesty on life. It cannot be made the subject for pleasantries in the columns of the daily newspapers, or the target for farcical thrusts on the stage. Actors and actresses blessed with simple mediocrity in the drama often find humor to be exploited in references to the married state or to the man with a family. . . .

The social conscience must be made stern against any influence which effects a travesty on the sacred purposes of a married existence. Marriage and family life are hallowed institutions, fitting into the fabric of the state in harmony with its function and growth. (45, 175)

³*Our Changing Morality*, 14–15. [These three quotations are from Bertrand Russell, “Styles in Ethics,” in Freda Kirchwey, ed., *Our Changing Morality* (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1924), 14–15.]

From these excerpts may be judged somewhat the spirit in which sex questions, love, marriage, and divorce in that symposium are discussed.

Second; another typical book on this line is *The Right to Be Happy*, by Mrs. Bertrand Russell. Her chapter on “Sex and Parenthood” is the chapter that represents the very heart of her book, and it should be entitled, “A Plea for Unbridled License in Sex Relations.” Perhaps I ought to forewarn the reader that this theme of necessity requires great frankness in the use of terms that are generally regarded as better unused for the general reader. To secure a right understanding of the subject must be my excuse for repeating some of these plain terms.

In the opening paragraph of the chapter referred to in Mrs. Russell’s book, a statement is made that “starvation or thwarting of the instinct of sex love,” which would include, of course, sex self-restraint, “causes more acute unhappiness than poverty, disease or ignorance.”⁴ **Under In** the regime proposed under this scheme set forth in *The Right to Be Happy*, this question is asked: “What hinders us from establishing a social system in which young men and women, who are out in the world earning, may ⟨not⟩ enter into open temporary sex partnerships, without harm to the work and legitimate ambitions of either?”

A rather bold question, and this question is answered by the author as follows:

Nothing whatever, excepting our false picture of woman, and our ingrained ascetic belief that sex is wicked if enjoyed and not immediately succeeded by the pains and anxieties and penalties of parenthood. Yet such companionships, now despised and concealed, would work great changes in the character of individuals.⁵

Undoubtedly it would! Again: “The idea of sin must be banished as must any demand for special service or sacrifice by women. . . . There would be passionate griefs, disappointments and broken ideals, but none of this is so damaging to personality as atrophy. . . . Men frequently regret what the moralist calls pre-marital indiscretions; and pre-marital experience for woman is definitely still thought a crime. . . . It is not impossible that a time may come when pre-marital experience will no longer be regarded as a crime, or even as an indiscretion”! “The superstition of ⟨jealousy⟩ [chastity] is a part of that same false psychology which makes moral virtue consist in emptiness and abstention.”⁶ Such is the spirit of the discussion throughout the book. ~~to which attention is called.~~

⁴Russell, *The Right to Be Happy* [newspaper clipping in Draft 1].

⁵Russell, *The Right to Be Happy*.

⁶Russell, *The Right to Be Happy*.

(b) *Church Treatment.* With equal frankness in magazines and the daily press, this question is debated. I think, however, I shall get the points of the debate before the reader best if I call attention to a very noted paper presented at the American Episcopal Church Congress held in San Francisco, in July, 1927.

This paper has resulted in very much criticism of its author, the Rev. Henry H. Lewis, of Ann Arbor, Michigan. His paper carried this title: "Moral Standards in an Age of Change."⁷ The intent of this topic so introduced was to bring out first, what changes are taking place in moral standards; second, how these changes are related to Christian standards which the church proclaims; and third, the message of the church in relation to "the existing facts." Of necessity I give a few excerpts from this paper, especially on that division of the topic that deals with "the existing facts":

New grouping of society's units. "The first thing, I believe," said the author, "which strikes us all is that we have largely substituted for the family groups other and larger groups." And then,

a generation ago, the home, the children, the cousins, the neighbors made the all important nucleus around which life was built and maintained. There was a sound honor, a simple goodness, a charm about it all. Today that scene is seldom repeated.

Yet that picture he draws for us was only a generation ago, and he now declares that it is seldom repeated! "The emphasis has shifted." Continuing he says:

We have other groups which form the centers around which life revolves; for older brother and sister in college—the fraternity and sorority; for mother, her reading or social clubs or health culture group; for father, the Rotary or Kiwanis, or lodge—clubs of all kinds—not to mention hotels for men, and hotels for women. In any discussion of the present moral situation such new groupings, which often have usurped the central place of family life, should be recognized. . . . The philosophy of many is to live for the moment, and to get the most out of life? . . . Is it any wonder that we have a behavioristic psychology which tells us that the main thing in life is to express ourselves, or get the greatest thrill we can?

That is held up to be the modern goal to which life is moving; and it is not difficult to see under it the old formula "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Again he says: "With such a philosophy it is hard to find a definite purpose toward which one is going."

⁷Russell, *The Right to Be Happy*.

In other words, modern life is losing its sense of direction, and seems not to appreciate or understand or even believe that there is a great objective in this earth life of man. A little further on the author says: “The result is that many an individual has an independence which amounts to complete disregard of anyone else.” Then he cites the fact that science is playing an important part with reference to moral standards. ~~He says:~~

Effect of science on morals.

The introduction of science is the outstanding fact of our time, and in morals science has created an entirely new moral situation. You have done away with that old but very effective weapon which has deterred many a person from going beyond the accepted moral code—fear of consequences. That fear no longer rests in the breast of any scientifically educated man or woman, and along with the passing of that fear is also going a vast amount of ignorance and misinformation upon the whole sexual relationship. The results are only partially manifest. To many young people what used to be considered lapses from the moral code are now considered to be acts which are as natural as eating and drinking. Indeed, youth often decide on the basis of expediency or “worthwhileness” whether sexual intercourse should be indulged in, never thinking of any after effects, because they believe there will be none.

They see no harm in it—science will protect them, and science generally does. Even with those who do not go so far, the idea that many of us had, that such things as petting or over-familiarity with the opposite sex, should be saved at least until the time of engagement, if not until marriage, on the basis that married life would be happier if one did—this has disappeared.

The youth of the day we know are not appealed to by any such idea. . . . Whatever we may think of such conduct, the thing for us to notice is that it does exist, and that largely because of scientific knowledge many people are finding reasonable justification for doing things they never would have thought of a generation ago.

Church unity on marriage lacking. The foregoing was the presentation of “the facts” in that **aforsaid** church congress! Further on the discussion shows how these modern changes as to the marriage institution are related to Christian standards which the church proclaims. Of course, there can be but one answer to that, and that is that the conduct of modern life represented by these “facts” ~~are~~ **is** revolutionary of all moral ideas of the churches. They must have credit for that, though they answer with varying voices, and there is a lack of unity in proclamation from the various divisions of Christendom. The churches are supposed to voice the law of God with reference to such

matters. Those in controversy with them say “that would be all right if we only knew what the law of God was.” And indeed here “the church,” having reference to all Christendom—all divisions and subdivisions of it—is at a disadvantage in meeting that flippant, rather than profound remark. **This** because of a lack of unity in their ideas with reference to what the law of God is.

The other point to be considered, and which was considered in the discussion at the Episcopal Church Congress on the occasion referred to, is: “What is to be the message of the Church in relation to these existing facts?”

Companionate marriage. Just at present the church seems not to have clearly answered this question; but within the churches there are those who would make the answer in such form as not only to condone these conditions that are here pointed out, but would make them respectable by legalizing them. Hence arises the suggestion of “companionate marriage,” accompanied by birth control, and by easy divorces; which means when considered in its effects, free love legalized. That is the meaning of the movement when stripped of all its pretenses and its disguises.

It is merely a form of marriage which is to continue as long as the parties to it desire the relationship to continue, but which may be dissolved mutually or at the pleasure of either party: divorce is to be easy. The object is not offspring and family and permanence of the home, but companionship, and pleasure, and sex liberties without the consequence or responsibility of children. These may be limited or eliminated according to desire.

It would not be difficult to forecast what the effect would be if such a scheme should be carried into effect. It would greatly weaken the marriage institution, and tend to the destruction of family life. “Home” would be a word without meaning! The “contract” of the “companionate marriage,” held lightly from the first, and designed to be easily dissolved, would stand little or no strain; would leave the parties to it free to contemplate other possible associations, free to seek them, constituting mate-hunting a continuous performance, wrecking all continence and inevitably resulting in the destruction of chastity both of mind and conduct; and instituting practically a free-love regime to the confusion of stable marriage, and family life.

The effect of easy divorce. What would be the effect of breaking down the moral restraints in sex relations may well be judged by the new laws governing divorce in England. England has long been renowned

for the stability of her family life. She in the past has made divorce as difficult as possible by her laws. A few years ago, however, England began granting what since have been called “secret divorces,” that is, divorces without publicity, limiting the press to publication of the facts in barest outline, and without the scandal that usually attaches to such trials. The result has been a great multiplication of divorce cases; in London alone rising from about five hundred in 1901, to more than two thousand four hundred cases in 1927; showing that if you make divorce easy by making its processes secret even, it results in greatly increasing divorces—a conceded evil because of the disruption of family life. “It would be difficult to guess how far the ease and popularity of divorce,” says one thoughtful observer, “may be making inroads into that constancy and tolerance which used to be considered the great glory of English family life.”

Existing sex and social conditions. That conditions are now bad in relation to sex life and social life, admits of no doubt. It was reported in 1927 that there were six million young men in our country (United States) of marriageable age who refused to take upon themselves the responsibility of marriage and family, largely because of the economic difficulties involved. As it would be unreasonable to suppose that this large body of the youthful manhood of the country abstained from sexual pleasures, such a condition proves, even of itself, how widespread promiscuous and unlawful intercourse must be, and what extent of prostitution. In the school and college life, as well as in the industrial life of our country, so many are already said to be involved in “companionate marriage,” and are living in defiance of the law in relation to such matters, that it is urged that their method of life should be legalized! Granting that ~~all~~ this deplorable condition may ~~be true~~ exist, yet take away the restraints that now exist, and there would be evoked the spirit of absolute recklessness which will mean the destruction ~~of all idea~~ of family life and home, the basic unit of civilization. How may the spendthrift be cured? By filling his pockets with money? Is that the cure for reckless spending? Granting that the social evils that exist are appalling, will they be made less appalling by declaring them respectable, by legalizing such relations as “companionate marriages,” with its birth control, its easy and inexpensive divorce system?

Other phases of the social evil. This effort to meet the conditions presented by “flaming,” modern youth, as yet unmarried, but involved in sex relations without legal sanctions, is but one phase of the social evil; there are others, and these **evils are to be found** among those

who have already entered into the marriage status. Among these evils are, notably, the increasing love of pleasure, by indulgence in the sensual delights of sex without incurring the risks, the pains and responsibilities of parenthood. Or, if a concession must be made to the convention of family under marriage, then offspring among such people, it is thought, must be limited to one or at most two children. This among the wealthier and educated classes, where wealth creates opportunity for leisure and artificially stimulates desire for greater variety of entertainment with diminishing effort, and an increasing sense of luxury and freedom ~~of~~ **from** responsibility. As large families would be a hindrance to all this self indulgence, large families are cancelled out of the reckoning by that class of the population best qualified, in a material way, to meet the obligations of large families.

This practice of limiting families by so-called "birth control" leads to many evils, physical and moral and spiritual. It endangers and wrecks the health of women, since it involves them in methods for prevention of conception, and *foetus* destruction, leading frequently to abortions and to infanticide, which is murder. Prevention, both by mechanical and chemical means, endangers the health of women who indulge it, impairs vitality, shatters nervous energy and deteriorates the race. The moral effect of such methods of living is nothing less than disastrous. It brutalizes and makes a shame of sexual pleasure itself, and kills the sentiment of love which alone refines the act to endearment. It ministers to the gross desire for sexual promiscuity; for with a felt security, through knowledge of a preventative nature from consequences that would expose infidelities to the marriage covenant, temptations to fornications and adulteries are greatly multiplied and the moral tone of a community greatly lowered, if not destroyed.

The baneful effects of all this frequently appear in the divorce courts. It is the divorce record of England **in the year 1927** that in forty percent of the divorce cases the couples seeking separation were childless, and in thirty percent of the cases they had but one child! These facts tell their own story. A thoughtful writer commenting upon the above state of facts declares:

Children create a bond which influences parents to think many times before they give way to divorce, and this may develop the tolerance of each other's faults and characteristics without which no marriage can be happy. But the bond being absent there is not incentive to overcome the obstacles to a satisfactory union of a man and a woman, and divorce results.⁸

⁸"The New Age," December, 1927.

It will be said perhaps that in all this there is nothing new; that these several recognized evils constituting menaces to the marriage institution, to the family, to the integrity of community life, to national life, and to civilization itself, have of a long time now been trumpeted by prophets of evil, and yet the marriage institution persists, the family survives, children are regularly born in constantly increasing numbers in most nations; and while it is recognized that many evils and dangers abound, they always have existed more or less, yet there seems to be no real cause for alarm **for** human nature is essentially sound and it seems likely that our cherished institutions will somehow be preserved. A comforting line of comment, doubtless; but shallow and inadequate to the world's present needs, and not at all reassuring in face of the conditions that now obtain and the changing mental attitude of the present generation toward the aforesaid cherished institutions. In that changed mental attitude lies the immediate danger to marriage and all that it concerns.

Moral standards and changes. A word in relation to this phrase "moral standards" as used above. In commerce and trade we have standard weights and standard measures. It will have to be conceded, I think, that in the world of trade and commerce, there is more or less fraud and trickery, of theft even; of false values fraudulently imposed upon the unsuspecting. How shall these evils be corrected? By tampering with standards of weights and measures? Or by demanding that the thing sold shall be honestly sold and shall be of proper weight, of proper measure, of the agreed number of feet or yards or pounds? Make commercial trade, and industrial transactions conform to standards of weights, lengths, measures and values. **And so with marriage and its obligations. Let it be completed marriage, which is righteousness; and not mutilated marriage, which is sin.**

Position of the Church ~~of Jesus-Christ-In~~ in the New Dispensation on marriage. I have gone into the consideration of all these things so far because I want to consider the position of the Church of Christ in the New Dispensation in relation to these very important subjects.

What is the message of the Church of the Latter-day Saints to its own people about these vital questions of sex, morality, and of marriage? What message on these subjects has ~~it~~ **she** for the world? Or has ~~it~~ **she** no word to give? I think ~~it~~ **the Church of the New Dispensation** has a message both for ~~its~~ **her** own people and for the world. Moreover that ~~word~~ **message** comes without uncertainty, and

under such sanctions of divine authority that heed should be given to it.⁹

The message of the Church. It starts with the great principle of Christ's Sermon on the Mount: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all **these** things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). "Seek" not one's own conceptions of righteousness, not one's neighbor's **conception of righteousness**, not human standards at all; for "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). Then, with reference to righteousness, men may easily be mistaken about it. Apart from the law of God's righteousness, men are likely to place wrong emphasis upon this or that part of righteousness, distorting it and perhaps making it of no avail. Men are subject to misconceptions ~~upon~~ upon generalizations about righteousness; but there can be no doubt with reference to the righteousness of God, and the righteousness of his law. And when men make the law of God their standard of righteousness, and the measure of their duty, they occupy sure ground. That is where the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands. The membership of that Church accept their moral duties as growing out of the commandments of God. They hark back in their conception of things in relation to the laws of God's righteousness, back to the beginning, when it was said by the divine Creator: "We will prove them herewith (preexistent spirits that were to become men in earth life), to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them" (Abr. 3:25). This makes the commandments of God, **in** the sum of **them**, the revealed righteousness of God; and the obedience of man to that righteousness is the full measure of his duty, and the acme of human morality.

The law of chastity. In the Sermon on the Mount, as we have already seen, the Christ gave the supreme law of chastity that is still of binding force to those who make any pretension of following the Master, or, **of following** effectual purity; namely, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh (up)on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery [with her] already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28). That, I say, holds not only as to those who are in the marriage relation but to those who have not yet entered into the marriage relation. Purity of mind, chastity of thought, as well as chastity of conduct is God's great law upon this subject. And when the Lord repeated that law of

⁹See note at end of chapter [555-59].

chastity in the New Dispensation of the gospel, he made these important additions to it, by saying that whosoever “looketh upon a woman to lust after her shall deny the faith, and shall not have the Spirit; and if he repents not he shall be cast out” (D&C 42:23). That is, cast out of the Church.

That is the message and the warning **which** the Church of the Latter-day Saints has for ~~its~~ **her** membership. To the world the Church declares that she regards as her moral standards the law of God. That law requires and demands purity of thought as well as chastity in conduct; and this as well before marriage as afterwards. The Church takes no part in striking down the restraints that a wholesome public opinion and the surviving fragments of God’s law among the Christian sects of the world projects about these problems of sex, morality, and marriage. The correct way of meeting these problems is by preaching repentance to those who violate the laws governing such relations. The Church of the New Dispensation stands for sanctity of the family and its permanency. In proof of this I call attention to our marriage ceremony as performed in the holy temples—the ceremony which ends not with a covenant “till death us do part,”¹⁰ but with a covenant which extends into eternity—“for time and all eternity!”¹¹ That is the guarantee of the Church to all the world that the Latter-day Saints believe in the permanency of marriage and of the home. Marriage, family, and the home have contributed so much to the happiness, peace, and progress of mankind, and built up and maintained such civilization as exists in the world today, that it may be trusted to achieve still greater things throughout the eternities in which men will live. The family founded upon true and complete marriage—marriage for companionship and marriage for family—becomes not only a sacred unit in our mortal life, but it will continue to be a sacred unit also in the eternal life toward which men are moving.

Per contra: Facing the real modern problems. Meantime, however, is nothing to be said of the real difficulties attendant upon the economic and industrial changes that have come over the world in recent

¹⁰Church of England, *Book of Common Prayer*, “Solemnization of Marriage.”

¹¹*The Appropriateness of the wedding ring in the marriage ceremony of the Latter-day Saints:* In view of the eternity of the marriage covenant by the Church of the Latter-day Saints, no people more appropriately may use the wedding ring in the marriage ceremony as a symbol of its nature. The circle is the most perfect of geometrical figures—the symbol of completeness and of eternity; therefore, by them, the wedding ring may most fittingly be used as the symbol of the marriage covenant.

years, making for many the ideal family marriage more difficult of realization? Nothing of the childless marriages, or the very, very limited offspring in the marriage life of the highly educated and the wealthy classes on the one hand; and of the over-prolific poor and ignorant and even criminal classes on the other hand? Undoubtedly something needs to be said upon all these problems; but surely nothing like what is being presented by the ultra, would-be “reformers” should be said. Their scheme is no panacea for these recognized ills of modern social life.

Briefly, for the really criminal classes, of both sexes, marriage and family should be prohibited. They should be barred [from] the propagation of their kind!^a

What should be said to the highly educated and wealthy classes who are shirking their responsibilities, and duties to life and to society, should be in the way of admonition to repentance; and to acceptance of the law of God as the measure of their moral obligations in the married state, an appeal to sound reason and to conscience, that they become lovers of God and duty more than “lovers of pleasure[s]” (2 Tim. 3:4) and of ease and of luxury. Would such an appeal only be met with quiet smiles of contempt, or perhaps with shouts of derision from their gilded, childless palaces miscalled homes? Or by shouts of derision from their pillowed divans, or the banquet-laden tables of their club houses? Then be it so. Nothing more may be done than to make this appeal to plain duty. **That failing** let them perish with their luxury and love of it, as they will so perish, if they repent not, **and will die** unloved, unhonored, and unsung—leaving naught but a wrack behind!^b

Of the over-prolific poor and ignorant, multiplying beyond all reason of hope to provide for bare necessities, to say nothing of opportunities for good prospects in life, wholesome nourishment, decent clothing and

^aIn 1925, Utah followed a national trend by passing a law that provided for the sterilization of rapists and other institutionalized persons, if “by the laws of heredity [they were] the probable potential parent of socially inadequate offspring likewise afflicted.” Lester E. Bush, Jr., *Health and Medicine among the Latter-day Saints: Science, Sense, and Scripture*, Health/Medicine and the Faith Traditions Series (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 168. Such state laws were held to be unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in *Skinner v. Oklahoma ex rel. Williamson*, 316 U.S. 535 (1942).

^bRoberts paraphrases a well-known passage from Walter Scott’s “The Lay of the Last Minstrel,” 6.11–17: “Despite those titles, power, and pelf, / The wretch, / Concentred all in self, / Living, shall forfeit fair renown, / And, doubly dying, shall go down / To the vile dust, from whence he sprung, / Unwept, unhonour’d, and unsung.” We are grateful to Jesse Crisler for help in locating this reference. The final phrase is from Shakespeare, *The Tempest* 4.1.

education—for these, enlightenment and patient instruction, education; and such improvement in economic policies as will lead to betterment of industrial conditions. Mere generalities these, I know, but I may not go beyond generalities on this head in this writing. In the instruction to this class would fall proper sex information, by competent and conscientious teachers; not for the introduction of knowledge of mechanical and chemical means for prevention of conception, *foetus* destruction, or abortions, much less infanticide; but instructions in sex cleanliness and health; in prudential self-restraint, that shall not be onanism either, but based upon such regard for the health of mothers and welfare of offspring that there shall be periods of continence self-imposed—out of loving consideration for the wife and mother that shall make for respect of wifeness and motherhood, and keep the family without hailing distance of rugged well-being.^c Is this too much to expect of the classes to which such an appeal is to be made? Again, be it so; but this is the only appeal which in safety to the marriage institution may be made; adjustment by slow but persistent and patient methods of instruction against merely brutal self-indulgence. What is it Paul says of the mutual duties of man and wife in their intimate relations? “Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency” (1 Cor. 7:5). If such admonition can hopefully be given in the interests of religious observances—fasting and prayer—why not invoke it in the interests of the well-being of wifeness and motherhood, and in the interest of the family and the home, and the church and the state? And why not hope for its achievement in the one case as in the other? In any event the processes of permanent reform will necessarily be by the slow processes of enlightenment, and not by the race-destructive methods proposed by the ultra “reformers.”

Already it is deplored that the highly educated and wealthy classes are so limiting their offspring that they are not perpetuating their class. What may be hoped for from a method likely to result in producing the same status in what we consent to call, for convenience, the great “middle class”—the rank and file of the people?

Hopes—Faith! Meantime, and fortunately, one may believe sufficiently in the soundness of human nature as to be confident that the

^cIn these comments about sex education, Roberts addresses a topic frequently discussed within the Church during his day. In the 1920s and 1930s, discussions of sex education in Church publications were “remarkably forthright.” Bush, *Health and Medicine among the Latter-day Saints*, 143–44.

program of the ultra “reformers” will not be projected into our modern life to any great extent; for humanity’s sake let us hope not; out of respect for the wisdom and the striving of our ancestors who sought for better things, and wrought into the fabric of church and state better things than these proposed by the ultra “reformers” of our times—for their sake, and their honor, let us hope the **ultra** “reformers” will not get far with their program to legalize vice; and especially for the sake of posterity let us hope not.

If one may hope for the failure of this evil program on the score of belief in the essential soundness of human nature generally, one may feel an increase of confidence in its failure when thinking of what influence the appeal will have upon the membership of the Church of the Latter-day Saints. For while I know this Church membership is not immune from the invasion of this pestiferous program, and there may be those among them who would give welcome to such canonization of vice as is proposed—yet that number can never be large nor influential. No, the program of the ultra modern “reformers” will never be an attractive marriage system, or rather anti-marriage system, among people of the New Dispensation. As a Church they stand committed to quite an opposite program from this. Their religion and their Church stand for the purity and the permanence of the home. For full and complete marriage, celebrated in their temples, open to all the membership in good standing, celebrated by a covenant not only “until death do them part,” but for “time and all eternity,” extending into and holding good in the immortal life brought to pass by the resurrection from the dead, of which the Christ was the first fruits.

Marriage to the Latter-day Saints means completed or perfect marriage—companionship and offspring—family. “Multiply and replenish the earth” is God’s commandment to them; and this, under the law of God, may be legitimately carried out only in wedlock. As for all the rest, their ideal is pure minds and clean lives, for only such can “see,” that is “realize,” God. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8). Lust of the eyes, and of the mind, and of the heart, is forbidden by the law of God to them, either inside or outside of the marriage status (Matt. 5:27–28; D&C 42:22–23). And this ethic of sex relations and marriage, they hope to see become—by the grace of God—the **sex and marriage** ethic of the world.^d

^dThe material on pages 551–54 is taken almost verbatim from Roberts’s article, “Complete Marriage—Righteousness: Mutilated Marriage—Sin,” *Improvement Era* 31 (January 1928): 189–92.

Note: Appendage to chapter 55 [Plural marriage]

Anything which a Latter-day Saint writer may have to say upon the subject of marriage will be regarded distrustfully by many readers because of the relationship of his Church to a unique sort of plural marriage doctrine and practice which was inaugurated and upheld for a time by the Church; by reason of which circumstance great prejudice was aroused against that Church and especially with reference to any message it ~~may~~ **might** have on the subject of marriage. Since candor, however, requires that something should be said in relation to the subject in such a work as this, I prefer to say it here at the close of this chapter.

In 1831, in Hiram Township, Portage County, Ohio, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were engaged in a revision (sometimes, and generally, referred to as a “translation”) of the Old Testament. In the course of that work Joseph Smith was much impressed with the apparent approval and sanction which the Lord gave to those patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament period in the matter of their having “many wives.” He was told in answer to his questions that a plurality of wives as practiced by the worthy prophets and patriarchs, under the sanctions of God, was righteous and approved; and the time would come when plural marriages would be introduced into the New Dispensation. This time came some years later, and on July 12, 1843, the knowledge previously received was committed to writing as a revelation (see D&C 132).

Joseph Smith introduced the plural-wife feature of marriage into the Church of the Latter-day Saints both by taking plural wives himself, and giving them to others. Not so much because there was evidence of Bible sanction for the righteousness of such unions among the worthy and approved patriarchs and prophets of God, as from the fact that revelation to himself sanctioned that order of marriage and authorized it. “If any man espouse a virgin,” said the revelation,

and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent, . . . then is he justified. . . . For they are given unto him to multiply and replenish the earth, according to ⟨the Lord’s⟩ [my] commandment, and to fulfil the promise which was given by ⟨the⟩ [my] Father before the foundation of the world, and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they ⟨might⟩ [may] bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of ⟨the⟩ [my] Father continued, that he may be glorified. (D&C 132:61-63)

There is nothing here or elsewhere in the revelation promising ease or happiness or pleasure; there is nothing but an exalted motive presented for this marriage system: the “bearing of the souls of men,” “replenishing the earth” with the race of men. Procreation of the race is emphasized as

the highest purpose of this phase of the marriage institution, all else incidental; and procreation under conditions the most favorable to the welfare of the offspring, and hence to the race. First in giving in larger measure progenitors of high character—men who have given evidence of upright, temperate, virtuous lives; women chaste, and willing to consecrate their lives to the duty of motherhood; to this end sacrificing earthly pleasure, including the exclusive companionship of the husband expected in monogamous marriage. As some women, against the promptings of natural inclinations of the social instincts, of the cravings for wedlock companionship, and the desire for offspring, will renounce the world and the noble office of motherhood itself, and retire into dismal retreats, and spend their lives in prayer and meditation, only emerging into the world to render service of teaching the youth, visiting the needy, or nursing the sick; so plural wives among the Latter-day Saints, and first wives who consented to their husbands entering into these relations, accepted the institution from the highest moral and religious motives. First as being a commandment of God instituted “for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men” (D&C 132:63); and, second, that they might bear the souls of men under conditions that gave largest promise of improving the race and bringing forth superior men and women who shall lead the way to that higher state of things for which the world is waiting; and which the first condition precedent to obtaining, is a consecrated fatherhood and motherhood, such as is contemplated in the plural marriage system of the Latter-day Saints.¹²

¹²On this phase of the subject, the Right Rev. D. S. Tuttle, D.D., LL.D.—formerly bishop of Montana, Idaho, and Utah; and for seventeen years a resident of Utah and therefore in personal contact with “Mormonism,” and later bishop of Missouri—has an enlightening passage. He says in a chapter on “The Mormons”:

I pause to remark that if some strength accrues to Mormonism from its adjustment to the nature of man, some unsuspected strength also is won to it by its appeal to the nature of woman. The self-sacrifice in woman, the appeal is made to that. One knows not much of human life if he is ignorant that one of the dominating characteristics of woman is the power of self-sacrifice. If self-sacrifice in woman is continually in evidence in mothers, in wives of worthless husbands, in sisters in religious communities, and in women giving up all in devotion to love or duty or religion, who wonders that the appeal to it, as in the matter of polygamy, strange as it seems, must be accounted an element of strength to Mormonism. As matter of fact, there were no more strenuous and determined upholders of polygamy than most of the Mormon women who were personally sufferers by it. To their nature it was a calamity and hateful. To their spirit it was religious duty and a call for self-sacrifice. Therefore they

The Saints did not accept into their faith and practice the plural-wife system with the idea that it increased the comfort, or added to the ease of anyone. From the first it was known to involve sacrifice, to make a large demand upon the faith, patience, hope and charity of all who should attempt to carry out its requirements. Its introduction was not a call to ease or pleasure, but to religious duty; it was not an invitation to self-indulgence, but to self-conquest; its purpose was not earth-happiness, but earth-life discipline, undertaken in the interest of special advantages for succeeding generations of men. That purpose was to give to succeeding generations a superior fatherhood and motherhood, by enlarging the opportunities of men of high character, moral integrity, and spiritual development to become progenitors of the race; to give to women of like character and development a special opportunity to consecrate themselves to the high mission of motherhood. Race-culture, then, was the inspiring motive of the plural-wife feature of this revelation on marriage. It was in the name of a divinely ordered species of eugenics that the Latter-day Saints accepted plurality of wives.

It should be observed also, in passing, that the Church of the Latter-day Saints never advocated the indiscriminate, or the general practice of a plural-wife system, under merely human, legal sanctions. Such a general practice would doubtless be mischievous and lead to the disasters which opponents have from time to time charged to the more limited and specifically guarded practice of the principle under what the Latter-day Saints held to be divine sanctions, restraints, and regulations. It was indeed a principle of religion to them, a holy sacrament, and not at all designed to become a general practice under merely human laws. It is unfortunate that the world outside of the Church was not impressed with this phase of the subject; for then it would have been apparent that the things the world argued against and fought against—a general plural marriage system free for all to adopt, considered to be destructive of the monogamous system and the menace to the home itself—was not the thing upheld and contended for by the Latter-day Saints, who believed that the privilege of plural marriage is to be limited to persons of high character, approved lives, and living under the most sacred obligations to chastity, and granted this privilege of the marriage system only under the most carefully guarded permission amounting to divine sanction. Such were the limitations put upon the practice of the plural feature of the marriage system of the Latter-day Saints.

were loyal to it, determined to live in it, and if need be, to die for it. Spirit, roused and active, evermore predominates over nature. (Tuttle, *Reminiscences of a Missionary Bishop*, 307-8)

Against this plural feature of marriage a series of Federal enactments were passed by the Congress of the United States, under the assumption that Congress held plenary power to legislate for the Territories. This series of enactments began in 1862 and continued intermittently until 1887, when what was known as the Edmunds-Tucker law was passed, which, in addition to increasing the penalties for violations of the law against plural marriage and its relations, also confiscated the Church property and dissolved the Church as a corporation. Even after this, still more drastic enactments were pending; but finally in September 1890, President Woodruff, and after every effort that could be made had been made before the courts to test the constitutionality of the law, moved thereto by an impression of the spirit of the Lord, announced the discontinuance of the system of plural marriage, and called upon the Latter-day Saints “to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land” (OD-1). This “Manifesto” as it came by usage to be called, was afterwards adopted by the Church in General Conference assembled, and is now the rule of the Church.

In this matter of plural marriage the Latter-day Saints are neither responsible for its introduction nor for its discontinuance. The Lord commanded its practice, and in the face of the sentiment of ages, and in opposition to the teachings of their own traditions, many of the Saints obeyed the commandment, and in the midst of weakness, of great difficulties, and dangers, sought to carry out the law as revealed to them. For ~~about~~ half a century they maintained its practice in the face of opposition sufficient to appall the stoutest hearts. They defended it in the public press, proclaimed it from the pulpit, debated it on the platform with many of those who chose to assail it, and practiced it in their lives, notwithstanding fines and imprisonments and exile followed as consequences. A whole generation was born and had grown to manhood and womanhood in this system, and the affections of family ties were entwined with it. Then, under the pressure of suffering brought upon the people through the laws of the United States, the Lord inspired the President of the Church of Christ to proclaim its discontinuance, and the people with sorrowful hearts submitted to the will of God thus expressed, and there the matter rests. If the labors and sufferings of the Church of Christ for this principle have done nothing more, this much at least has been accomplished: the Saints have borne testimony to a truth connected with marriage, sanctioned and approved of God in ancient times, and revealed anew in this present age.

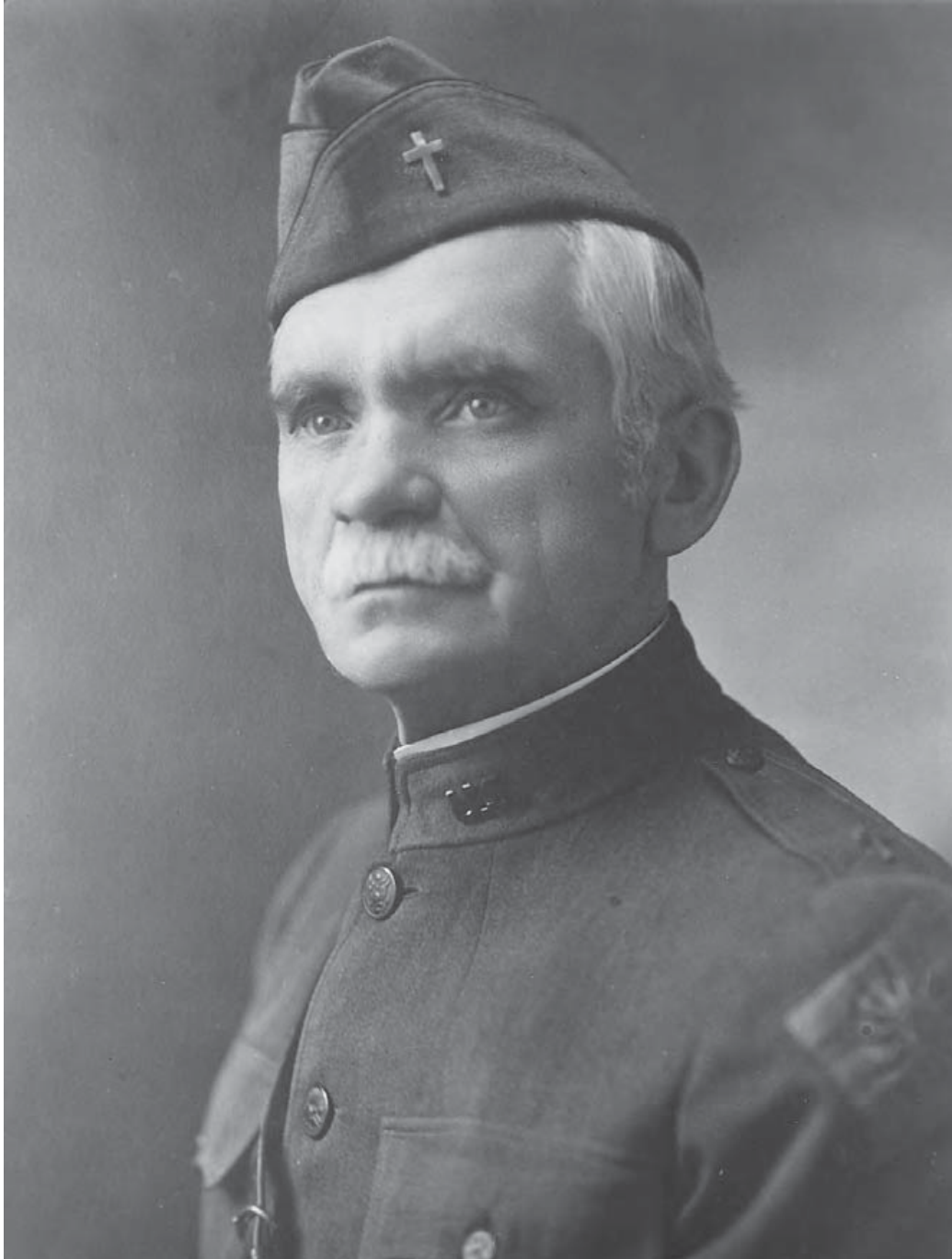
It should be remembered that in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, all things are to be gathered together in one—“all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him” (Eph. 1:10).

This Dispensation of the Fullness of Times is identical with the “times of ⟨the⟩ restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all ⟨the⟩ [his] holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:21). This prediction was made by St. Peter as something future from his day; and therefore, this principle and practice of plurality of wives by men and women of God in old Bible times, and with the approval of God, must at least be restored, as to the knowledge of it, together with other ancient truths; and witnessed to the world by the Saints and the Church of the New Dispensation, whatever else may become of it. And this was done as stated above; and it is left for God to vindicate his own truth, of which his people have borne record by suffering, in his own time and in his own way.

It is to be understood, of course, that the foregoing statements are but an academic setting forth of the plural marriage feature of the marriage system of the Church of the New Dispensation, and are not intended as propaganda of that feature.

Further references recommended by Roberts for this lesson: “Pratt-Newman Debate” and three sermons attached to the debate, on Bible marriage; Madden, *Thelyphtora*; Roberts, “History of the ‘Mormon’ Church,” chs. 40 and notes, 107 and notes, and 121; Roberts, *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, pt. 4, sect. 9 and note 5; Gen. 1-2; D&C 132; Official Declaration—1. For a discussion about Roberts’s views concerning the relationship between wife and husband, see pages 586-88 below. As to eugenics, see page 588.

After the last page of this chapter, Roberts appended a cover sheet to introduce an appendix consisting of “Analysis of Chapters for Lessons.” He added the handwritten note “**Intended to gather under this appendix at the end of the volume all the lesson analyses.**” In this edition, the chapter analyses, which consist of the subheadings in each chapter, have been gathered on pages 3-13 above.



B. H. Roberts ca. 1918. Although over sixty, Roberts served as chaplain of the U.S. Army 145th Artillery Unit after passing the standard qualifying academic and physical tests at the Officers and Chaplains School. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

A Masterwork of Mormon Theology?

Davis Bitton

Most General Authorities in the LDS Church from the beginning to the present have worked quietly, often behind the scenes. Results have counted, not flamboyance. Yet some members of that impressive corps of leaders have displayed a more demonstrative style. Larger than life, these few are especially noticed while alive and are expansively remembered in subsequent generations. For forty or fifty years, from the 1880s to the 1930s, one of these “stars” was B. H. Roberts.

In Roberts’s day, General Authorities included only the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the First Council of the Seventy, and the Church Patriarch. So, when Roberts became one of the seven members of the First Council of Seventy at the age of thirty-one, he entered the ranks of a relatively small group of twenty-three General Authorities, with whom he associated closely and shared many responsibilities.

Within this group of twenty-three, B. H. Roberts stood out, as if a spotlight were on him. What made him different? (I do not say greater or even more effective—distinctions that Roberts never would have claimed for himself.) Although the intangibles of his charisma may elude definition, four characteristics can be noted:

1. He had a distinctive appearance. With his head of white hair and walrus mustache, Roberts was easily recognized in his later years. People sitting in the Salt Lake Tabernacle would whisper to each other as they pointed him out, “That’s B. H. Roberts.” As he participated in stake conferences—indeed, as he appeared in any public setting—he was noticed.

2. He was a fighter. Along the spectrum of human temperaments, some are timid or relatively placid, while others are more combative. Shaped by a life of challenges that developed his toughness, Roberts moved through a series of controversies.¹ His life can be fruitfully considered as a series of confrontations: in the mission field he faced not merely verbal denunciation but the murder of fellow missionaries;

he opposed female suffrage at the Utah Constitutional Convention in 1895; he spoke out for his political convictions, often at variance with other Church leaders; he precipitated the “political manifesto” by which General Authorities were required to receive permission from the First Presidency before running for political office; he won an election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1898 and then fought unsuccessfully to retain his seat;² he defended the role and authority of the Seventy within the councils of Church governance.³ In addition, he frequently jumped into the theological fray, defending “the faith and the Saints” against outside critics. At the World Parliament of Religions in 1893, he insisted that the Church be treated as one of the world’s major religions.⁴ He was a scrapper. Since many of these controversies were known to the public, he was in the public eye. One can imagine present-day news reporters, including radio and television people, gravitating to him irresistibly. He was eminently quotable, always newsworthy.

3. He was an orator. His natural fluency as a speaker captured his audiences. After polishing both his speaking and debating skills in his youthful Mutual Improvement experience, he entered the mission field during an era that still valued oratory. The restrained style of “talking heads” now familiar from television was far in the future. In order to reach audiences, speakers had to project; this meant speaking loudly, even shouting at times, and it also included variations of pace and volume. Daniel Webster and others had perpetuated the oratorical ideal of the early American republic; at the end of the nineteenth century, the great exemplar was William Jennings Bryan. Against such a backdrop of eloquence and refinement, Roberts became known as the “blacksmith orator” while still a young man and went on to be widely acknowledged as Mormonism’s leading orator. In reading his addresses, modern readers can still detect a special tang. What we miss, of course, is the three-dimensional experience. We have to imagine Roberts’s slow beginnings, the changes of tempo, the build-up to a climax, the flashing eyes. Although these talks were not written out in advance, they were prepared. While Roberts relied on the Spirit, he had also filled his mind with ideas and scriptural references. He was indeed a memorable public speaker.

4. He was an intellectual. I hesitate to use a term that is so easily misunderstood and is not always considered a compliment. For present purposes, I mean that Roberts was a man of ideas who wrote and published articles and books. In that restricted sense, intellectualism is no prerequisite for service in the Church, even on the highest levels, but undeniably it enlarged the scope of Roberts’s influence. People who saw Church periodicals, lesson manuals, and books frequently

encountered the name of B. H. Roberts. Possessed of an irrepressible desire to communicate his ideas in writing, he started in the 1880s accumulating journalistic experience with the *Millennial Star* in Liverpool and the *Salt Lake Herald* in Utah. He went on to publish tracts, articles, a play, and books on just about everything relating to Mormonism. He was counted as one of the ten greatest Utahns during his lifetime, and he is regularly listed among the top LDS theologians and historians of his generation.⁵ Being an intellectual did not prevent him from being also a man of great faith, a combination not common in the twentieth century. He was not alone in this respect, but his combination of intellectual interests and faith made him stand out as an unusual figure among the General Authorities of the Church.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. None of the four qualities I have described here is indispensable to effective service. Personally, I have learned to value the quieter qualities in many Church leaders. But B. H. Roberts, with his unique combination of traits, was also someone who contributed mightily. This exceptional mix made him a figure of constant interest and made his speeches and the products of his pen newsworthy.

These ruminations bring me to *The Truth, The Way, The Life*, now published some sixty years after Roberts wrote it. While others comment on its specific philosophical and theological aspects, my observations are more general.

First, notice the work's enormous scope. Roberts was nothing if not ambitious. His treatise was to be "a search for the truth, as it relates to the universe and to man; a consideration of the way as it relates to the attainment of those ends which may be learned as to the purpose of man's earth-existence; and the contemplation of the life that will result from the knowledge of the truth and the way" (15). That's all.

Next, observe Roberts's style. His writing, like his public speaking, was strong, muscular. He had a distinctive voice. When he indulged in speculation—not the kind of thing found in committee-produced, cautiously correlated, or overedited articles or manuals—Roberts knew that he had proved nothing. In the manner of Joseph Butler's celebrated *Analogy of Religion*, Roberts strove to make a presumptive case based on expectations from the natural world. More than that, behind his sometimes tendentious and sophistic logic one always detects a passionate human being, never lacking in a strong self-image.

But aside from acknowledging its vast ambition and vivid writing, how does one evaluate a work like *TWL*? Mainly, I suggest, *TWL* can be evaluated in three contexts.

One context is Roberts's own intellectual-spiritual evolution. To appreciate this evolution, one would need to retrace Roberts's biography and, in so doing, not assume that he had read and mastered everything while still young.⁶ Without attempting that challenging biographical project here, one can at least recognize that Roberts's published works are a series of milestones along the road of his development. Christian ecclesiastical history, controversy over succession after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith, theological confrontations with opponents, defenses of the Pearl of Great Price and the Book of Mormon,⁷ extensive editorial work in assembling documents of early Mormonism, narrations of different phases of Mormon history, a culminating comprehensive history—such were the written projects that extended over much of Roberts's adult life. Understandably, he felt that he had paid his dues and was equipped to produce a great work of synthesis. He was not someone new to the subject. One can imagine the satisfaction with which, in the late 1920s, he contemplated his *Comprehensive History* and *TWL* as the twin crowning achievements of his written corpus.

A second, larger context is that of all LDS writings—works written about Mormonism by Mormons for Mormons. Which titles stand out? Theological or scriptural studies of genuine merit or distinctive style have been relatively few. Besides books compiled from the sermons and writings by Church presidents, almost any list of significant LDS works from Mormonism's first century would have to include titles by Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, James E. Talmage, and B. H. Roberts. (Later, one would add John A. Widtsoe, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Bruce R. McConkie, all very prolific.) Having already contributed significantly in history and theological polemic, Roberts saw *TWL* as a culmination, a massive *summa* that distilled his best religious thought, just as *Comprehensive History* was his magisterial historical work. Had *TWL* been published in the early 1930s, it would doubtless have established itself as a landmark. Not that it would have swept everything else aside. On the subject of Jesus Christ, for example, the chapters that Roberts devotes to Jesus Christ, while moving, would scarcely have replaced Talmage's *Jesus the Christ*. And the issues which led to controversy and the insistence on revision before publication could not be avoided. Roberts's book, had it been published, might have seemed authoritative; but even when Talmage published "The Earth and Man"⁸ in 1931, those who took a different stance did not consider the issue settled. Clearly, however, *TWL* is on the same plane as those few other works considered to be classic statements of Mormon belief at the end of the Church's first century. In its efforts to set forth the basic truths of the restored gospel, it has sweep and excitement.

I have found by experience that I need to clarify this point. To say that Susie wrote the best essay in the class may or may not be high praise, depending on the quality of the class's work. To say that Roberts had produced one of the leading theological works during Mormonism's first hundred years is not necessarily to say that *TWL* was magnificent. Others may disagree, but I do not see that the early Saints manifested very much high intellectual or literary genius in theological publications.

Third, if the field of comparison is enlarged one step further, one quickly recognizes that *TWL* has serious limitations. How does *TWL* measure up against other theological, historical, or philosophical contributions produced during the first thirty years of the twentieth century? Is it, in other words, truly a major achievement when matched against the world's standards of intellectual and inspirational achievement? Roberts, of course, was quite willing to engage leading thinkers by reading and reacting to them. In philosophy he was familiar with Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Henri Bergson, John Fiske, and William James. In religion he studied works by Ernst Haeckel, Oliver Lodge, Henry L. Mansel, and Sabine Baring-Gould. Interested in the relationship between science and religion, Roberts had read standard histories by John William Draper and Andrew D. White, along with specific treatments of evolution by G. H. Howison, Richard S. Lull, and F. W. Headley. Roberts's knowledge of Judeo-Christian history was derived primarily from the Bible, supplemented by Josephus, Mosheim, Neander, Edersheim, and Shedd. He was versed in Shakespeare and Emerson. Considering that Roberts was essentially self-educated, such a range of reading is impressive. He was a voracious reader, one who was anxious to seek knowledge "out of the best books." What other Church leader has mustered such a range of works, relating them to Latter-day Saint beliefs?

Yet the verve and enthusiasm of the amateur carried certain limitations. If Darwin is addressed, at least as interpreted through Spencer and Fiske, where are those other two giants, Marx and Freud? Max Weber seems to have eluded Roberts. Where is Feuerbach? And the clergyman Baring-Gould is not really an adequate substitute for Sir James Frazier. For the study of the New Testament, drawing on the work of the venerable Edersheim does not make up for ducking the critical challenges from David Friedrich Strauss and Ernst Renan. Lacking competence in any foreign languages, Roberts could not enter into direct dialogue with the works of Continental thinkers, but even the European works in translation are barely sampled.

In the area of science, Roberts was the interested amateur, totally dependent upon works of popularization, especially magazines (which are

not to be confused with learned journals). Roberts moved somewhat beyond this point on the subject of evolution, where he consulted six or eight books, but even here one cannot say that he was anything but a rank amateur. In addition, nothing indicates that he understood the Einsteinian revolution. Mormons wishing to explore the basic issues between science and religion may find *TWL* casually interesting as a reflection of the state of affairs in the Church around 1930, but to approach the subject responsibly, they must move on to other authors.

If the foregoing seems like a heartless criticism, readers should remember that I am not evaluating the life of B. H. Roberts, but a book. An evaluation of this book according to the canons of scholarship, and examinations of its use of source materials and the way it would have contributed to the different fields covered, lead to an inescapable conclusion: while Roberts might have instructed and challenged the Mormon population, what he tried to say beyond an LDS circle would never have been heard due to his failure to conduct the necessary homework and to confront the issues in language that would communicate outside his own religious community. He probably did not place primary emphasis on such a goal, intending mainly to instruct fellow Mormons, but readers should be under no illusions: *TWL* is not a work of stature on the large stage of intellectual history. Had *TWL* been published in 1931 or soon thereafter, however exciting it might have been to some Mormon readers, it would not likely have been noticed elsewhere.

Of course, saying that Roberts or anyone else failed to be aware of later developments is not a valid criticism. But let me mention the obvious on this score anyway: if *TWL* was inadequately grounded in the 1920s, its scholarship is hopelessly out of date in the 1990s. The flow of scholarship has produced a veritable flood in religious history, biblical studies, science, philosophy of science, epistemology, and many other subjects. It is an understatement, therefore, to say that *TWL* is largely unrelated to many present concerns.

Roberts's ambitious study has its problems, and the manuscripts are rife with minor textual errors. Yet despite its flaws, *TWL* was a major achievement in its day. Furthermore, although it is only one piece of the puzzle, *TWL* tells us something of the unresolved issues occupying some attention of the Church, or at least of some individuals within the Church, at the time.

In 1931, hoping to garner support for the book's publication, Roberts wrote to his friend President Heber J. Grant that *TWL* was "the most important work that I have yet contributed to the Church, the six-volumed *Comprehensive History* . . . not omitted."⁹ Roberts may have been right. But just as one should be aware when reading the

Comprehensive History that it has been superseded on many points, so one should read *TWL*. The words of B. H. Roberts are not definitive—beyond the scriptures, what book ever is?—but intelligent readers can still enjoy and benefit from many of his words.

NOTES

¹The standard biography is Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980).

²Davis Bitton, “The Exclusion of B. H. Roberts from Congress,” in Bitton, *The Ritualization of Mormon History and Other Essays* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), ch. 8.

³See Gary J. Bergera, ed., *The Autobiography of B. H. Roberts* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1990), ch. 26.

⁴Davis Bitton, “B. H. Roberts at the World Parliament of Religions, 1893,” *Sunstone* 7 (January–February 1982): 46–51.

⁵Davis Bitton, “B. H. Roberts as Historian,” *Dialogue* 3 (Winter 1968): 25–44; revised as “B. H. Roberts: Historian and Theologian,” in Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, eds., *Mormons and Their Historians* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 69–86. In the 1930s, Salt Lake newspapers listed Roberts fourth on the list of ten “greatest living Utahns.” When fifty prominent Mormon intellectuals in the 1960s were asked to list the five most eminent intellectuals in Mormon history, thirty-eight respondents nominated B. H. Roberts at the top. Leonard Arrington, “The Intellectual Tradition of the Latter-day Saints,” *Dialogue* 4 (Spring 1969): 13–26. That poll, although not very scientific, has recently been repeated, with the same result. Stan Larson, “Intellectuals in Mormon History: An Update,” *Dialogue* 26 (Fall 1993): 187–89.

⁶His biographers too readily attribute the command of his later life to the time of his youth.

⁷The chronological dynamics of Roberts’s attitude toward his Mormon faith have been complicated by a study he completed in 1922 on the Book of Mormon. Intended for private circulation among fellow General Authorities, the study was published with accompanying editorial comments that suggest that Roberts had abandoned his belief in the Book of Mormon. B. H. Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985). For a discussion of this subject, see pages 687–91 and accompanying notes in this volume.

⁸James E. Talmage, “The Earth and Man,” *Millennial Star* 93 (December 31, 1931): 849–55, 857–63.

⁹Roberts to Heber J. Grant, February 9, 1931. The fact that Roberts was indulging in a bit of overappraisal is seen in his failure to mention *TWL* at all in his autobiography, whereas he discusses the *Comprehensive History of the Church* thoroughly. See Bergera, *Autobiography of B. H. Roberts*, 226–29.



B. H. Roberts before 1895. About the time this photograph was taken, Roberts published his *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*. He was also serving as a member of the First Council of the Seventy. Courtesy Richard Roberts.

Rhetoric

Gary Layne Hatch

Rhetoric is a term that for many readers has a negative meaning: language used to deceive or confuse, language that sounds good but has no real substance. In B. H. Roberts's time and earlier, however, rhetoric had a much broader meaning: skill in speaking or writing to a public audience in order to affect the views or behavior of that audience. In keeping with this broader meaning of rhetoric, this essay examines how Roberts used language to move his audience to accept the truth of scientific knowledge and divine revelation, to follow the way of the gospel, and to live a Christian life.

Audience

The first concern of the student of rhetoric is to identify and understand an author's audience. In the introductory chapter in Draft 2, Roberts contemplated several target audiences, including students, independent philosophers, and priesthood quorums. In his third and final draft he continues to address these multiple audiences. Roberts sometimes had a young student audience in mind. For example, he provides an "analysis" or summary of each chapter along with a rather ambitious list of readings. He provides page numbers and chapter references for these readings, but he often recommends an entire book or any "standard work" on the subject (29). In addition, some lesson outlines contain instructions to teachers and students. For instance, in the lesson outline for chapter 2, Roberts instructs the teacher to assign the scripture reading lesson "a week in advance of the lesson treatment that a selection suitable to the theme of the lesson may be obtained, and the reading practiced" (29). He then recommends Ezekiel 18 as a reading suitable for that chapter. In the lesson outline for chapter 3, Roberts gives some words of caution to the students: "All the works given in the column of 'References' should be read with discrimination; not accepting either all the premises laid down, or the conclusions reached. They are given merely as sources through which the

student may pursue his thought-investigations, not for unquestioning acceptance” (37).

Other characteristics found throughout the text confirm that he also had in mind a much broader audience than members of the Church. In fact, Roberts seems to be using the publishing opportunity provided by the Church to write the book he really wanted to write: a synthesis of all his thinking on theology for a general audience. He states at one point that his theories about human origins will be “not only a service to our own church, especially to the youth of it, but a service to all Christendom, and to humanity in general” (318). He appears to distinguish between “students” of his book and “readers.” Most of the time he refers to his audience as “the reader.” But he occasionally refers to the “general reader,” “readers and the students of this book,” “the reader or student,” or even the “reader-student.” Usually, the term “reader” is general and unspecified. The fact that Roberts occasionally distinguishes between readers and students, however, may indicate that he has at least two separate audiences in mind.

The background information Roberts provides and the stance he sometimes takes toward his topic show that he considered the needs of these readers and others who were not Latter-day Saints. When referring to LDS writings, Roberts occasionally provides more background information than one would expect to be necessary for the LDS reader. For example, Roberts explains what “the Church of the Latter-day Saints say in their summary of faith” (412) as he proceeds to quote the second Article of Faith, familiar to all within the Church. In chapter 42, Roberts felt the need to explain by an insertion that the book of Mosiah was found in the Book of Mormon (414, n.1). He either assumed that his audience was not LDS or was not well versed in LDS scripture. On another occasion, he prefaces a quotation from the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob in this manner: “A book was published in 1830 purporting to be the revealment of an inspired scripture abridged from larger authoritative writings had among the ancient peoples of America, in which one of their inspired teachers is represented as saying . . .” (21). Likewise, with respect to a revelation contained in the Pearl of Great Price, Roberts reports that “Moses is represented” (99) as talking with God face to face. On another occasion, Roberts refers to the Doctrine and Covenants in a similarly detached manner. In chapter 1, after surveying a number of definitions of truth given by philosophers, Roberts cites the definition of truth given in Doctrine and Covenants 93:24 and mentions that this book “claimed for itself a divine authority” (21). He then distances himself somewhat from this claim and writes, “If this [definition of truth] is spoken with divine

sanction, under inspiration from God . . .” (22). His use of the word *if* and his assertion that the Doctrine and Covenants *claimed* authority are odd if Roberts is writing only to an LDS audience; these statements make sense, however, if Roberts is trying to reach a more general audience. By adopting this detached manner, Roberts strives to give the impression that he is approaching his own faith objectively and that he does not take for granted that his audience will share his knowledge and beliefs. Such a gesture establishes common ground for his rational appeal to the members of the audience, inviting them to identify with his beliefs. Furthermore, Roberts states at one point that his remarks on human origins are directed “only to those people who have supposedly built their faiths upon the revelations of God found in the Old and in the New Testament” (207).

At one point, Roberts even distanced himself from his belief in the Bible. He spoke of “the alleged Hebrew revelation” (153) and said that the Old Testament “is alleged to have been written under the inspiration of God” (156). In discussing the relationship between humans and animals, he wrote: “It is represented in some ~~alleged~~ revelations that when God had created man he gave him dominion over all the earth, with a commandment to subdue it, and have dominion over all that was upon it” (73). The fact that he originally wrote “alleged” suggests his desire to establish his objectivity and identify with a broader audience. He may have crossed the word out when he realized, perhaps, that distancing himself from the Bible in this manner was unnecessary or offensive to a general Christian audience.

Roberts directly addresses a non-LDS audience in his appendix to chapter 55, in which he discusses the history of LDS plural marriage. As a Latter-day Saint and a former polygamist himself, Roberts realized that he would have some difficulty writing to a general audience on the subject of marriage. In order to build common ground and credibility with his audience, therefore, he tries to establish his objectivity. After describing the history of plural marriage in the Church, he writes, “It is to be understood, of course, that the foregoing statements are but an academic setting forth of the plural marriage feature of the marriage system of the Church of the New Dispensation, and are not intended as propaganda of that feature” (559).

Use of Generalities

In addition to audience, the student of rhetoric is concerned with *style*—the patterns and forms of language. Roberts writes in a variety of styles, from the plain and straightforward (in his textbook-like descriptions of scientific knowledge) to the highly ornamental and descriptive

(in his eloquent presentations of lofty concepts). These ornamental passages may sound somewhat exaggerated to the contemporary reader, but they reflect the rhetoric of Roberts's time very well.

Richard Weaver, a younger contemporary of Roberts, has described the characteristics of what he called the "old rhetoric"—a style that was passing out of fashion about the time Roberts wrote *The Truth, The Way, The Life* but would have appealed to many of Roberts's readers. One characteristic of this style was the abundant use of generalities whose validity is based upon the assumption that the audience and author had in common a relevant body of knowledge and experience.¹ A tendency to this type of generality appears in Roberts's description in chapter 2 of "what man knows" (29). The entire chapter is worth examining from a rhetorical perspective, but the sections on "Consciousness of self and other selves" and "Knowledge of external things" provide sufficient examples, for instance:

Man knows himself as existing. He is a self-conscious entity. He knows himself as existing by many manifestations. He knows himself as seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling; as feeling—meaning by that only the sense of touch. But most of all in these manifestations through which man attains self-consciousness, he knows himself as thinking: "I think, therefore I am." This of a long time now has been the most acceptable formula for expressing self-consciousness—assurance of self-existence. One thinks, and one acts: therefore one is. . . .

He knows the earth is divided into islands and continents, seas and oceans, rivers and bays. He knows of the existence of the town or hamlet or countryside where he was born. In time he knows by visitation the capital of his county, of his state, of his country. He knows, at least by report, of the great centers of world population. He has verified so many things reported to him that he has confidence quite generally in what is reported to him, and seems supported by the consensus of opinion of others who have experienced them. (29-30)

Roberts continues expanding his list of "what man knows," but he provides very few concrete details, relying upon the reader to fill in the gaps with shared experience and knowledge. To contemporary readers, who demand that writing be vivid, concrete, and immediate, such generalizing appears irresponsible.

In addition to generalizations, Roberts uses what Weaver would call "uncontested terms," assertions without proof.² Some may object that Roberts does not truly make his case or that his thinking is superficial. Actually, as Weaver explains, the style Roberts employs does not require a defense or illustration of uncontested terms. Roberts's very point of departure is that self-evident truths—things that all humans know and experience—exist. Roberts does not prove these assertions

because they find their proof in the shared experience of humanity. Weaver calls this approach the author's "right of assumption," a "right to assume that precedents are valid, that forms will persist, and that in general one may build today on what was created yesterday."³ This right carries with it the authority of the collective wisdom of humanity. Such a right, however, would not always be granted today and was losing popularity even during Roberts's time.

Roberts's style of arguing from generalities and common knowledge reflects one of the main organizing principles of *TWL*. Roberts attempts to find a foothold for faith in a time of increasing disbelief and disillusion. He illustrates his method by describing a set of circles fixed around a common point (40). That common point is those things that all humans know: common experience and shared knowledge. Roberts then moves from that common point to one circle and then to the next, demonstrating that disputes about religion and behavior can be resolved by reference to this common point: a true understanding of knowledge and religion creates a common basis for Christian action. Thus *TWL* is organized to lead readers from the knowledge they all share to a resolution of their differences.

Authoritative Voice

Because he is addressing a general audience and building upon common knowledge, Roberts speaks with an authoritative voice. Rhetorically, the writer's voice is important because a writer who does not speak in a manner appropriate for the audience and occasion will lose the confidence of that audience. Roberts addresses this problem of voice in his introduction:

When we contemplate the largeness of the theme, the height and the depth of it, and recall how many world-geniuses have wrecked their thought upon it, we marvel at the audacity that dares to attempt so much! . . .

If the author of this proposed treatise were depending upon his own learning, or on any way of wisdom in himself to justify the investigation of these high themes, then he would not only shrink from the task but would abandon it altogether, as being inadequate to such an undertaking. But the author believes himself to be living in what, in the parlance of his faith, is called the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times in which a great volume of truth has been revealed in addition to, but in harmony with, the truth revealed in former dispensations. In fact in this Dispensation of the Fullness of Times all truth of former dispensations and the whole volume of it, is being merged into a unity. The veil of mystery is being rent to reveal the things of God in their completeness, and it is upon the basis of this more fully revealed

knowledge that the author ventures to speak, rather than from any learning or intellectual excellence in himself. (16)

This passage shows how Roberts establishes a credible voice. He anticipates that some will accuse him of arrogance for attempting to speak in an authoritative manner on broad philosophical issues, so he demonstrates that his authority as a writer does not come from his own intelligence and learning. Rather, his authority derives from divine revelation and the collected wisdom of humanity. Having made this one self-effacing remark, he speaks with confidence through the rest of the work. This confidence reflects the old rhetorical style wherein the writer spoke “for corporate humanity” as “the mouthpiece for a collective brand of wisdom which was not to be delivered in individual accents.”⁴

Adaptation of Style to Subject

Another feature of the old rhetoric is the occasional use of the grand or heroic style.⁵ The ancient writers on rhetoric, Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, acknowledged three levels of style: the grand, the middle, and the plain. Unlike many contemporary writers who believe that each person should cultivate an individual style, ancient authors chose a style to match the subject.⁶ A lofty or elevated subject would require an equally lofty style. What the contemporary reader may view as inconsistency or unevenness in Roberts’s writing, then, may actually be Roberts’s attempts to adapt his style to the immediate subject at hand. Roberts generally writes in a middle style—the language of a scholar—appropriate to the serious but fairly commonplace nature of much of what he describes. At times, however, he makes an abrupt stylistic change and waxes poetic, in the grand style, using parallel and balanced phrases, elevated diction, and figures of speech. Consider the following passage from Roberts’s description of truth in chapter 1:

Truth is not a stagnant pool, but a living fountain; not a Dead Sea, without tides or currents. On the contrary it is an ocean, immeasurably great, vast, co-extensive with the universe itself. It is the universe bright-heaving, boundless, endless, and sublime! Moving in majestic currents, uplifted by cosmic tides in ceaseless ebb and flow, variant but orderly; taking on new forms from ever changing combinations, new adjustments, new relations—multiplying itself in ten thousand times ten thousand ways, ever reflecting the Intelligence of the Infinite, and declaring alike in its whispers and its thunders the hived wisdom of the ages! (24)

The first two sentences demonstrate the balance and parallelism in Roberts’s grand style: the stagnant pool contrasted with the living

fountain, the Dead Sea contrasted with an ocean as boundless as the universe. The third sentence is a lengthy elaboration of the metaphorical comparison of truth with this ocean/universe. This sentence contains a number of poetic devices, including poetic diction, or the use of uncommon words or common words in an uncharacteristic manner. The universe of truth is “bright-heaving,” has “cosmic tides,” and moves in “majestic currents.” Truth “whispers” and “thunders” the “hived wisdom” of humanity. Roberts mixes his metaphors—truth as universe, ocean, and beehive—but this fault may have gone unnoticed in his day. Such a style may be jarring to contemporary readers, but it would have been conventional to those accustomed to the old rhetoric.

Another passage illustrates Roberts’s grand style. In this passage, Roberts describes the activity of those who seek after the truth: archaeologists, historians, geologists, and scientists. In order to capture the energy of this group, Roberts switches to a more poetic style:

Others, still, are seeking truth by utilizing what, in general terms, we call natural forces, and applying them to industrial and commercial activities. To locomotion on land and sea; to the production of light and heat and mechanical power; thus increasing the supply of the world’s necessities, conveniences, comforts, luxuries, and adding to its progress in material ways, until it would seem that millennium conditions dreamed of by saints, sang of by poets, and predicted by prophets, would not only be realized but surpass all the excellence of anticipation, even of inspired anticipation. (26)

Here again Roberts uses balance and parallelism to build phrase upon phrase, idea upon idea, to a climax. Specifically, he describes the millennial world “dreamed of by saints, sang of by poets, and predicted by prophets.” Roberts also uses stylistic repetition. Instead of merely saying “the world’s necessities,” he adds “conveniences, comforts, [and] luxuries.” Such repetition is logically redundant, but it is stylistically important to portray the wonder of technological progress.

Roberts concludes his description of truth seekers—archaeologists, historians, geologists, and scientists—with an *apostrophe*, a rhetorical technique of speaking to those who are absent as if they were present. Here Roberts speaks directly to these truth seekers as a body:

Such is the great and varied host of seekers after truth, and as we contemplate them from the departing days of passing years, we shout to them with all our voice, and say, “success to you!” The world’s best hope for all time is your continued progress! Seek on, and let each one bring to the service of man that which he shall find of the truth, confident that the world’s progress, the advancement of civilization, man’s best welfare, and God’s greatest glory will be in exact proportion to your success. Legends, venerable for their age, you may destroy;

myths, though beautiful, you may discredit; creeds, formulated on misconceptions of truth, may crumble at your touch; half truths, dear to some, you may rend from men's belief. With all these there may go much to which the world has become attached, and your work at times may seem iconoclastic; but in the end all will be well, nothing will perish but that which is false and evil. (27)

With its repetition of words and phrases, balance and parallelism, and poetic diction, this passage may appear overstated and exaggerated to the contemporary reader. Those familiar with the old rhetoric, however, would have recognized the style of this passage as elevation rather than exaggeration, a style wholly appropriate to the loftiness of the theme. The printed page does not do justice to the elevated rhythms of this passage. It must be read aloud.

Oral Qualities

As a mission president, missionary, President of the Seventy, and a politician, Roberts had many opportunities for public address, and he was renowned as an orator. Some of the oral qualities of Roberts's public speaking found their way into *TWL*, possibly because he dictated the book to his secretary. One wonders how many of the more oratorical and elevated passages of this work came to Roberts in the dynamic act of speaking the text aloud for his secretary to transcribe. Readers should try reading aloud the grand-style passages cited above—with emphasis—to realize the full stylistic effect of Roberts's writing.

One can imagine that Roberts also revised his dictation in the act of delivery, much as one would adapt a sermon or speech. Some of the errors Roberts makes indicate just such an adaptation: the errors are oral rather than written. In quoting lines of poetry (often without attribution) from William Shakespeare, Robert Browning, Walter Scott, and John Milton, for example, Roberts often changes words. These changes suggest that Roberts is relying on his memory. Roberts makes similar errors in quoting scripture, indicating perhaps that he recited passages from memory rather than from the scriptural text itself. Additional allusions and echoes to passages—the common stock of an experienced public speaker—were doubtless stored in Roberts's memory.

Conclusion

Richard Weaver writes about the old rhetoric as something that was passing out of fashion in the early part of the twentieth century. Indeed, few remnants exist of the oratorical tradition of which Roberts was a part. If some aspects of Roberts's writing and language seem

old-fashioned or inappropriate to the contemporary reader, the reason may be that the entire project of *TWL* goes against the assumptions of the contemporary world. Roberts adapts his language to his theme, a theme that Roberts and Weaver assumed to be common in the past, “that true knowledge somehow had its source in the mind of minds.”⁷ The goal of Roberts’s rhetoric was to express this theme in an authoritative and fitting style.

NOTES

¹Richard M. Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Davis, Calif.: Hermagoras, 1985), 167.

²Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 166.

³Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 169.

⁴Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 182.

⁵Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 166, 169.

⁶Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 185.

⁷Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 185.



B. H. Roberts between 1895 and 1900. During these years, Roberts's main writing projects were *New Witnesses for God* and several works in Church history. As a delegate to the Utah state constitutional convention in 1895, he stood out as one opposed to woman suffrage. Photographer C. R. Savage. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

Attitudes and Beliefs Concerning Women

Doris R. Dant

In 1895 an LDS father planned to name his newborn child Roberts Kimball in recognition of B. H. Roberts, a Church leader whose oratory the father esteemed. But the baby's mother opposed honoring in such a fashion the man who that year had opposed including woman suffrage in the Utah state constitution. And so the baby, who was to become the twelfth president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was named Spencer Woolley Kimball.¹

Olive Kimball was not the only person who disagreed with Roberts's stand against woman suffrage. Roberts upset his own constituency from Davis County and members of both political parties. His stand was not supported by most of the leading women and men of the Church.² His position was notorious in 1895 and remained so for some time. For instance, when Roberts ran for Congress in 1898, some women believed he had incredible gall to solicit votes from those whose rights he had tried to withhold.³ In 1899, during Roberts's battle to be seated in Congress, Emmeline B. Wells and nine other Utah women were in Washington, D.C., attending a meeting of the National Council of Women. When the Roberts question arose during a plenary session of the council, the women were discomfited to have to support Roberts's right to represent Utah when he had opposed their right to vote.⁴ Even now, what is remembered about Roberts concerning women is primarily his antisuffrage campaign and the controversy over his practice of plural marriage.⁵ The publication of *The Truth, The Way, The Life*, therefore, provides an opportunity to examine Roberts's attitudes toward women in the light of that work's language and concepts.

Gender Discourse in Roberts's Time

During Roberts's lifetime, Americans followed a set of prescriptions, many subconscious, in thinking and talking about men and women. In retrospect, modern commentators have given the label of gender

discourse to those prescriptions and the values, roles, and prohibitions they reflected.⁶ Mormon culture partook of gender discourse, although with some permutations peculiarly its own probably arising, in part, from the partial independence many women had experienced earlier as plural wives and Relief Society sisters.⁷ Certainly, leading Latter-day Saint women believed their lot differed from that of their sisters of other faiths. Ida S. Peay of Provo wrote that “man in his might and blindness has wrested from Eve’s daughters their God-given rights in the dominion [of the earth], hence this modern war which woman-kind is waging to obtain them back again.” Then she noted:

But we of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are not obliged to fight for this kind of recognition. Joseph Smith, under the inspiration of the Father, restored to our sex a voice in public councils. As we often express it, “He opened the door to women,” by organizing them into societies and leading them into church and civic responsibilities and privileges.⁸

Any discourse, whether that of gender, science, or nation, shapes the texts produced by members of those groups. Ideas, terminology, metaphors, and descriptions specific to that discourse seem so natural and commonsensical that they are used unquestioningly.⁹ In fact, the group will see proposed change as unnatural and wrong, a phenomenon experienced by Emmeline B. Wells, who was a central figure in the movement for woman suffrage:

Every day those who are stepping forward in the march of improvement, with a determination to succeed and accomplish something creditable and exceedingly desirable for woman, are made painfully aware, by the current of opposition which pours in upon them from all sides, that they are literally rowing against the stream. Generation after generation have yielded the palm in favor of man’s superior intelligence, until it has become a time-honored, authenticated, and established positivism, “immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.”¹⁰

She understood just how incontestable the gender discourse of that time seemed to those carried along in its stream.

Public discussion of woman’s sphere and woman’s suffrage, which began in the mid-nineteenth century, forced many people to consider the roles and status assigned to the sexes or the ways those were incorporated into common language. Generally, however, both women and men, even those who fought for suffrage, unconsciously subscribed to much of the language of the prevailing gender discourse.¹¹

Roberts, too, was influenced by the discourse of his day. But he also viewed his work in *TWL* as potentially shaping the attitudes and

practices of his own readers, as implied in the introduction, where he sets forth his purpose: “There is great need that someone should seek to bring forth to the clear understanding of men the Truth, the Way, and the Life, for there is great confusion existing among men on these matters of such high import” (16). In part 3, “The Life,” Roberts explicitly instructed his readers on the relationship of all men and women to each other and to God. In addition, his language, his examples, and the details of Eve’s story reveal the ways in which Roberts hoped to affect attitudes and in turn was affected by gender discourse.

Roberts’s References to Male and Female

Consistent with the usage of his day, Roberts employs *man* and *men* extensively to refer to all humans.¹² For example, the main title for chapter 26 is one word: “Man”; humans are “children of men” (185); part of Christ’s mission is “redeeming man from the Fall through the resurrection from the dead and the reestablishment of man’s union with God” (162); and “knowledge of things as they are . . . will be each man’s truth” (22).

However, in the latter half of *TWL*, Roberts occasionally includes females in his phrases, although sometimes still indirectly: “what of man, male and female” (290); “love of man—the race” (496); “disciples of Christ are but men and women in the making” (528); and “‘any man’—or person” (530–31). In his discussion of marriage, Roberts endeavors to be evenhanded, sometimes in ways remarkable for his time: “completed man is man-woman” (539)¹³; “woman is derived from man (and also, though it is not written, man is derived from woman)” (539); “consecrated fatherhood and motherhood” (556); “men of high character” and “women of like character” (557); and “manhood and womanhood” (558). In order to include women, he also furnishes a gloss on Genesis: “‘It is not good for man to be alone’ (nor for woman either)” (540). Even in these phrases, however, Roberts is somewhat bound by the gender discourse of his time, for he follows “the general pattern”¹⁴ of putting the male term before the female term.

In discussions of the resurrected Christ’s appearance to Mary Magdalene at the tomb, Roberts chose between male and female terminology depending on his purpose for writing. In *TWL*, Roberts’s comment on Christ’s instruction, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17), focuses only on Christ’s relationship with his brethren: “A sweeter statement of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of the Christ to men may not be found” (248). Such language may reflect the fact that

Roberts initially wrote *TWL* as a priesthood course of study.¹⁵ By contrast, in a letter sent to his mother, which Roberts read in the Tabernacle on another occasion, Roberts referred to the incident at the tomb in paying tribute to women, especially his mother: “Next to her holy office of wifeness and motherhood, the most exalted honor Deity ever conferred on woman was that of making her his first messenger of the resurrection.”¹⁶ Roberts’s interpretation was possibly influenced by James Talmage or Alfred Edersheim, although both of them viewed Christ’s appearance at the tomb as an honor to a “favored” woman rather than to women in general.¹⁷

A text’s use of the generic *man* can be problematic, especially for female readers, who must determine whether the word includes them or not.¹⁸ Roberts takes notice of this ambiguity when he wants to emphasize that all humans are coeternal with Jesus. In that instance, he edits a crucial scripture in order to specify that *man* refers to the whole race: “‘Man’ (that is, all men, the term is generic, includes the race)—‘man was also in the beginning with God’ (D&C 93:29)” (249; a similar commentary is added twice on 252).¹⁹ However, when Roberts uses *man* and *men* in discussing who receives priesthood authority, he simply expects his audience to have the necessary background to correctly interpret the passage (362). In a generic context, Roberts was so influenced by gender discourse that his phrasing eliminates the possibility of females reading themselves into his text: in describing the generic benefits of the Fall, he lists experiences that develop “virile manhood” (349).

The most instructive example of the difficulty of interpreting *man* occurs in chapter 10, where Roberts pairs features of the earth with human acts that give those features purpose. In the process, he lists “man” who “let[s] loose . . . energy for useful production,” “man the builder,” “man the sculptor,” “man the artist,” and “man” who “fashions [gold and silver] into objects of beauty or utility” (94). Because the passage begins with a phrase that is clearly generic—“human life”—a female reader believes she is included. But then Roberts pairs gemstones with the sentiment that “no queens or princesses or other women of grace and beauty are on earth for whom they will be fitting adornments.” For two reasons, woman is left to wonder at what point the passage ceased to be generic: Because woman is specified in one sentence, are the earlier sentences about man limited to males? Because the passage shows woman as passive, a consumer, and “man” as active, a creator, does this difference mean that the preceding sentences refer only to males? Is or is not woman among the builders and artists of the earth? For women, the question is not trivial.²⁰

Roberts's Examples

On the few occasions when Roberts employs an example, he follows the gender discourse of the time by emphasizing males and "male" activities.²¹ In one such illustration, which he paraphrases from deist Dean Paley's *Natural Theology*, a man finds a watch, concludes that the watch must have had a designer, and seeks out the designer. At the end of the quest, "he finds that the designer, the 'cause' of the watch, to be a man" (72). In the same chapter are examples of a man building a house and a group of men building a city. Earlier a male mariner is selected to illustrate how miracles may utilize laws unknown to humanity (64). The story of David and Absalom is used as an example of the "willingness of men to suffer for each other" (450).

In one of the chapters on the Atonement, a woman is specified but only in company with a man: "Take the case of an honorable father and mother who have led . . . ideal lives. . . . Then out of this family group . . . there comes forth a reprobate youth [a male]. . . . And what is the condition of that righteous father and mother the while, when they look upon this sad mischance in their household? Sorrow!" (449). Roberts then departs from specifying a female and uses *men* generically: the parents "illustrate . . . the fact that men can suffer because of each other" (450). This practice of generic references following inclusive language occurs several times in *TWL*.

Finally, to help illustrate the "heterogeneous mass" that "had full access" to Christ (484), Roberts names the woman taken in adultery and the widow of Nain along with Nicodemus and Zacchaeus. In this case, the inclusion of both women and men is significant for its affirmation that women have equal access to the Lord.

The Story of Eve

The story of Eve has been so central to the way Judaism and Christianity define the roles of men and women that the history of this story "is a record of its interpretation both as shaped by cultures and as shaping them."²² Roberts's interpretation, which elevates Eve, was somewhat unusual within both his American culture (in view of his account's Mormon traits) and his Mormon culture. Because the identity of women tends to be determined in Jewish and Christian cultures partly by the interpretation of Eve's actions in Eden,²³ Roberts's account can be read as having had the potential to advance the status of women had it been published.

For Roberts, the story of Eve begins on another world, where she and Adam were of a race of intelligences who had evolved until they were superior to humans physically, intellectually, morally, and spiritually and were capable of great self-sacrifice for the sake of a less-developed world (95–101, 324–26). The two progressed in these qualities until prepared to come to this earth:

When they had attained suitable development to receive this mission appointment to open a dispensation with reference to the purposes of God on the earth, they came to plant their race in a desolate earth, and to become Patriarch and ~~Mother~~ **Matriarch** to earth's future teeming millions in that dispensation they were honored to begin. (325)

As a being brought to the earth, Eve was not created from Adam's rib; thus Adam's statement that "she shall be called Woman, because she is taken out of Man" merely means that she is "derived from the same race, and is of the same nature" (540).

Already Roberts's account is noteworthy for its very favorable treatment of Eve. She is made the equal of Adam in several regards: she, too, is a superior being; she, too, received a "mission appointment"; she shared in opening a dispensation; and she was given a title to match Adam's designation of patriarch. In the latter instance, Roberts's intention is clearly revealed by his striking out "Mother" and replacing it with "Matriarch."

Once on this earth, the "royal planters" (324) are to bring about not the fall of man, but "the beginning of the rise of man" (344, 349; see also 342). To show that "the affair in Eden" (340) is not a fall, Roberts casts those events, including Eve's actions, in a positive light. First, he reasons that Eve did not break a commandment,²⁴ because the Lord's statement about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not a prohibition; the Lord was instead stating the natural consequences of eating the fruit of that tree (341). Second, when Eve said that the tree and what it stands for is good, she was stating a truth, not a falsehood fed to her by Lucifer (341–42). Third, her statement that the fruit would make Adam and her as the Gods is also a truth, affirmed later by God himself, and no one can say that being like the Gods is undesirable; in fact, partaking of the fruit was necessary, for it is "the only way to be 'as God'" (342, 345). Fourth, Eve offered the fruit to Adam out of love: she "so loved him that she would have him as 'God, knowing good and evil'" (350). Fifth, rather than simply choosing death, Eve and then Adam "chose the way of . . . immortal and eternal life, though the way led through the valley and the shadow of temporal

death” (343). Sixth, being prevented from partaking of the tree of life gave Eve as well as Adam and their posterity the “opportunity” to be tested (342). Seventh, the so-called curse upon Eve was but “announced consequences of the ‘fall’” (351). Eighth, Eve rejoiced about her role in Eden after receiving more knowledge about the gospel (358).²⁵

On all counts, Eve is a hero in this outline of the events in Eden. But Roberts waffles when discussing 1 Timothy 2:14: “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” In this section, Roberts’s concepts are more traditional and his language follows the lead of the King James translation of Paul. Making a choice is replaced with being persuaded; a positive act is replaced with disobedience, transgression, and violations of the law; natural consequences with the penalty of the law; and opportunity to be tested with banishment (350).²⁶

Such inconsistency is problematic in the work of someone developing a theological system. Probably Roberts was truly ambivalent in his views about women, sometimes treating them as equals and other times subordinating them. In this regard, he mirrored themes in the national culture. Certainly his language demonstrates the tension of working partly in and partly out of the contemporaneous gender discourse; apparently when he makes a conscious effort to include women, he can break free of the standard discourse, but the rest of the time the subconscious discourse takes command, sometimes as soon as a few words later.

Other aspects of Roberts’s wording lend additional credence to these possibilities. As noted earlier, in the discourse of Roberts’s time women were subsumed under the category of man. Roberts himself usually followed this practice, but he was erratic. In like manner, Roberts (1) sometimes subsumes Eve within Adam, (2) sometimes excludes her, (3) sometimes names Adam but designates Eve by role rather than by name, (4) sometimes names her equally (although *Eve* always follows *Adam*), and (5) sometimes tacks her onto the sentence. An example of each will suffice:

- (1) It became the mission of Adam to “replenish” the earth with inhabitants. (294)
- (2) Such was Adam’s world into which he was driven from his Eden. (354; the following example is from the next page and deals with similar subject material more inclusively)
- (3) Adam and his wife were driven from Eden, and shut out from the presence of God, the source of his spiritual life. (354; note the “his,” which excludes Eve)

- (4) But here it was, this physical death [of Abel], the very palpable evidence of it, thrown into the trembling arms of Adam and Eve—a strange silence, and coldness! (355)
- (5) One [Adam] from among their number . . . is brought to the earth and with him his spouse. . . . A man is **created brought**, and a woman. (324; note the comma separating the woman from the man)

Often, Roberts's inconsistency of language parallels that of the scriptures he is paraphrasing. When the scriptures mention only Adam, Roberts does likewise. When they specify both, he follows suit. But he sometimes breaks this pattern. For example, Moses 5 says both Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord speaking from Eden; Roberts first emphasizes Adam's joy upon hearing the words and only then notes that both Eve and Adam had received the message (356). Moses 5:5 specifies Adam's obedience to the commandment to offer sacrifices; Roberts speaks of the obedience of both (357). Whatever the cause, the pattern of inconsistency is sufficiently prevalent to indicate some unresolved tensions in Roberts's conscious and subconscious discourse.

Relationship between Husband and Wife

The only "instruction on the domestic relations" that Roberts names as such comes from Peter, who, Roberts says, urges "that husband and wife so live 'as being heirs together of the grace of life'" (518; 1 Pet. 3:7). Significantly, Roberts focuses on the mutuality of the relationship and does not cite the first part of the verse, which by present-day standards disparages women: "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them . . . giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel."

This selectivity is echoed in Roberts's section on "St. Paul's doctrine of obedience." There Roberts stresses that the "principle which underlies that whole Gospel plan" is obedience (521); it is the "crux of 'the life'" (488). Christ is used as the exemplar, who, Roberts says, learned obedience as the son of God (521). Thus the obedience that is crucial is our obedience to God.²⁷ What Roberts does not include, but could have in a section on Paul's teachings about the Christian character, is the pronouncement that wives should obey their husbands. In contrast, the obedience of wives to husbands was one of Roberts's six issues of "merit" in the antisuffrage debate some thirty years earlier, when he argued that only those who could act independently should have the vote. Married women could not be independent: "Such was

the relationship of woman in the family that she was not capable of acting thus independently without the dictation or the suspicion of dictation from her husband. . . . Do we not know from the difference of man's nature and woman's nature that it will be so?"²⁸

Perfect marriage for Roberts is "marriage for companionship and marriage for family" (551, 554). It is "man and woman united" in a sacramental relationship instituted by God (539). This union is based upon the need for completion. Although Roberts links union to procreation, he suggests it extends beyond the physical realm. In such a union, women have a greater importance to the marriage relationship than was found in the stereotypical family of Roberts's day because the man depends no less on the woman than the woman on the man and she clings no more to him than he to her: "The nature of both man and woman cries out aloud—each needs the other for completion. Completed man is man-woman" (539; see also 540).²⁹

The marital relationship, Roberts states, should be characterized by "true companionship for man and woman" (540), permanence, and chastity—a desirable and for civilization a necessary contrast to the trends he observed leading to sexual promiscuity and easy divorce. Should a person divorce his or her spouse for any reason not sanctioned by the Lord and then remarry, that person is guilty of adultery (501). In this regard, Roberts feelingly describes the plight of a divorced woman:

Here is the case of a young wife, not guilty of the offense that would justify her husband in putting her away, but blameless. Her husband, however, has become weary of her, she no longer pleases his fancy, he may already have found someone more desirable to him, and so puts away his wife that he may marry the creature of his lust. . . . But in the case of the innocent, cast-off wife, where does she appear in blame or guilt? (502)

Roberts responds that even if the woman should remarry, she, as the innocent party, is not guilty of adultery. This, Roberts says, is the correct application of God's law, which is only partially expressed in Matthew 5:32: "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Perhaps Roberts's belief that a legal second marriage could nonetheless be adulterous is what the review committee objected to when they commented that "the question of divorce does not seem clear to us as here stated, and in harmony with the words of the Savior" (see note on p. 502).

In his discussion of plural marriage, Roberts exalts plural and first wives by comparing their sacrificial renunciation of “the exclusive companionship of the husband”³⁰ and the purity of their motives³¹ to the self-sacrifice and religious motivation of nuns:

As some women, against the promptings of natural inclinations of the social instincts, of the cravings for wedlock companionship, and the desire for offspring, will renounce the world and the noble office of motherhood itself, and retire into dismal retreats, and spend their lives in prayer and meditation, only emerging into the world to render service of teaching the youth, visiting the needy, or nursing the sick; so plural wives among the Latter-day Saints, and first wives who consented to their husbands entering into these relations, accepted the institution from the highest moral and religious motives. (556)

This view of plural marriage is a positive departure from a nineteenth-century concept advanced by others that linked women’s motivation to marry with Eve’s curse that her desire would be to her husband and that her husband should rule over her.³² Obedience to the principle of plural marriage was viewed by some as the means by which women would be redeemed from that curse.³³

Medieval theologians believed that nuns atoned for Eve’s act by preserving their virginity.³⁴ But plural wives were not nuns; whether or not they believed they were redeeming themselves through child-bearing, they did have children. Through plural marriage, Roberts believed, they had “a special opportunity to consecrate themselves to the high mission of motherhood” (557). Brigham Young taught that by providing righteous homes for spirits, women in plural marriage would help establish “a royal Priesthood, a royal people, on the earth.”³⁵ In Roberts’s opinion, plural wives did more than provide devout homes; they helped improve the race physically as well. The “inspiring motive” of plural marriage is “race culture”—“a divinely ordered species of eugenics” (556–58).³⁶ Eugenics was a popular movement in America during Roberts’s time,³⁷ but a few years after Roberts’s death, Hitler used that cause as justification for murdering thousands of “inferior” humans. As a result, eugenics has been in disrepute until recently, when proponents of genetic engineering reopened the issue. Interestingly, Roberts does not initially attribute this motive to Joseph Smith, whom he acknowledges as having taken plural wives; the specified motive is simply that plural marriage was sanctioned by revelation.

Family Government

The kingdoms comprising the universe, Roberts believes, have “what would doubtless be [a] patriarchal, and theo-democratic order of

government, constituting, as a whole, the priesthood of the cosmos” (224). By “theo-democratic,” Roberts means a government by council that answers to a higher priesthood authority yet practices the principle of common consent. Common consent applies because the government must be one of “love and persuasion,” not force (224). Thus, as Roberts makes clear earlier in *TWL*, a theo-democratic government is a “moral government” that “rests upon” the precepts of love and persuasion found in Doctrine and Covenants 121 (90). This government is hierarchical, one in which each council acts “in its place and station and appointed office” (224).

Should this form of government also pertain in the home? Roberts is silent on this issue. However, because he envisions theo-democracy as pervading the universe, with “empires of kingdoms” governed in this manner (224), he probably expected the smallest unit of the kingdom on earth—the family—to operate in like fashion. Yet another clue evidencing Roberts’s attitude is that he uses *companionship*, not *partnership* and not *rule*, in describing the marriage relationship and applies *preside* in describing government by council.³⁸ These usages appear in the context of Roberts’s discussion of high religious ideals and contrast with his earlier political statements that by nature husbands dictate to their wives, who by nature obey those commands.

Conclusion

Roberts made significant efforts to rise above the gender discourse of his time. Sometimes he names women instead of using the generic *man*, even editing a few scriptures to make them more directly inclusive. He acknowledges that women have access to Christ equal to that of men. He describes Eve as the equal of Adam and celebrates her actions in the Garden of Eden. He underscores the mutual need, mutual fidelity, companionship, and unity of a good marriage, and he eschews dictatorship in the home. He attributes noble motivations to plural and first wives.

On the other hand, Roberts uses the generic *man* or *men* the majority of the time. All of his examples involve men and usually only men. Phrases involving both Eve and Adam always subordinate Eve in some way, and in one section of *TWL*, Eve’s actions are described in less positive terms than found in other sections. Frequently, sentences or paragraphs that designate a woman or both sexes will lapse into generic or strictly male terms, occasionally with illogical results.

These conflicting approaches reveal a Roberts who stood between the discourse of his environment and the discourse he was attempting

to create. They may also reflect a deeper, personal ambivalence concerning the status of women. These tensions he did not reconcile in spite of his systematization of theology.

NOTES

¹Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball, Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977), 18-19.

²Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 219; and Linda Thatcher, "I Care Nothing for Politics': Ruth May Fox, Forgotten Suffragist," *Utah State Historical Quarterly* 49 (Summer 1981): 250, 253. In fairness, we should remember that some of Roberts's arguments about the merits of antisuffrage were resorted to by Congressmen twenty years later. For example, Roberts believed that politics would degrade and unsex the "queens of the domestic kingdom." The same argument was used by Congressmen Frank Clark, Martin Dies, and Edwin Webb in 1915. Jean Bickmore White, "Woman's Place Is in the Constitution: The Struggle for Equal Rights in Utah in 1895," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 42 (Fall 1974): 358; and Haig Bosmajian, "Sexism in the Language of Legislatures and Courts," in *Sexism and Language* (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977), 83-86.

³See Emmeline B. Wells, Diary, November 10, 1898.

⁴Carol Cornwall Madsen, "'The Power of Combination': Emmeline B. Wells and the National and International Councils of Women," *BYU Studies* 33, no. 4 (1993): 438-66. Roberts and Wells were reconciled in 1910 after Roberts presented a tribute and a bouquet of white roses to Wells during the public celebration of her eighty-second birthday. Carol Cornwall Madsen, conversation with author, March 15, 1994.

⁵See, for example, White, "Woman's Place Is in the Constitution," 368. Roberts married three women: Sarah Louisa Smith (md. 1878), Celia Dibble (md. 1884), and Margaret Curtis Shipp (md. 1890, just months before the Manifesto was issued). Roberts's practice of plural marriage is what led to his expulsion from Congress.

⁶Note that today's discourse, although gender-inclusive, is nonetheless still a form of gender discourse.

⁷One permutation was fueled by recurrent attempts to clarify religious roles. By the time *TWL* was written, most of the LDS women who were leaders in the nineteenth century had died. These women had relied on sisterly interdependence to sustain them through the hardships of the early Church and had shared the spiritual experiences of Nauvoo, Winter Quarters, the establishment and reestablishment of the Relief Society, polygamy, and the leadership of Eliza R. Snow. But even before this era ended, Church leaders had begun the process of formalizing and systematizing relationships, including women's relationships, within the Church organization, for "the house of God is a house of order," President Joseph F. Smith observed. The Relief Society, youth organizations, and Sunday School were defined as auxiliaries to the priesthood. As such, President Smith noted, "when [the Relief Society or any other auxiliary] meets it proceeds as an independent organization,

always mindful of the fact it is such, by virtue of the authority of the holy Priesthood.” Correlation of auxiliary and priesthood lessons was initiated (a move that meant both opportunity and challenge to Roberts). In 1921, Charles W. Penrose reminded women that they were to obtain permission before holding meetings in their wards and that they could supplement but not usurp the role of the elders in blessing the sick. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 144–45 (excerpted from a 1903 article), 147–48 (excerpted from 1903 and 1915 talks); and *Conference Report*, April 1921, 199. See also Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), chapter 8, “The Church Auxiliary Organizations.”

⁸Ida S. Peay, “Taking a Stand for the Right,” *Woman’s Exponent*, June 1913, 61. Another phrase often alluded to when women explained why their lot in the 1900s was better than that of women in the early 1800s is that the Prophet Joseph Smith “turned the key for woman.” They believed that the organization of their “powerful society” (Relief Society) “was the opening wedge.” “General Relief Society Conference,” *Woman’s Exponent*, May 1913, 52; italics added. For another example, see Annie Wells Cannon, “Relief Society Day,” *Woman’s Exponent*, March 1913, 44. Other examples are spotted throughout the pages of the Relief Society’s unofficial newspaper, the *Woman’s Exponent*. For the minutes of the Relief Society meeting in which “turned the key for woman” was used, see Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, comps. and eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith*, The Religious Studies Monograph Series, vol. 6 (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 118. For a discussion of the meaning of “the key,” see Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, eds., *Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 1, 46–50, 74–75.

⁹For a more complete discussion of the commonsense nature of discourse, see Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, Language in Social Life Series (New York: Longman, 1989), chapter 4.

¹⁰Blanche Beechwood [Emmeline B. Wells], “Rowing against the Stream,” *Woman’s Exponent*, February 15, 1875, 140.

¹¹For example, a 1912 issue of *Woman’s Exponent* chastises women for “their apathy in political matters.” “Office for Women,” *Woman’s Exponent*, September 1912, 4. The editors and correspondents of this monthly newspaper rejoiced in every advance for women that came to their attention, yet they still used phrases such as “the sterner sex,” “man’s brain and faculties,” and “man’s experiments.” “Office for Women”; and “The New Year—1913,” *Woman’s Exponent*, Midwinter 1913, 36.

Examples of men subscribing to the prevailing discourse can be found in the quotations Roberts includes in *TWL*. As would be expected, those citations use *man* or *men* in the inclusive sense, as referring to both male and female, a common practice until the 1970s. Cited authors using *man* or *men* in this way include John William Draper, William Hurrell Mallock, Robert Kennedy Duncan (but science for Duncan is feminine [42]), William James, Thomas Paine, and George Rawlinson. Two other common practices were using *man* as a suffix and providing male-oriented examples. For example, Rawlinson uses *layman*. Simon Newcomb gives us an example of a hypothetical man voyaging through space.

¹²Some of the central issues of linguistic sexism were presented to a general audience for the first time when the *New York Times Magazine* published an

article on April 16, 1972, titled “One Small Step for Genkind.” Alleen Pace Nilsen, “Linguistic Sexism as a Social Issue,” in *Sexism and Language*, 6–7.

¹³President Joseph F. Smith made a somewhat similar comment in 1902: “We never could be in the image of God if we were not both male and female.” Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* (1919; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1977), 276.

¹⁴Alleen Pace Nilsen, “Sexism in the Language of Marriage,” in *Sexism and Language*, 132–33.

¹⁵Gershuny provides a similar example—“Man, like the other mammals, breast-feeds *his* young”—that is caused by the “lack of an English pronoun that symbolically includes men and women [and forces] users of Standard English into uttering nonsensical statements.” H. Lee Gershuny, “Sexism in Dictionaries and Texts: Omissions and Commissions,” in *Sexism and Language*, 145.

¹⁶Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 275.

¹⁷James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (1915; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1955), 681; and Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 2 vols. (McLean, Va.: MacDonald, [1886]), 2:636.

¹⁸See Kathryn H. Shirts, “Women in the Image of the Son: Being Female and Being Like Christ,” in *Women Steadfast in Christ: Talks Selected from the 1991 Women’s Conference Co-sponsored by Brigham Young University and the Relief Society*, ed. Dawn Hall Anderson and Marie Cornwall (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 94; and Gershuny, “Sexism in Dictionaries and Texts,” 145.

¹⁹Another example from Mormon literature of such a gyration is this by Brigham Young: “the world of mankind, the world of man, not of woman.” Contrast the ambiguity of *mankind* with the clarity of *womankind*. August 31, 1873, *Journal of Discourses* 16:167.

²⁰Several researchers have concluded that the generic *he* and generic *man* do affect perceptions. For example, see Barrie Thorne and others, “Language, Gender and Society: Opening a Second Decade of Research,” Wendy Martyna, “Beyond the He/Man Approach: The Case for Nonsexist Language,” and Donald G. MacKay, “Prescriptive Grammar and the Pronoun Problem” in *Language, Gender, and Society*, ed. Barrie Thorne, Cheri Kramarae, and Nancy Henley (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1983), 25–37.

²¹This practice was firmly embedded in gender discourse for the majority of this century. For fairly recent examples, see Gershuny, “Sexism in Dictionaries and Texts,” 145, 152–53, where he notes the same pattern in a 1966 dictionary, a 1967 shorthand textbook, and a 1973 accounting textbook.

²²Jolene Edmunds Rockwood, “The Redemption of Eve,” in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 10. Similarly, Paul Morris comments that “our primary relationships—between man and woman, humanity and deity, and humanity and nature—have been defined by our understandings of this biblical text.” Paul Morris, “A Walk in the Garden: Images of Eden,” in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series* 136 (Sheffield, Eng.: JSOT Press, 1992), 22.

²³Rockwood, “The Redemption of Eve,” 1–10.

²⁴Joseph Fielding Smith took a similar position: “We all owe a debt of gratitude to Mother Eve for partaking of the ‘forbidden fruit.’ It was not a sin . . . but an eternal blessing.” Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. and ed. Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., 5 vols. (1966; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book,

1979), 5:65. See also *Selections from Answers to Gospel Questions: A Course of Study for the Melchizedek Priesthood Quorums of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1972-73* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1972), 60. John A. Widtsoe's view, expressed in 1915, was that "the fall . . . was simply a deliberate use of a law, by which act Adam and Eve became mortal, and could beget mortal children. The exact nature of this event or the exact manner in which the law was used is not understood. . . . There was no essential sin in the fall, except that the violation of any law . . . is always followed by an effect." *Rational Theology* (n.p.: General Priesthood Committee, 1915), 47. On the other hand, James E. Talmage echoed the language of 1 Timothy. James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith* (1890; Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1975), 65. See also n. 26 below.

²⁵Joseph Fielding Smith goes a step beyond Roberts in placing a positive interpretation upon Eve's role, for he calls Eve's words in Moses 5:11 a revelation in which she learned "the true purpose for the fall." Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions* 4:59. In contrast, Roberts calls these same words simply a "paean of praise" (358). He does state later that "a dispensation of the gospel had been imparted to them [Adam and Eve]" (358). However, in this passage, Roberts is likely referring only to the Lord's command to offer sacrifice, the message of the angel, and the Holy Ghost's witness to Adam concerning the redemption. Roberts places these communications under the headings "The first revelation after 'the Fall'" and "A dispensation of the gospel to Adam." Eve's words he places under the heading "Rejoicing."

²⁶In *Evidences and Reconciliations*, John A. Widtsoe presents a view closer to Roberts's earlier discussion: "It [the eternal power of choice] really converts the command into a warning, as much as if to say, if you do this thing, you will bring upon yourself a certain punishment; but do it if you choose. . . . This they did with open eyes and minds as to consequences." (1947; Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960), 193-94. See also n. 24 above.

²⁷Eliza R. Snow and other women of the nineteenth century believed that obedience was the means by which women would eventually be redeemed from the curse of Eve. Brigham Young was more general in teaching that the curse upon women would be lifted when "the mission is fulfilled, and our Master and our Lord is perfectly satisfied with our work." Jill Mulvay Derr, conversation with author, March 18, 1994; and Brigham Young, August 18, 1872, *Journal of Discourses* 15:132. Jill Mulvay Derr notes,

Though Brigham Young saw woman's dependence upon man as a possible problem, he could not conceive a solution outside of adherence to the order of the kingdom. . . . So while Young allowed that women should develop their talents, seek their own inspiration from the Holy Spirit and make their own choices, according to Young a "woman of faith and knowledge" would say, "It is a law that man shall rule over me; his word is my law, and I must obey him."

Jill Mulvay Derr, "Woman's Place in Brigham Young's World," *BYU Studies* 18 (Spring 1978): 382-83.

²⁸*The Autobiography of B. H. Roberts*, ed. Gary James Bergera (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 190. Note the implication that it is woman's nature to accept the dictates of her husband.

²⁹The mutual need that a man and woman have for each other is often placed by Latter-day Saints in the eternal perspective—one cannot receive exaltation without the other. Except for a brief reference to Doctrine and Covenants 132, Roberts does not hint at this meaning.

³⁰In the proposal Roberts reportedly made to his second wife, Celia (in the presence of her parents), he briefly noted his awareness of how challenging separations would be: “My wife and I desire to begin a second family. If you become my wife there will be much hardship for I am constantly on call as a missionary.” Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 157.

³¹Roberts extended the concern for pure motives to himself. He would not enter plural marriage until he became convinced through the example of Erastus Snow that a man could have more than one wife and still escape “the corruption of promiscuity” and that the man’s love could be “purified and exalted.” *The Autobiography of B. H. Roberts*, 159.

³²*Journal of Discourses* 15:132.

³³George Q. Cannon was one who taught the concept of redemption. George Q. Cannon, October 9, 1869, *Journal of Discourses* 13:207. See also n. 26 above.

³⁴Rockwood, “The Redemption of Eve,” 9.

³⁵Brigham Young, April 7, 1861, *Journal of Discourses* 9:37.

³⁶Roberts’s former professor at the University of Deseret, John Park, was cited by George Q. Cannon as saying that the children born of plural marriage were unsurpassed in intelligence. Elder Cannon also claimed that the children were “much more healthy and strong.” *Journal of Discourses* 13:207.

³⁷Lester Bush notes that between 1925 and 1930, seventy-nine sterilizations were performed by Utah for eugenics-based reasons. He cites James Talmage as commenting that “a taint in the blood” that can be transmitted “should be hemmed in and not allowed further propagation.” Lester E. Bush, Jr., *Health and Medicine among the Latter-day Saints: Science, Sense, and Scripture*, Health/Medicine and the Faith Series (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 168.

³⁸Other Church leaders in Roberts’s day also emphasized love and persuasion, and they decried tyranny. But at least some did so in the context of the “rule” of husband over wife. For example, Joseph F. Smith defined priesthood government according to Doctrine and Covenants 121 and also taught, “It is intended that [the husband’s] rule shall be in love and not in tyranny. God never rules tyrannically, except when men so corrupt themselves that they are unfit to live.” Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 143–44, 149, 274. In this context, the term *rule* seems to have a different definition than we tend to give it. If a husband’s rule is to be like God’s rule, it must allow considerable exercise of agency by all family members within laws that are not the husband’s creations nor, Roberts believed, even to some undefined degree God’s creations. Because such laws are transcendent, they apply to all parties equally.

Philosophy

(Chs. 1–3, 8, 26–27, 33)

Truman G. Madsen

Roberts once called *The Truth, The Way, The Life* “the most important work that I have yet contributed to the Church.” He saw it as “crystallizing practically all of my thought, research, and studies in the doctrinal line of the Church.”¹ Though he considered himself a layperson, he came to *TWL* as one who had confronted many disciplines: as historian, theologian, philosopher, apologist, expositor, textual analyst, scientist, and advocate. Preston Nibley said of him that he “could only think in book lengths.”² He writes both in a comparative and a critical mode, striving to see how things interrelated, tying movements together, and picking and choosing ideas that appeared to him to approximate or confirm the teachings of Joseph Smith.

Roberts’s Purpose and Sense of Mission

Was Roberts writing for those whose approach to religion is primarily intellectual, or was his intent to reach into subjective religious concerns? The answer is both. He did not want to have the heart breathing defiance to the intellect. Further, he was bold enough to predict that once the intellectual foundations of the Restoration were properly presented as a whole they would not only enlighten the minds but inspire the hearts of future generations. This hope and his own agenda were lodged in a discourse he had given three decades earlier:

These doctrines contain the elements of a physical, moral and spiritual philosophy that will be the accepted philosophy of the New Age now dawning upon our world; a philosophy that will supersede all other philosophies and remain steadfast in both the beliefs and affections of mankind. The elements, I say, are here in these doctrines; they await only some future Spencer to weave them into synthetic completeness, that shall be as beautiful as it will be true, to make that philosophy acceptable to the higher intellects of our age.³

At a gathering of youth leaders charged with the creation of enthusiasm and loyalty, Roberts chose to present the “doctrines that challenge my affections and make me love Mormonism.”⁴ Typical of his dual sense of intellectual and spiritual commitment, his advocacy reflects his thirst for knowledge as well as his faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ:

My love for the gospel grows out of the partial knowledge I have of the great truths it contains. In it I feel the presence of a marvelous system of truth, a philosophy that gives unity to all history, and proper relationship to all existing things; that fills life with a real meaning, and makes existence desirable. And if I could only intelligently grasp these great truths in the presence of which I feel I am standing when I contemplate “Mormonism,” and reduce them to some orderly system which I am sure they are capable of, I would account myself most happy.⁵

The key word here is “system.” Roberts held that a chief characteristic of the New Dispensation was “the Unity of Truth,” that is, a set of truths combining toward one grand design, “the whole being given through a series of dispensations from the beginning of man in the earth until the present time.”⁶ He did not aspire to create a set of inter-related syllogisms ending respectively with “Q.E.D.” Rather, he sought broad-scale coherence with both the science and the philosophy of his time. That was Roberts’s ambitious and, as time and change have shown, somewhat hazardous enterprise.

At a time when his manuscript was all but press-ready, and just six months after he finished his six-volume *Comprehensive History of the Church*, Roberts expressed his feelings about the task of articulating the philosophical truths embedded in the gospel. He saw this mission as a mandate:

I regard it the duty of the Church to represent and uphold and sustain in the exercise of the mission given to her of God the so-called philosophical truths of the revelations of God, as well as the important doctrinal truth and ordinances of the Gospel that he has restored. It is binding upon the Church, from my viewpoint, that she shall weave into beautiful harmony, as I believe it can be woven, the truth that God has revealed and also those undoubted truths which men, and especially in this wonderful age, have been developing by their profound research and experimentations.⁷

Roberts had another long-range concern: Would Mormonism become a worldwide movement or a narrow sect? *TWL* is in part his answer: “a world movement not a sect will be its character.”⁸ That meant to him, as he had often said through the years, that “we will yet measure arms with the most learned and greatest men of the world.”⁹

Roberts knew well that a final and definitive system was beyond mortal reach. “Too many philosophers have attempted closed systems,” he wrote.¹⁰ He regarded the New Dispensation as by definition open—open, that is, to the further clarification and supplementation of revelation and to the findings of ongoing scientific and philosophic inquiry.

Logic and Epistemology

Roberts commended the definition of truth revealed by Joseph Smith as “the completest definition of truth found in human literature.”¹¹ Truth is “knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24). For Roberts, this definition was not a set of trite truisms. In the Prophet’s definition, Roberts saw absolute truth, in the sense of a fullness of truth presently beyond finite humanity. He also saw relative truth, namely truth relative to human perception and comprehension. And finally, he saw unfolding truth, the dynamic dimension of applied and living truth.

Truth in the Western tradition has been characterized both as “that which is” and as propositions about that which is. Three theories have prevailed: the correspondence, the coherence, and the pragmatic theories. In the first, truth is defined as “copying” reality. A statement is true if and only if it corresponds to reality. Coherence theory, in comparison, urges that truth is interrelational, that the full meaning of truth is its harmony with other truths.¹² Here the model is one of formal logic and consistency. Fragments are understandable only in relation to the whole, texts are to be understood within context, and a *Gestalt* is more than the sum of its parts.

For Roberts, if religion is not true in the correspondence and coherence senses, it must be rejected out of hand regardless of its effects. Regarding pragmatism, Roberts read extensively the works of William James, for whom truth is defined as practical outcomes in problematic situations. So for James the question “Does God exist?” becomes “What effects follow from acting as if God exists?” He deliberately applied this pragmatic criterion to religions and to religious experience. Roberts saw this application as a rewording of the New Testament test “By their fruits ye shall know them” (Matt. 7:20), but he did not see such application as an adequate definition of truth or as an all-sufficient test. An illusion may be comforting or disquieting, but either way it is self-deception.¹³

Roberts expanded the domain of truth beyond the realms of sensate empiricism and formal logic to the spheres of eternal knowledge, being, and becoming. In his own hand, Roberts inserted the following into Draft 3 of *TWL*: “Intelligence is the light of truth; or the power by which truth is cognized” (22). And he adds the word “absorbed,” thus conjoining truth and light as do many passages in modern scripture. This light “he [Joseph Smith] holds forth as eternal, uncreated and uncreatable therefore eternal as truth itself—a parallel existence with Truth. Intelligence-Truth! The existence-truth; and the light which discerns it—Intelligence” (22). Roberts followed the Prophet further by teaching that Christ’s emanating power is in all and through all things, that it lights every person in the world, that it will cut its own way and carry its own influence and recommend itself.¹⁴ From this statement, it follows that for Roberts no one has a monopoly on truth and everyone is influenced in a measure by the light of Christ.¹⁵ Are, then, the teachings of the New Dispensation utterly eclectic? No. Roberts interpreted “truth as becoming” to mean that the time will come when the puzzle pieces will fit, not approximately, but exactly. But we do not have all the pieces yet or even fully understand the pieces we have.

Roberts frequently expounded one implication of this view: “We Latter-day Saints do not want to contract our feelings, our sympathies, our opinions of the truth to the narrow limits of our own church fellowship; but we must recognize that God does things on a broad scale, and that He is directing, and that He is influencing, by His Spirit, His children.”¹⁶ Roberts saw the hand of God in religions, whether narrowly or inclusively conceived, as well as in science, philosophy, the arts, and every constructive human enterprise:¹⁷ “God’s spirit is working among all people to bring to pass the accomplishment of His great designs.”¹⁸

Throughout *TWL*, Roberts maintains that Christ is both the embodiment of truth and the “spirit of truth.” Because humanity is also the “spirit of truth” and was in the beginning with God (cf. D&C 93:23), communication and communion are possible between God and humans. For Roberts, the modern Prophet-teacher demonstrated and commended openness to reformulations and reconstructions. Hence, in the Restoration can be found no closed creed, no exhaustive articles of faith, no final revelation, no finished canon.

In matters of confirmation or verification of truth, the New Dispensation, Roberts wrote, is “bound by no rules prescribed by any . . . schools. . . . [I]t recognizes both experience and thought as avenues to

knowledge; and ‘both channels of knowledge mutually complementary and indispensable.’” Thus, to a degree, it “accepts what is known as rationalistic methods.”¹⁹ As for apprehending truths of revelation, Roberts cites repeatedly these lines from Joseph Smith: “Every word that proceedeth from the mouth of Jehovah has such an influence over the human mind—the logical mind—that it is convincing without other testimony. Faith cometh by hearing.”²⁰ Man is spirit. The spirit in man is native to truth—and when man represses or suppresses the impulses of the light within him toward the light from on high, he is under condemnation.

Even as flame leaps towards flame and blends with it, so truth proclaimed and striking the hearing spirit of man, finds entrance there, and understanding; unless he by perverseness holds back the will to believe,²¹ and with that holding back comes condemnation because he receives not the light which comes to his understanding—his intelligence. (264)

Thus, in addressing the perennial question “How do you know?” Roberts applies a federation of methods.

In outline, Roberts is concerned in his chapters on epistemology to establish that the mind enjoys self-consciousness and possesses knowledge of other selves and of the external world. His account is reminiscent of traditional discussions of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. He labors the point that the power to discriminate, to form judgment, is itself an act of freedom. His lengthy quotations from W. H. Mallock seem designed to counter the tendencies of determinism, behaviorism, and predestinationism. He allows for the impact of conditioning and limits on human powers. But the fact of agency “resides complete in the resolution which man makes after deliberation; it is the resolution which is the proper act of man, which subsists by him [in him?] alone; a simple fact independent of all the facts which precede or surround it” (32).

Though people are fully responsible for belief or disbelief, Roberts in other writings challenged the notion that all religious doubt or disbelief is the result of sin.²² There may be completely honest doubt. On the other hand, genuine faith in Christ is not a leap in the dark. It is, instead, “trust in what the spirit learned aeons ago.”²³ Religious recognition is just that—re-cognition. The Spirit brings “all things to . . . remembrance” (John 14:26). A person’s authentic response to truth requires a truthful—truth-full—nature. “Intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; . . . truth embraceth truth; . . . light cleaveth unto light” (D&C 88:40).

Intelligence and Free Will

It is axiomatic for Roberts that all intelligence is “independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself.” Agency is inherent in intelligence. “Behold, here is the agency of man” (cf. D&C 93:30–31). Responding to Josiah Royce, Roberts wrote that “will is more than choice,”²⁴ and he explicates that position in the section of *TWL* entitled “Free agency more than a choice of alternatives” (33). He intended to add to his 1907 article on the immortality of man the point that “will is an element of intelligences, that is, minds.”²⁵ Inside the cover of a personal volume, he noted, “One criticism of the doctrine of intelligences is that I represent the ego as too complexly and highly advanced mind—consider.”²⁶ He did consider. But whatever else is to be ascribed to primal intelligence, Roberts concludes that freedom must be. The freedom of intelligences is uncreate. The children of God are necessarily forced to be free (31–35).

Most arguments for hard determinism (which claims that human beings, like all other beings, are always effects and never self-determining causes) assume that something accounts for or precedes the person. This something may be chance, accidental collocation, mysterious fate, the big bang, the emergence of nucleic acids, *Moirai*, the decree of the stars, or the fiat creation of God. Such views of priority, whether temporal or metaphysical, are undercut by Roberts’s doctrine. Individual intelligences self-exist, coexist, and forever exist side by side with other intelligences and with the cosmos. God is not, contrary to major Western traditions, the only “necessary being.”

In many strands of world thought, individual volition—whatever its power—can be obliterated by an absolute will or by other wills. The aspiration of many mystics anticipates a union with God that is a kind of annihilation of individuality. Roberts, however, insisted that the scriptures describe individual human independence as inviolate.²⁷

Further, for Roberts, God, freedom, and immortality are fully manifest only in a society of selves.²⁸ Relationships obtain between and among persons, and only a persisting identity-person can sustain lasting relationships. This was a point that Roberts asserted in *TWL* as well as in his *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*. He wrote of “the principle of harmonizing individual wills with community will,” that if the will of a community “follows deliberation, it is fair and free, and then it is just that it be submitted to.”²⁹ Because of human individuality and energy, William James had speculated, “God himself may draw vital strength and increase of very being from our fidelity.” With approval, Roberts underlined that statement in James’s *Will to Believe*.³⁰ It is not blasphemy to speak of “God’s need of man.”³¹

Other LDS interpreters of scriptural statements about eternal intelligence have speculated that “intelligence” is not, without God’s intervention, individualized, but is the name of the primordial materials out of which spirits were created in the premortal sphere.³² But Roberts held strongly to the view that intelligences are individual, uncreate and, within limits, free.³³

The crux of the problem of the nature of intelligence is this: if intelligence is “in the mass,” and if from it God apportions or “organizes” or “begets” spirits, then upon God—and upon God alone—rests the responsibility for the natures, the choices, and therefore the radical inequalities among humans. But that view would contradict Roberts’s essential positions on the problems of individuation and evil. Furthermore, Roberts inquires, how can intelligence be independent—that is, conscious, free, and autonomous—if individuality or self-hood emerges from a force, divine or not, outside it?

Roberts also maintained that the uncreated and uncreatable intelligences are likewise indestructible. Responding to William James’s postulate about the world’s author putting the case of real risks and real gains to humanity (“Had James read of the Council in Heaven?” Roberts wrote in a margin), Roberts commented: “While in the exercise of their freedom these intelligences might decline participation in the scheme of things proposed, they could not sink back into non-entity.”³⁴

The eternal nature of intelligent beings leads to another shift in approaching the problem of evil. From his premises about free will and the nature of intelligence, Roberts concluded that the situation or predicament of mortality is partly the result of human initiative. We are here by our own advice and consent. This is the sense, and the only sense, in which the human race participated in Adam’s fall. We submitted to this option and voluntarily subscribed to it in the former estate.³⁵ In each stage of human existence, Roberts insisted, “God only becomes an efficient cause of our growth if we permit it.”³⁶

Causation and Metaphysics

TWL chapter 2, on knowledge, leads Roberts to more inclusive categories than “earth-bound” knowledge. He extends his inquiry in chapters 3–5 to a description of the solar system, the galaxy, galaxies, and what he describes in awe as the infinite cosmos. He says, however, that he is merely giving definitions, not attempting a “deep metaphysical inquiry” into these “building stones of knowledge” (37). But what he says about time, space, matter, force, and mind cuts deeply into traditional assumptions. How Roberts’s discussion relates to

contemporary developments in physics and the philosophy of science is another question.³⁷

Time. Roberts's charts and conclusions may be dated, but what is central to his account is his rejection of the concept of eternity that has prevailed in Western philosophical theology since Aristotle. In that tradition, time and eternity are utterly unlike. Eternity is defined as timelessness, that is, as nontemporality. God, it is held, exists "outside of time." The tradition says that time is unreal as contrasted to the really real: eternity. Hence, for centuries it has been taken for granted that God, being nontemporal, is immutable, that is, beyond process, and impassable, beyond either passivity or response.

But the close relationship of time and space that Roberts finds in the book of Abraham makes such ideas paradoxical. Roberts sees in the teachings of the Prophet Joseph the view that *time* is "infinite after its kind" (40). The notion of timelessness or a nontemporal eternal, although advocated by later Christian and Jewish philosophers, was foreign to early Jewish understanding of sacral time.³⁸ In Hebrew, the root word for time is *olam*, which also means "the world." Roberts kept notes on Augustine, Boethius, and Aquinas, all of whom hold that eternity has no succession, but exists all together. This Roberts called the "now-theory," finding it unacceptable, even unintelligible. Statements such as "all things are present before mine [God's] eyes" (D&C 38:2) or that God lives in an "eternal now"³⁹ mean to Roberts that past, present, and future are apprehended by God as present, not that God has no actual past, or present, or future. The "eternal now" idea, however, has some currency among Latter-day Saints because it seems to help account for divine foreknowledge. Joseph Smith, nevertheless, clearly refers to "God's time, angel's time, prophet's time, and man's time" and teaches that these are reckoned "according to the planet on which they reside" (D&C 130:4).⁴⁰ Thus, eternity, in Joseph Smith's teaching, may be viewed as an endless series of eternities.

On the question of immutability, modern revelation returns to the biblical view: Joseph Smith not only contradicts but also inverts the static conception. God is not the unmoved mover. God is the most-moved mover, most responsive, most all-encircling in care and concern. Furthermore, as Roberts argued in his *Mormon Doctrine of Deity*, the static conceptions of God make any approach to the Creation or the Incarnation impossible. In a personal notebook, after describing the Aristotelian and Thomistic notion that "creation is simply the divine Still Vision," Roberts writes, "They [the worlds] are only organized." Creation, which is design and ordering, is a process, not a motionless act. In entering the world at birth, God-Christ did not enter space and

time for the first time. He changed his location to the earth, and he participated fully in the processes of mortality. This approach to God has new defenders in our time.⁴¹

Metaphors for time, such as a line, a circle, and a spiral, all have a point. But Roberts implicitly undercuts the notion of eternal recurrence, the idea that everything happens or can happen all over again. For Roberts, the variety, plurality, and individuality of the components of the universe make such recurrence impossible. Nor did he seriously entertain the notion—pervasive in science fiction—that time may be reversed or that it may move backward.

Space. Roberts argues in similar ways on behalf of “boundless expanse and indefinite divisibility” (40). For example, he says that “space then is boundless. It is without a center; it is without circumference! The contrary is inconceivable” (41). In light of this concept, one can understand why Roberts settled on the word “eternalism” as the most comprehensive word for the LDS understanding of metaphysics.

On matter, force, and mind. Roberts works with Joseph Smith’s teaching that “element had an existence from the time he [God] had.”⁴² Thus, for example, Joseph taught that earth and water “had their existence in an elementary state, from eternity.”⁴³ So, Roberts says, the elements are eternal “when you get to them” (47). He notes that Joseph Smith spoke of “chaotic matter” but implied something more basic, namely, “the pure principles of element.” What are these principles? This much is clear in Joseph Smith’s declaration: “They may be organized and re-organized, but not destroyed. They had no beginning, and can have no end.”⁴⁴ The Prophet also referred to element as that “in which dwells all the glory.”⁴⁵

So, “elements” may be more basic than contemporary physics or metaphysics have been able to discover. Roberts’s notes on the Greek cosmologists and on the philosophy of Hobbes versus Berkeley reflect his view that neither the old forms of materialism nor of immaterialism were the last word. He asserts that “the New Dispensation conception of the universe is undoubtedly pluralistic.”⁴⁶ Clearly he was trying to avoid the “block universe” and the idea of Being (with a capital “B”) that is the premise and conclusion of much classical talk about God. But he was also trying to explicate, through some scientific theories of his time, the meaning of the Prophet’s statement that “all spirit is matter” (D&C 131:7). As for physics and the observable cosmos, Roberts writes, they “can only describe certain of [matter’s] properties and speculate as to its structure” (42). Whatever science or philosophy might discover about substance, Roberts affirms “its eternity and its limitless extension, its indestructibility and the necessary corollary of that quality, its uncreatability” (42).

How, again, does all this relate to a treatise on theology and Jesus Christ? One of Roberts's answers is as follows: "Grace, mercy, justice, and truth are qualities or attributes of mind or spirit, which may be matter, but of a finer quality than that which is cognized by the senses" (42-43). So spiritualism and materialism, properly defined, join hands.

Roberts ends chapter 3 with a brief postscript on mind and the divine mind. There is one God, "the Eternal God of all other gods" (D&C 121:32). That means there is also only one God-nature to which the children of God may be linked by the Spirit. God's power is the master power of the universe, and harmonized intelligences receive and manifest God's light which, Roberts believes, proceeds from all. This is "the very spirit of God, everywhere present and present with power" (49). Roberts thus ascribes to Joseph Smith the way out of another long-standing impasse in religious understanding: how can God be a person of attributes and location and yet at the same time be everywhere? Roberts's answer, following Joseph Smith's, is that God as a person is not present everywhere, although he is present through his emanating and all-pervasive Spirit.

Mind and Intelligence

In chapter 8, Roberts explores further the nature of intelligence, mind, or minds. Roberts took as axiomatic the scriptural statement that "intelligence . . . was not created or made, neither indeed can be" (D&C 93:29). He also accepted as clarification of that statement the further radical teaching of the Prophet Joseph that humans exist on the same principles as God exists,⁴⁷ namely, as self-existent beings.⁴⁸

Only weeks before his death, Roberts discoursed at length on topics from the manuscript of *TWL*. Speaking of the coexistence of divine and human intelligence, he said, "Splendid, I say, as the material universe may be, it has not outgrown the universe of 'Mind' incarnated in the Personal Intelligences that hold all this manifest glory and awe-inspiring power in balance, giving direction and purpose to the whole."⁴⁹ Then he cited an 1865 statement from the First Presidency and the Twelve. That statement concludes that "from all eternity there had existed organized beings, in an organized form, possessing superior and controlling power." The plural *beings* is emphasized by Roberts. Stressing the point of eternal coexistence, the official statement adds that "it [is] neither rational nor consistent with the revelations of God and with reason and philosophy, to believe that these latter Forces and Powers [what apostle Orson Pratt had speculatively called "self-moving intelligent particles"] had existed prior to the Beings who controlled and governed them."⁵⁰

Roberts found support for his teaching about the individuality of primal intelligences in the words of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, Orson Pratt, and George Q. Cannon.⁵¹ He also found it in the teachings of his close colleagues, including John A. Widtsoe⁵² and Joseph Fielding Smith.⁵³ Roberts's understanding was that these "intelligences differ in degree of intelligence, moral quality, and greatness, hence also they differ in power, standing and appointment."⁵⁴

If God created everything, then he created the drastic problems to which the Atonement of his Son, Jesus Christ, is a drastic, cruel, and costly solution. But because of the "eternalism" of elements, volition, minds, and law, Roberts saw a rationale for the Atonement that is profoundly clarifying and deeply moving.⁵⁵

For his account in *TWL* of mental functions, Roberts is indebted to William James and Oliver Lodge; his ascriptions to the will follow Guizot. One may wonder why Roberts supposed that a clarification of issues about mental capacity would relate to a treatise on Christ. But Roberts's reason soon becomes clear enough. Since Christ, who is "more intelligent than . . . all" (Abr. 3:19) and even, as Roberts interprets the passage, more intelligent than all combined, then what can be said of His trustworthiness and the rational foundation for submission to His will?⁵⁶

At a minimum, Roberts ascribes to primal intelligences these traits: consciousness, self-consciousness, subject-object discrimination, generalization, and a priori ratiocination. By these labels, Roberts means powers of deduction, induction, imagination, memory, deliberation, judgment, and volition. In a summary statement of these powers in a later chapter, Roberts says, "To accredit an intelligence with fewer or less important powers than these would be to deny him intelligence altogether" (255).

Having said all this, he sides with the critics of pure materialism in affirming "the mysterious something" that moves and motivates the human brain and body. He finds confirmation in Oliver Lodge that minds will not disappear nor "vanish into nothingness," but "shall endure forever" (83).

Roberts cites William James's empiricism that the imagination can only make combinations of earlier perceptions, following Locke's dogma that there is nothing in the mind that was not first in the senses (79–80). Roberts elsewhere argues for innate ideas in mortal awareness, including those presently hidden under amnesia. Here he simply wished to establish that image-making, remembering, and recombining images are powers inherent in the mind (83).

In *The Concept of Mind*, Gilbert Ryle held that the notion that there is a self that *has* a mind is a grammatical mistake, and he protested against a “ghost in the machine.”⁵⁷ In the thought of the New Dispensation, however, intelligence is not a ghost, but a subtle materiate entity; the human self—spirit and body—is not a machine, but an organism of life and consciousness.

Roberts skirts the question of how intelligence is manifest in the so-called lower forms, except to say, “We shall hold that there is a difference in mind-stuff as there are differences in matter; distinction between the intelligence of man and the instinct of brutes” (77). He takes generally a more positive view of the “lower animals” than does traditional thought. He also only hints at Joseph Smith’s teaching that the earth itself is in some sense alive (242) and omits the idea that it will die and be resurrected. Is it possible that there is life in all, even so-called inanimate, matter? That idea would lead to pan-psychism (consciousness in everything) or animism or vitalism (life force in everything). Perhaps Roberts does not address these concerns because he had already “twisted the nose of Dame Orthodoxy” far enough.

Spirits and Intelligence

In chapter 26, Roberts cites scriptures, especially the Johannine writings, that ascribe premortal existence to Christ. Roberts then relates these scriptures to insights that are in a measure unique to the New Dispensation. These insights are as follows:

1. Christ existed as an individual spirit before he was embodied. As a spirit being, he was the creator of worlds and world systems.
2. Humans likewise lived as spirits before mortality.
3. The “creation” of humans should be in quotation marks because, contra Creationism and Traducianism, both the human mind and spirit predate earth life. Birth brings a premortal spirit quickened by an ageless intelligence into a physical body.⁵⁸
4. Jesus is divinely preeminent as Firstborn of spirits, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh, the Firstfruits of the dead, the Resurrection, and the Life.
5. The intelligence in humans is individual and eternal.
6. The idea of individual intelligences can be found in the doctrines of modern prophets and in a unique ancient source, the book of Abraham.

Also, chapter 26 anticipates the topic of chapter 33, the problem of evil or theodicy, by speaking of the “value” of the foregoing doctrines. They abandon the paradoxes of the dogma of creation from nothing. They shed light on how evil may exist in the universe. They show how in every stage of eternal progression Christ is exemplar. And between the lines, they resolve the paradoxes of the Council of Chalcedon, which asserted at one and the same time the absolute divinity and the absolute humanity of Jesus. Modern revelation is clear: Christ was divine before mortality. He did not, however, receive “of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness” (D&C 93:13). Hence, for Roberts, becoming is reinstated in the Christ-life.

Many philosophical accounts of the origin and the nature of mind assert that everything that can be called “mental” had its beginning in some earlier preconscious form. A corollary to this assertion is the view that mind will decline into lifeless cosmic dust in the vast total death of the universe. Roberts wrote in a notebook that “it is just here that the importance of an uncreated entity in man appears.”⁵⁹ The self is a unity, not a composite, and has not been arbitrarily (by chance or by God) pulled together in a way that may be broken up or coalesced into a new identity. The body may die and disintegrate, but the individual is indivisible. This eternally persisting self is the identity and continuity through all change. Hence, for every person there is premortal existence as there is immortality. Knowing this answers the problem of individuation and also of change. Mind is not reducible to brain. While it preserves its identity, intelligence may change and enlarge.⁶⁰

In taking this position, Roberts opted for an idea that is paralleled in Plato, the idea of the active soul. For Roberts, this idea takes precedence over Plato’s theory of forms or universals. The Greek view is that, in some way, *nous* or reason is immortal. Roberts viewed all of human essence as immortal. Plato taught that the world is created according to ultimate forms or ideas. Roberts wrote, “It must be a previous spiritual existence,”⁶¹ and he means for each particular person or thing.

In response to Hume and other Western thinkers who assert that the self is a composite of habits, a “bundle of perceptions,” Roberts wrote in a note, “Close to the Hindu karma, made up of acts, i.e. experience. But the self is coexistent with its experiences, not a collection of them. The self *has* experiences.” Dun Scotus held that “God knew individuals as pure ideas before the creation.” Roberts replied, “Instead of this he knew them as individual intelligences who were eternal.”⁶²

Roberts hoped to do more with the questions of why minds are enhanced rather than delimited by brain and why spirits are enhanced

by embodiment. Joseph Smith taught that “all beings who have bodies have power over those who have not.”⁶³ What, Roberts wondered, is the explanation of that superior power? And what is really at stake in the affirmation of modern scripture that “spirit and element when separated cannot receive a fullness of joy?” (260; see D&C 93:33–34).

In his private papers, Roberts addressed related theories that have in various forms characterized Oriental religions and medieval Judaism: reincarnation, transmigration, and metempsychosis. On two grounds, Roberts negated these ideas. First, the fundamental principles in each human body never become an essential part of any other body but are eventually resurrected.⁶⁴ Second, the seriousness and cruciality of mortal life is vitiated if it can be repeated in all-but-endless rebirths.

Purpose of Earth Life

All of Part 1 of *TWL* sets the stage for asserting the purposeful existence of the universe. This theme culminates in chapter 27. In the early 1920s, Roberts collected material from sundry books and articles on the question, “Is Life Worth Living?” He was somewhat surprised that the trend, at all levels of culture, was negative. He saw signs, as his notes on the writings of Nietzsche show, of what were called “the furies,” the anguished theme of meaninglessness which was to dominate Continental philosophy and theology in the twentieth century. This theme culminated in the death cry of Camus: “There is only one problem: suicide.” Claiming that he was “somewhat read in the philosophies of men,” Roberts said often that he had found no set of utterances quite equal to those of the New Dispensation.

What, then, is the meaning and the purpose of earth life? Roberts wished he could put the following sentences in the sky so that they blazed like the sun: “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39); “Men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25); “Spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy” (D&C 93:33); and “And as I, Christ, have received a fulness, you may receive a fulness” (cf. D&C 93:20). The significance of these verses arises from the recognition that humans are spirit as well as body, that the whole person is the soul of that person, that eternal life is life like the divine life, and that the resurrection of the body is therefore the redemption of the soul.

All these assertions cut against the grain, as Roberts recognizes in his notes, of Plotinus and Augustine in the Christian tradition and of Maimonides in the Jewish tradition. Those three maintain that the soul is immaterial, that only the soul is of worth (or even real), that

eternal life is the escape of soul from *soma* or flesh, and that human resurrection must be either utterly spiritualized as a symbol or rejected. The same tendencies have diluted Christology. Ancient docetic definitions of the infinity and incorporeality of God taught that Christ was never really physical but only appeared to be so, or that his resurrection was a temporary way of manifesting immortality.

But in the Restoration, Roberts observes, “the Christ illustrates what takes place with all intelligent entities of the divine human species. Intelligences are begotten spirits, and these spirits, no doubt are more definite personalities, and of greater tangibility, and possessed of higher powers than many suppose them to be” (262). Furthermore, “as with Christ so shall it be with men in varying degrees” (259). Roberts had previously elaborated these teachings in a long discourse, comparing and contrasting them to five philosophies: Epicureanism, Stoicism, Platonism, Aristotelianism, and the Christian Spirit of Love (Social Gospel).⁶⁵

So what is the *joy* that Lehi celebrates and describes? Roberts reads into this and related chapters an all-consuming joy that involves “intelligence, faith, knowledge, light, truth, mercy, love, justice, glory, dominion, wisdom, power; all feelings, affections, emotions, passions; all heights and all depths.” It is a joy that arises “from the highest possible development, the highest conceivable enlargement of physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual powers. . . . Joy arising from progress . . . bringing to pass the progress, enlargement and joy of others” (267–68).

The scriptures speak of joy of the Holy Spirit, joy of release, joy of creation, joy of enabling grace. These are parts of the joy-constellation, but they are not all of it. The connection between Lehi’s passage on joy and what Roberts calls “the law of opposite existences” shows that there is nothing Pollyannaish here. Joy is not an escape, not a withdrawal, not a product of the ascetic and mortification traditions. In its most inclusive state, joy emerges from confronting, coping, serving, partaking, and participating in all of daily life.

Roberts infers that the heights of virtue, moral as well as intellectual, are developed only in the mortal struggle. They are also related to giving oneself in the birthing, nurturing, and serving of children, who are the very children of God. This is the harder, but the blessed, way of joy in posterity: “Herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified” (D&C 132:63).

But humans do not exist, with all due respect to the creeds, as a fiat product of God for his own glory only. This, Roberts says, is a view that represents “God as selfish and vain of glory” (267). Instead, God and

Christ are glorified in the increasing glorification of their creatures, a “constantly increasing splendor” (267). This deepens three traditional answers to the why of humanity’s creation: that God can exercise his own good will and pleasure,⁶⁶ that he might have creatures to worship him, and that he might not be alone.

So Roberts revels in the Prophet’s King Follett teaching: God did not totally create men and women. He “found himself” amidst glory and intelligences. He sired spirit bodies and then initiated the siring of physical bodies. He chose to implement spiritual and physical law to share with his children his gifts of redemption and eternal life.

Problem of Evil

Chapter 33 deals with what Roberts cites Mansel as calling “the real riddle of existence—the problem which confounds all philosophy” (332). The problem is theodicy, the relationship of God and evil.

Roberts poses the problem in the manner of the ancient Epicurus: God does not eradicate pain and suffering from our lives, either because he cannot or he will not. If he cannot, he is not all-powerful. If he will not, he is not all good. But the major monotheistic religions insist that God is both absolutely powerful and absolutely good.

Two purported solutions to this dilemma are not even mentioned by Roberts. One maintains that the existence of evil is an impenetrable mystery, that in this, as in other ways, God’s will is inscrutable. So, in the name of reverence, many prefer no answer to any answer. The claim is not only that mortals do not understand, but that they cannot. The other way out is simply to deny that evil is evil. This is the position of extreme mysticism both in Far Eastern and Western forms. In Hinduism, for example, all differences, including the distinction between good and evil, are illusory, due to *maya*. Not only evil, but matter itself as we know it—and disease and death—are solely “in the mind.” That tack—although some things are no doubt taken to be evil which are not, and vice versa—is unavailable to Latter-day Saints.

The heart of Roberts’s treatise is that God sent his Son into this real world to cope with real diseases of spirit and body, real evil and opposition, and real death. Jesus came not only to eliminate illusions, but to transform reality.

Roberts observes that the problem of evil becomes more acute within the Judeo-Christian tradition because of the dilemma imposed by the view of *ex nihilo* creation and divine omnipotence: if God brought everything, except himself, into being, then he brought into being evil, the Devil (no more mysterious a creature, Roberts observes,

than evil-inclined men), and the calamitous consequences associated with mortality. Worse than that (if anything can be worse), God brought into being from nothing—with absolute foreknowledge which, Roberts argues, is close to precausation—people who would commit terrible atrocities. Furthermore, God created, in addition to this anguished world, a place for these evil persons' eternal suffering. If God can create from nothing, can he not return his creatures to nothing? Classical theology paradoxically answers no. Roberts concludes that to ascribe such total causation to the Divine is “revolting to reason” and “shocking to piety” (256).

One modification of the traditional approach is the privative theory, the idea that evil is the absence of good. Another is Leibniz's thesis that in God's perspective, under the aspect of eternity, this world is the best of all possible worlds even with all of its injustices, inequalities, and inabilities. This theory is often cited as philosophical optimism, but it can also lead to pessimism. What if Leibniz is right? It may be, as the phrase has it, that this world is “a vale of soul-making,” but all around us is evidence of soul-shrinking. Roberts argues that, as an instrument of probation and testing, this is the best possible world. But it is not the best conceivable. Therefore, “this best possible world presents apparent limitation to the power of its Creator: . . . he may not create space, nor matter, nor force, nor intelligence, nor annihilate evil. Yet all the power that is, creative, or destructive, or controlling is his” (338). Had he so minded, a God of unlimited power could have made a world in which all evils are absent and all people are perfect without stress, strain, and suffering. To say that God could not or cannot set up this condition is to acknowledge that God is limited.

What, then, of scriptural language that God is almighty and all-powerful, that because of him “all things are possible”? Roberts's answer is straightforward: God does not have absolute power. He has all the power possible in a self-existent universe amidst indestructible free selves.⁶⁷ Hence, it is appropriate to call him the Almighty. But then may not evil triumph in the end? Drawing on the optimistic view of the cosmos as articulated throughout *TWL*, Roberts concludes that the order of the universe “shall stand secure, because there will always be enough, and enough of sufficient power, to hold things in their course of progress, and to the attainment of the higher things, the best things” (261).

Roberts cites Lehi's words, written in the context of explaining the fall of Adam, and claims that Lehi's discourse is unique among sacred texts. It is all the more impressive, he says, because Lehi proceeds through a series of “if . . . thens,” defining the cruciality of human expo-

sure to contrasts, such as good and evil, bitter and sweet. Lehi ends this series by saying that if there were no contrasts, God himself would cease to exist. This is an inversion of the traditional argument that since there is evil, God cannot be. Roberts here and elsewhere champions one central theme: there is no substitute for experience—first-hand experience—and that means direct experience of contrasts. This situation or predicament is not altogether of God’s making. It is just the way things are.

So, the challenging answer to theodicy that Roberts finds in modern revelation is this: evil is among eternal things. Evil is not only the potential for the abuse of freedom; it is also the antithesis of good and the foundation of discerning, crucial judgment. It is, as Roberts cites Fiske at length to show, “part of the dramatic whole” (337). As Roberts wrote in his *Comprehensive History of the Church*:

Good and evil then, in Latter-day Saint philosophy, are not created things. Both are eternal, just as duration is, and space. They are as old as law—old as truth, old as this eternal universe. Intelligences must adjust themselves to these eternal existences; this, the measure of their duty.⁶⁸

Roberts finally extends his basic insight into the biblical narrative of the Garden of Eden and the two trees in order to confirm Lehi’s understanding: one cannot know sweet without bitter. The primal parents of the race chose the better, but also the bitter and harder, way.⁶⁹

Roberts completed chapter 33, and in fact his book, before major calamities of the twentieth century, including World War II, nuclear explosions, and the Holocaust. Furthermore, Roberts says little of natural evils: earthquakes, plagues, disease, volcanic eruptions, flood, and drought. Likewise, he does not directly address the plight of the innocent, especially children, who are victimized by these evils. Finally, one might ask, how does it help us cope with evil, even if we acquit God of being its cause? Roberts’s response is that evil cannot be totally eradicated from the universe. But through Christ it can, in individual and eventually in community lives, be overcome.

Because coercion is out of the question, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which is the centerpiece of *TWL*, is an act of persuasion, the most powerful in the universe. The Atonement did not become “necessary” by arbitrary divine decree. Christ caringly gave himself because in no other way can human beings be more profoundly reached, enlightened, enlivened, and capacitated for eternal life. Eternal life includes eventual triumph over ignorance, sin, and death, and everlasting communion with God and his Christ.

Some things are possible for God that are not com-possible. God *can* prevent this or that, but he cannot prevent this or that and still open the way to the ultimate ends of perfecting and perfectionism that he envisions and that we agree to. Some insist that eventually no opposition to the divine will, in any creature whatever, will remain. To this position, Roberts responds in a notebook, “It does now. Why not in the future?”

NOTES

¹B. H. Roberts to Heber J. Grant, February 9, 1931.

²Preston Nibley, conversation with the author.

³B. H. Roberts, *Joseph Smith: The Prophet Teacher*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1927), 66–67 (hereafter cited as *JSPT*).

⁴B. H. Roberts, “The Creation of Enthusiasm and Loyalty,” *Improvement Era* 9 (September 1906): 844.

⁵Roberts, “Creation of Enthusiasm,” 844.

⁶B. H. Roberts, “Modern Revelation Challenges Wisdom of Ages to Produce More Comprehensive Conception of the Philosophy of Life,” speech delivered Sunday, April 15, 1923; *Liabona* 20 (May 8, 1923): 434.

⁷*Conference Report* (October 1930): 21.

⁸B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century I*, 6 vols. (Provo, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1965), 6:555 (hereafter cited as *CHC*).

⁹*Conference Report* (October 1901): 57.

¹⁰In Roberts’s copy of William James, *A Pluralistic Universe, Hibbert Lectures at Manchester College on the Present Situation in Philosophy* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1909).

¹¹*JSPT*, 33.

¹²Josiah Royce in Roberts’s generation; Hocking, Blanshard, and Werkmeister more recently.

¹³Roberts kept notes in his copy of Southey’s biography of John Wesley, now in Archives Division, Church Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives). Wesley was taunted by skeptical hearers. He replied, “Well, will it [Christian faith] at least make people happier here?” Roberts comments, “Think upon and analyze it in the dignity of truth.” Robert Southey, *The Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism* (London: F. Warne, n.d.).

¹⁴*CHC* 6:554.

¹⁵Some significant passages on this point: D&C 88:7; *JSPT*, 14–15; and Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, comps. and eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 237.

¹⁶*Conference Report* (April 1908): 112.

¹⁷See, for example, his account of “collateral rays” of divine inspiration which, he believed, “led to those great discoveries in the arts and sciences and in

mechanics, which make our age so wonderful.” *Conference Report* (October 1903): 72.

¹⁸*Conference Report* (April 1902): 16.

¹⁹*CHC* 2:410. He listed these in the same order in his discourse “Joseph Smith The Prophet Teacher,” delivered December 22, 1907, at the Salt Lake Tabernacle. The subheadings in chapter 63 of *CHC* (2:381–412), which is entitled “The Prophet’s Work—The New Dispensation a System of Philosophy,” are: Joseph Smith Taught No Systematized Philosophy; Joseph Smith’s Definition of Truth; As to Things—The Universe; Change and Its Tendency; Purpose of God in the Earth-Life of Man; The Eternal Existence of Intelligence; Other Worlds and World Systems than Our Own Inhabited by Intelligences; The Relationship of Intelligences—The Congregation of the Mighty; The Spirit of the Kingdom of Heaven’s Government; The Immanence of God; “The Light of Christ”; The Reign of the Law; The Doctrine of Opposite Existences—Good and Evil; The Moral Freedom of Intelligences; Eternity of Relationships; and Classification of the New Dispensation Philosophy.

²⁰Joseph Smith, Jr., *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 5:526 (hereafter cited as *HC*).

²¹The phrase is from William James, who later called it “the right to believe.” James and Fechner were both impressed with the subconscious as the mechanism of spiritual awareness.

²²Roberts’s personal notebook in LDS Church Archives (hereafter cited as Roberts’s notebook).

²³Roberts’s notebook.

²⁴In Roberts’s copy of Josiah Royce, *The Conception of God: A Philosophical Discussion Concerning the Nature of the Divine Idea as a Demonstrable Reality* (New York: Macmillan, 1902), 188, LDS Church Archives.

²⁵B. H. Roberts, “Immortality of Man,” *Improvement Era* 10 (April 1907): 401–23. This article, which advocates individual intelligence, was approved by a committee of the Quorum of the Twelve.

²⁶See note 10 above.

²⁷Abraham 3:18: “They [not it] are gnolaum, or eternal.” See also Roberts’s note in Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938), 354: “‘A spirit from age to age’ . . . ‘A spirit,’ that is, an entity, a person, an individual” (hereafter cited as *TPJS*).

²⁸Royce, *Conception of God*, 112, Roberts’s copy.

²⁹Royce, *Conception of God*, 274, Roberts’s copy.

³⁰William James, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, and Human Immortality* (New York: Dover, 1956), 61.

³¹B. H. Roberts, “God’s Need of Man,” *Improvement Era* 24 (August 1921): 907–11.

³²Elder Bruce R. McConkie took the view that “the intelligence or spirit element became intelligences after the spirits were born as individual entities.” *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979), 387. The *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* presents both views and concludes that “the Church has taken no official position on this issue.” See Dennis J. Packard, “Intelligence,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:692; and Paul Nolan Hyde, “Intelligences,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 2:692–93. It has been pointed out that in some passages “intelligences,” as

referred to in the book of Abraham, are “spirits,” that is, begotten sons and daughters of God. Roberts acknowledges this point in his text. See *TWL* 251–55. See generally Kenneth W. Godfrey, “The History of Intelligence in Latter-day Saint Thought,” in *The Pearl of Great Price: Revelations from God*, ed. H. Donl Petersen and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1989), 213–36.

³³For others who have shared this view, see notes 49–51 below.

³⁴In Roberts’s copy of William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1907).

³⁵See Roberts’s revision on the doctrine of the Fall in “Preface to the Third Edition,” *The Gospel*, 3d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1901), vi–vii.

³⁶Roberts’s notebook.

³⁷See William Evenson’s essay, pages 633–51 below.

³⁸Thus Ernst Cassirer speaks of the time mode of Judaism as “prophetic time.” See Paul Arthur Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer* (Evanston, Ill.: Library of Living Philosophers, 1949), 398.

³⁹*TPJS*, 220.

⁴⁰See also time references in the book of Abraham, Facsimile 2, explanation of figure 1. See also D&C 121:31.

⁴¹See, for example, Charles Hartshorne, *A Natural Theology for Our Time* (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1967), and John Cobb, Jr., *A Christian Natural Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965). They advocate process philosophy, following the lead of Alfred North Whitehead, as discussed in Truman G. Madsen, review of John B. Cobb, *A Christian Natural Philosophy*, in *BYU Studies* 6 (Spring 1965): 186–88.

⁴²*TPJS*, 351

⁴³*TPJS*, 158.

⁴⁴*TPJS*, 352.

⁴⁵*TPJS*, 351.

⁴⁶*CHC* 2:409; compare *TWL*, 86–88.

⁴⁷*TPJS*, 352.

⁴⁸Roberts traced this teaching to three main sources from Joseph Smith’s time: Doctrine and Covenants 93, the King Follett discourse, and the book of Abraham. He also adds a statement made by the Prophet in Washington: “I believe that the *soul* is eternal; and had no beginning; it can have no end.” *HC* 4:79; italics in original.

⁴⁹B. H. Roberts, *Discourses of B. H. Roberts*, comp. Elsie Cook (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1948), 96. Discourse on God, June 18, 1933.

⁵⁰The statement was signed by Brigham Young and the Quorum of the Twelve in 1865. James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 2:233. Also in *Millennial Star* 27 (October 21, 1865): 659.

⁵¹Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 3:356, 4:132, 6:146, and 8:205; George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses* 15:294; and Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses* 17:325.

⁵²Roberts underlined this sentence in his copy of Widtsoe’s *A Rational Theology*: “In each intelligent being has resided, from the beginning, an individual and distinct will, which, of itself, has been acting in some degree upon the external universe.” John A. Widtsoe, *A Rational Theology* (Salt Lake City: General Priesthood Committee, 1915), 32, LDS Church Archives.

⁵³Joseph Fielding Smith edited *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. He inserted several footnotes written by B. H. Roberts, including a comment on the following statement of Joseph Smith: “Intelligence is eternal and exists upon a self-existent principle. It is a spirit from age to age, and there is no creation about it.” Roberts wrote, “‘A spirit from age to age’—not ‘spirit from age to age’; but ‘a spirit,’ that is, an entity, a person, an individual. This paragraph in the Prophet’s remarks may well be taken as an interpretation of Doc. and Cov. Sec. 93:29.—Note by Elder B. H. Roberts.” *TPJS*, 354. Elder Smith affirmed these three stages of human existence in his recommendations to President J. Reuben Clark, who was planning to address a Relief Society conference. Elder Smith wrote:

My opinion is that the word “originally” or some such expression may help the youth to a better understanding as follows. First, a few words about our intelligences: originally uncreated and coexistent with the father, with our father. It is my understanding that first the intelligences—coexistent with God and uncreated. Then there were created the spirit bodies by their creator, for example, Jesus showed himself [as a spirit] to the brother of Jared. These spirits were organized and among them God came down and chose his rulers as he defined to Abraham. And then to these spirit bodies were given bodies of flesh just as Jesus took on a fleshly body. So as to each of us today there is *an* intelligence. (Joseph Fielding Smith letter to J. Reuben Clark, Jr., 1940, LDS Church Archives)

⁵⁴*CHC* 2:393.

⁵⁵He had, he said, embraced the Atonement as a principle of faith. But after reaching this framework of understanding,

my intellect also gives its full and complete assent to the soundness of the philosophy and the absolute necessity for the atonement of Jesus Christ. That this atonement, the method and manner of it is the only way by which there could be brought to pass an at-one-ment, a reuniting of soul of man with soul of God. I account it for myself a new conversion, an intellectual conversion, to the atonement of Jesus Christ; and I have been rejoicing in it of late, exceedingly. (*Conference Report*, April 1911, 59)

⁵⁶*TPJS*, 353, n. 8.

⁵⁷Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1949).

⁵⁸Various views are held by members of the Church on the question of when the spirit conjoins with the body, for example, at conception, at quickening, or at birth. See pages 246–47 above.

⁵⁹Comment in Roberts’s notebook on Frederick J. E. Woodbridge, “Naturalism and Humanism,” *Hibbert Journal* 6 (October 1907), LDS Church Archives.

⁶⁰*TPJS*, 354. See also Roberts’s notes on Woodbridge, “Naturalism and Humanism.”

⁶¹See Roberts’s note in his copy of the Pearl of Great Price, 175, LDS Church Archives. William R. Fix, *The Bone Peddlars: Selling Evolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1984), concludes that for every living thing in this world there is a corresponding spirit. Individual spirits are eventually embodied. Why embodied? Because obtaining a body is somehow necessary for their further development.

⁶²Royce, *Conception of God*, 232, Roberts’s copy.

⁶³*TPJS*, 181.

⁶⁴*HC* 5:339.

⁶⁵“Modern Revelation Challenges Wisdom of Ages,” 433–39. See William De Witt Hyde, *The Five Great Philosophies of Life* (New York: Macmillan, 1904). Roberts expounds on this and related themes in *CHC* 2:381–412 and in *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 3:80–86.

⁶⁶Roberts cites Rev. 4:11, “Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created,” as an incomplete answer to the why of creation.

⁶⁷Anthony Kenny, *The God of the Philosophers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 98, defines omnipotence as “the possession of all logically possible powers which it is logically possible for a being with the attributes of God to possess.” That is close to Roberts.

⁶⁸*CHC* 2:404.

⁶⁹On the impossibility of divine impassability, see Nelson Pike, *God and Timelessness* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970). On the meaning of “unchanging and everlasting” in biblical context, see Nicholas Wolterstorff, “God Everlasting,” in *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Steven M. Cahn and David Shatz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 88–95.



B. H. Roberts ca. 1927. After his release as mission president in 1927, Roberts devoted himself almost exclusively for six months in New York to working on *The Truth, The Way, The Life*. His conception of the work expanded, and he was still composing and revising this *Elementary Treatise on Theology* a year later. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

Theology

(Chs. 6–7, 13, 20, 23, 42)

David L. Paulsen

Roberts unfolds his understanding of God and of the Godhead within a metaphysical worldview grounded in the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith but supplemented and amplified by ideas drawn from the science of his day. While it is evident that Roberts had considerable respect for scientific theory, he explicitly acknowledges that he takes *only* the scriptures as “conclusive authorities” (69). Yet in his initial presentation of his metaphysical and theological theses, he relies heavily on both reason and scientific theory and deliberately makes very little appeal to uniquely LDS scriptures.¹ Why so? The answer is found, I believe, in his introduction to the treatise, where he queries: “Is there a truth, a way, a life that can be made to appeal to reason as well as to faith? Can it be made to satisfy the understanding as well as the longings of the human heart?” (16).² *TWL* is intended as a resounding affirmation to the questions posed. That is, he is writing to show that science, reason, and the Bible combine to corroborate the truth of the restored gospel. His project is that of St. Anselm: faith seeking understanding.

In this introductory essay, I first outline Roberts’s LDS worldview or metaphysics and then his understanding of God and the Godhead, showing the intimate links between his theology and his metaphysics. My purposes are primarily expository and explanatory; evaluation is an important task largely deferred.

Roberts’s LDS Worldview: The Doctrine of Eternalism

Roberts calls the worldview developed from his sources the doctrine of eternalism. It is the doctrine that whatever most fundamentally exists now—space, time, matter, energy, intelligences; in sum, the universe—has always existed. In Joseph Smith’s teachings, this doctrine is implicitly

embedded³ and, in part, even explicitly articulated, the clearest statement being found in Joseph's watershed address, the "King Follett Discourse."⁴ But consistent with Roberts's apparent apologetic aims, he cites no LDS sources. Instead, he supports the doctrine with both *a priori* reasoning and scientific theory. Rationally, he argues that the unboundedness of space and time and the uncreatability and indestructibility of mass-energy are necessary truths, in the sense that their negations are inconceivable (69–70). Scientifically, he finds the doctrine vindicated by the principle of the conservation of matter.⁵

Roberts argues for several principles which are closely related to the doctrine of eternalism. These include (1) creation as organization, (2) the reign of law, (3) agentive causality, (4) immanent as opposed to transcendent teleology, and (5) eternal cause as opposed to first cause. Let us briefly consider each as we attempt to elucidate Roberts's metaphysics. In doing so, understanding will be sharpened by contrasting Roberts's views with the mainline Christian tradition.

Creation as Organization. Christians have traditionally understood God to have created all things, including humans and the material universe, out of nothing.⁶ But it follows from the doctrine of eternalism that God did not (indeed, cannot) produce the universe out of nothing. It has always existed. If so, how then is God the Creator? Roberts no doubt finds his answer to this question in the King Follett discourse, where Joseph Smith explicitly repudiates the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* and affirms that God creates by organizing pre-existing materials into new patterns or structures.⁷ Joseph taught:

You ask the learned doctors why they say the world was made out of nothing; and they will answer, "Doesn't the Bible say He *created* the world?" And they infer, from the word create, that it must have been made out of nothing. Now, the word *create* came from the word *baurau* which does not mean to create out of nothing; it means to organize; the same as a man would organize materials and build a ship. Hence, we infer that God had materials to organize the world out of chaos—chaotic matter, which is element. . . . Element had an existence from the time he had. The pure principles of element are principles which can never be destroyed; they may be organized and re-organized, but not destroyed. They had no beginning, and can have no end.⁸

Roberts illustrates how such creative reorganization of existing materials may result in new substances with unique properties. Water, for example, is not produced out of nothing but from two molecules of hydrogen bonding with one molecule of oxygen. The emergent substance, water, has properties which are not possessed by either oxygen or hydrogen (60).

Reign of Law. Roberts concurs with several cited authorities that “the impressive thing about the universe is . . . the fact of order within it” (61). The order to which he refers is causal order (or regularity of temporal sequence). This regularity is the foundation of science and enables one to predict the future, interpret the past, and to understand the present. Roberts quotes John Fiske: “So beautiful is all this orderly coherence, so satisfying to some of our intellectual needs, that many minds are inclined to doubt if anything more can be said of the universe than that it is a Reign of Law, an endless aggregate of coexistences and sequences” (62).⁹

Agentive Causality. Is nature’s orderliness *all* that can be said of it? Is its lawlike structure inherent in the very nature of uncreate matter and hence an ultimate fact? Roberts answers these questions in the negative, pointing rather to agentive causality as at least co-ultimate. And here Roberts introduces a different kind of order into his picture of the world—teleological order, or the agentive adaptation of means to ends. His account of the agentive causality which gives teleological order is clear and illuminating:

In fact, man finds within himself the nearest approach to a *vera causa*—a true, or real cause. How does this power of causation proceed with and through him? He is *in* the world with all that environs him—a world of things and forces are about him. He conceives the notion of building a house. If he builds it he will be the efficient cause of its existence; but this power of causation of which he is self-conscious, as resident within himself, he finds to be subject to his will. He may or may not conclude to build the house—it will be just as he chooses. But he concludes to build it, to suit his convenience and to meet his felt needs. He did not have to create out of nothing the things of which he made the house, they already existed; all that he had to do was to effect certain changes in materials about him, assemble them in a certain order, and the house is completed. The builder caused its existence. In all this procedure, the mind of the man that was operating as a power of causation, was operating somewhat as a mind anywhere might act where like conditions obtained—as eternal mind might be found acting or causing. *The man was acting as the intelligent factor in causation.* (75; italics added)¹⁰

Granted that an agent may have such causal efficacy, is this causal efficacy merely exercised through a system of uncreate causal laws, or is the system of laws *itself* the product of ordering intelligence? On this issue, Roberts seems unsure or at least unclear. On the typescript of the final draft of the manuscript, he wrote: “For a reign of law observed in the universe suggests something more of which the reign of law is *but the effect*, namely, Mind, Intelligence” (62–63; italics added). Here, Roberts seems to imply that nature’s causal orderedness

is *solely* the effect of mind, and that agent causality or personal explanation is ultimate.

That this is Roberts's view, however, is made doubtful by his revision of the text just quoted. In his final reading of that draft of the manuscript, he amended the passage just cited to read: "For a reign of law . . . *suggests* something more of which the reign of law is but *a part and not the whole*; namely, Mind, Intelligence" (62–63; italics added). Notice here he does not *assert* that nature's orderedness is "but the effect" of intelligence. He describes it only as "a part and not the whole" of what is. Nonetheless, Roberts still asserts that the reign of law *suggests* mind. This leaves interestingly open the question of causal order's origin, if any,¹¹ and its relationship to mind. To what extent does God simply find causal-orderedness ready at hand and utilize it in achieving his ends and to what extent does he produce that very order? While Roberts does not definitively answer this question, his discussion of related issues suggests a possible answer: *some* (as opposed to all or none) of the world's actual causal-orderedness is due to divine design. This answer emerges in Roberts's discussions of (1) the mode of God's creative activity and (2) miracles. The former discussion suggests that mind may be *a* source of causal order, and the latter that mind is not the sole source.

Mode of Creation. Two points are relevant here. First, Roberts claimed that since space, time, matter, energy, and spirit are all eternal, "'creation' can only consist of certain events or changes in, and within, these eternal existences" (60).¹² Second, by giving the example of combining hydrogen and oxygen, Roberts illustrated how God might create water. While the properties of hydrogen and oxygen give rise to regularities of temporal sequence, so also do the novel properties of water. Roberts's example shows how God's creative activity *might* produce new regularities within a world already having some causal structure.¹³

Miracles. Further, Roberts's account of miracles (63–65) seemingly coheres best with the interpretation that not *all* causal order is mind produced. For had Roberts concluded that event causality is *totally* contingent on mind, then it would seemingly follow that mind could suspend the operation of event causality. Indeed, Christians traditionally understand a miracle to be such a divine suspension or violation of natural law. But Roberts rejects this conception of a miracle. He writes: "This resolving of miracles into events or effects contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a deviation from the known laws of nature, is a wrong viewpoint. What is especially faulty in this definition of miracles is that they are held to be outside of or

contrary to the laws of nature” (64). Rather, miracles, Roberts argues, are interpositions in the normal course of events by agents employing laws not yet understood by those to whom the interposition appears miraculous. His example is helpful. An old mariner who knew only wind and ocean currents as motive powers for a ship might find a modern steamship speeding forward in the face of both wind and ocean current miraculous, even though the phenomenon is perfectly explicable by other observers in terms of known natural laws (64).¹⁴ The view that mind—even a divine mind—is incapable of suspending operation of natural laws suggests that at least some causal order may exist independently of mind and thus be coeternal with it as an ultimate explanatory principle. Roberts’s total analysis points to this conclusion.

Immanent vs. Transcendent Teleology. Whatever the ultimate status of causal-orderedness, Roberts sees it as “the means through which Intelligence is working to the achievement of some high purpose” (63). Mind is the source of teleological order. Since within our own experience we find intelligence or mind increasingly dominating matter, adapting or conforming it to our ends, we might reasonably suppose that the same telos-ordering process is going on within the larger cosmos (75). But here again, the doctrine of eternalism suggests a departure from classical teleology. For the traditional theist, the universe as a totality has been brought into being by a purposing intelligent Creator who transcends or exists outside it. But the God revealed in the Restoration exists within, not outside, the universe. He is at work within an environment that is given even to him, ever shaping or fitting it more perfectly to his ends. Here, then, is an insight that will illuminate the problem of evil: God is not responsible for creating evil; rather, evil arises from the inherent nature of men and from their volitions.¹⁵ Roberts uses a similar mode of analogical reasoning to suggest a cooperative teleology in which a plurality of minds united in a common end might operate as intelligent cause of the creative changes occurring within the universe (76).

Eternal Cause vs. First Cause. Did God’s creative activity have a beginning or has he been eternally engaged in ordering self-existent chaos? Christians, generally, believe that God as the only self-existent being produced the world at some moment in time or timelessly produced both world and time. In either case, both the world and time have a beginning, and God is their uncaused “first cause.”¹⁶ Roberts finds rational difficulties in this idea. The mind, he argues, cannot come to rest in the conception of an endless chain of cause-effects or in a first cause that somehow initiates the whole process. Nor

can the mind rest in the idea of a time when there was no cause as seemingly implied by the idea of a first cause.

In accord with his doctrine of eternalism, Roberts affirms that there is not only no beginning to the universe, but similarly no beginning to God's creative activity:

All this, with eternal mind as eternal power of causation in all its phases present—change and development, what we call creation and progress, may go on as it has eternally been going on without beginning and without end. (76)

Roberts sees the idea of eternally operating causes constantly present and acting within an eternal universe to be “more rational than the conception of a ‘first cause,’ followed by secondary causes. . . . And ‘causation’ when regarded as eternal” and intelligent, supports “the conception of the dominance of mind over matter as completely as when the universe and its phenomena are accounted for by the conception” of God as first cause (71).

God and the Godhead¹⁷

Armed with this understanding of Roberts's metaphysics, we shall now address more particularly his understanding of God and the Godhead, attempting to see the linkage between his metaphysics and his theology. Among the uncreated agents or intelligences there are three who are supreme and together constitute the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Again, Roberts's theology will be compared and contrasted with that of mainline Christian orthodoxy.

The Godhead. Roberts sees the resurrected Christ—a spirit and a body in human form, indissolubly united—as model and prototype for his understanding of God and the Godhead (188), and seemingly with scriptural warrant. For when Philip asked the yet-to-be-resurrected Jesus to show him the Father, Jesus answered: “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). Further to the same point, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews describes the *resurrected* Christ as being in “the brightness of [God's] glory, and the express image of his person” (Heb. 1:2–3). Since in Christ dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9; see also 1:15–19), Christ provides the fullest revelation of what the Father is like.

Again, consistent with his purpose, Roberts draws only, and persuasively, on New Testament scripture to support his understanding of the Godhead. His views are clearly set out and represent what seems to be the standard LDS conception of the Godhead.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three separate persons or individuals—three distinct centers of consciousness. And each is divine or God.¹⁸ Together they constitute the supreme governing and creating power on our earth and in its heavens.¹⁹ The Son was with the Father prior to the creation of the world, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father.²⁰ So far, Roberts's account of the Trinity mirrors closely that of orthodox Christian theology. But still relying on New Testament scripture exclusively, he persuasively justifies two LDS departures from Christian orthodoxy: the nature of the Godhead's oneness and God's humanlike embodiment (188–90).

Traditional Christians hold that the three persons constitute one God in that they together constitute one metaphysical substance or entity. Roberts's conception of their tri-*unity* is seemingly much less problematic. He suggests that the three members of the Godhead constitute one social unit—they are perfectly united in purpose and will.²¹

In defending the doctrine of divine embodiment,²² Roberts affirms that the Son is in the express image of his Father's person. Thus, whoever sees him has seen the Father, not because he and the Father are the same individual, but because Christ is a perfect revelation of the Father. Indeed, it is part of Christ's *mission* to so reveal the Father. He is a revelation of the *kind* of being God is. The New Testament represents God as anthropomorphic—like man in bodily form; that is, it reaffirms the doctrine found in Genesis, namely, that man is created in the image of God and after his likeness.²³ Not only does God have a humanlike body, he also possesses what are called human-mind-like qualities and feelings—powers of knowing, willing, feeling, loving, and so forth.²⁴ Unlike our human bodies and powers, however, God's body and powers are perfect. Roberts suggests that just as God in the resurrection will fashion our "vile bodies" (191) to be like his glorious body, so he will fashion or transform our imperfect minds to be like his.

After attempting to demonstrate on the basis of New Testament confessional and other passages the pristine Christian (and LDS) understanding of God and the Godhead, Roberts traces its development via the Apostles' Creed, the Apostolic Fathers. Finally, he traces its radical transformation in the Nicene, Athanasian, Chalcedonian, and subsequent creeds, identifying Neoplatonism, Oriental mysticism, and political expediencies as among the interplaying forces that led to the "paganization" of the New Testament vision of God.

In particular, he points out that during the first few centuries of the Christian era Christians were detested and Christianity proscribed. Survival needs alone pressed Christians to assimilate and accommodate the dominant cultural ideas. Whenever it could be shown that under

the new symbols the Church was really teaching the same doctrines that the older philosophies did, such a demonstration was regarded as a distinct gain to Christianity. “In a short time, we have the alleged followers of Christ involved in all the metaphysical disputations of the age” (195).²⁵

The Attributes of God. Roberts divides the attributes into two groups: what I shall call “the moral perfections” and “the power predicates.” Among the former, he includes holiness, truth, justice, mercy, and love; and among the latter, eternity, immutability, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. His explication of the moral perfections seems straightforward, clear, and uncontroversial, squaring with both LDS and standard Christian understanding. But his explication of the power predicates departs rather radically from Christian orthodoxy and, at points, differs from views endorsed by other LDS thinkers. It is important to note here that Roberts sees the power predicates as being *intrinsically* limited. This implies that the limitations which Roberts describes in his discussion of deity inheres in the nature of the attributes *themselves* and not in God’s attainment of them. With this understanding, let’s examine his discussion of the power predicates with some care.

Eternity. In a tradition that stretches within Christendom back to Augustine and Boethius in the fifth century and within Western culture farther back to such non-Christian thinkers as Plotinus (second century Neoplatonist), Philo (Jewish Platonist contemporary with Jesus) and Parmenides (fifth century B.C. pre-Socratic), God’s eternity has been understood to mean his total transcendence of time. That is, to say that God is eternal is to say that he is timeless, that he exists outside of time altogether. For example, when Augustine was once asked, “What was God doing before he created the world?” he quipped, “Creating a hell for cavaliers who ask such foolish questions!” He hastened to explain that there was no time before God created the world since time itself was a dimension of the created order. God exists timelessly. Similarly, Boethius defined divine eternity as “the simultaneous possession of interminable life.” God’s life does not proceed or unfold sequentially, as our lives apparently do, but encompasses the interminable whole all at once. Thus, for God there is no past, present, and future. He has no history. He has neither temporal location nor temporal duration.²⁶

Advancing a corollary of the doctrine of eternalism which affirms that time is an uncreate constituent of uncreate reality, Roberts rejects the mainline doctrine of divine eternity, holding that God is temporally (not timelessly) eternal. As temporally eternal, God is everlasting; he is without beginning or end and exists in never-ending time.²⁷ This view impacts profoundly on Roberts’s understanding of the other power predicates.

Immutability. The orthodox Christian doctrine that God is immutable or unchangeable is based upon both logical argument and biblical interpretation. Logically, change requires at least two locations in time, for that which changes must come to differ in some respect from what it was at some earlier time. Given that God has *no* location in time, it would be logically impossible for him to change. Similarly, Christian theologians, in an argument borrowed from Plato, have deduced God's unchangeability from his perfection. If a being were to change it would change either for the better or for the worse. God is perfect or complete. A being which is perfect cannot change for the better (if it could, it would not be perfect), neither could it change for the worse (if it could, it would not be perfect). Thus, a perfect being could not change at all.

Roberts rejects the major premises on which the above arguments are based: the assumptions that God is timeless and that perfection is static completeness. But what, then, of the scriptural declarations that God is unchanging? To say that God is unchanging leaves open the question of whether he is unchanging in all respects or some respects. Roberts chooses the latter option.²⁸ He proposes that scriptural affirmations of God's immutability should be understood as "stability, adherence to principle . . . fixed devotion to law . . . working through law to achievement of his divine purposes" (416). But this kind of immutability is perfectly consistent, Roberts claims, with process and progress in the divine life. God can and does increase endlessly in glory and kingdoms. Absolute immutability "would reduce God to a condition eternally static . . . [and] bar [him] from participation in that enlargement of kingdoms and increasing glory that comes from redemption and the progress of man" (417). Roberts suggests that God may be eternally self-surpassing in other respects as well. He writes, "And is it too bold a thought, that with this progress, even for the mightiest, new thoughts, and new vistas may appear, inviting to new adventures and enterprises that will yield new experiences, advancement and enlargement, even for the Most High[?]" (417).²⁹

Omnipotence. In a tradition that goes back at least to Thomas Aquinas, Christian theologians have typically defined omnipotence as the power to do anything that is possible absolutely, where "possible absolutely" means logically possible. This formulation of divine omnipotence coheres with the premise that God is the absolute creator of whatever exists, for, in this case, there is nothing that exists externally to or independently of God that could serve as limit, constraint, or condition to his will. Roberts sees that the doctrine of eternalism has implications for our understanding of divine omnipotence. For from

Joseph's teaching that there are realities coeternal with God, it follows that there are ontological,³⁰ as opposed to merely logical,³¹ conditions on what God can do. Roberts reasons: "Not even God may have two mountain ranges without a valley between. Not even God may place himself beyond the boundary of space: nor on the outside of duration. Nor . . . create space or annihilate matter" (418). Since "eternal existences" limit or condition even God, how, then, should God's omnipotence be defined? Roberts proposes that divine omnipotence be understood as the power to do anything in harmony with the natures of eternal existences (418).³²

Omniscience. Similarly, given Joseph Smith's metaphysics, Roberts suggests that Latter-day Saints ought to qualify the traditional understanding of God's omniscience. Historically, Christians have understood that God has absolute knowledge—not only of the past and the present but of the future, including the future free choices and decisions of personal agents. Without indicating whether or why he finds this idea problematic, Roberts proposes an alternative rendering of the meaning of divine omniscience. To say that God is omniscient is to affirm that he is all-knowing in the sense that he knows everything that is known. But since that which is known is neither static nor complete, God's knowledge is neither static nor complete. As the universe developmentally unfolds, so does God's awareness of it.³³

Conclusion

This brief essay hardly does justice to Roberts's fundamental metaphysical and theological presuppositions. For example, it has given scant attention to his interesting conjectures about a plurality of gods and worlds (see chapter 23 and my footnote 19). On this and other omitted items, his text for now must speak for itself. This essay may suffice, however, to show how radically Roberts's worldview and his corresponding understanding of God differ from those of more classical Christian thinkers. Perhaps as clearly as any other Latter-day Saint, Roberts grasped the Prophet Joseph's doctrine of eternalism; and, perhaps more rigorously than any other, he drew out its implications and wove them into a comprehensive worldview within which God and his plan of salvation might be understood. Whatever the final assessment of this worldview's truth may be, it will no doubt remain a noteworthy model of faith seeking understanding.

NOTES

¹In this regard, Roberts stated, “It is my general policy in the thought-development of my theme to hold in reserve the introduction of the teachings of Joseph Smith with reference to the subject matter of these introductory chapters” (66).

²Elsewhere in his treatise, Roberts quotes liberally from latter-day scriptures, thus presupposing an LDS audience. How is this inconsistency to be explained? Roberts’s masterwork, I submit, is an amalgam of different pieces written for different purposes and different audiences. When these different materials were brought together in a comprehensive treatise, they were not finally integrated into a fully unified work—hence the variableness in Roberts’s choice of sources.

³For example, Joseph’s teaching that the members of the Godhead are both self-existent and materially embodied beings seemingly entails that space, time, and matter are self-existent.

⁴This was the sermon given by Joseph at the funeral of King Follett, a Church member who lost his life working on the Nauvoo Temple. The funeral was held in conjunction with the April 1844 conference of the Church. The text of the sermon was first published on August 15, 1844, in *Times and Seasons*, reprinted with notes in Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1965), 342–62; and in Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, comps. and eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1980), 340–62.

⁵Roberts’s doctrine of eternalism—especially his view that space, time, and matter are beginningless—no longer enjoys the scientific support it had at the beginning of the century. Big bang cosmology, presently the most respected scientific theory of the origin of the universe, posits a beginning for space and time and possibly for matter. For a discussion of the implications of big bang cosmology for Robert’s theology, see pages 636–41 below.

⁶Incidentally, the doctrine is nowhere taught in the Bible, but apparently was invented by Christians in the second century A.D., in their controversies with the Gnostics. See, for example, Richard Sorabji, *Time, Creation, and the Continuum* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 194. The same conclusion was reached by David Winston, “The Book of Wisdom’s Theory of Cosmogony,” in *History of Religions* 11 (November 1971): 185–202. The notion was first introduced by the Christian Neoplatonist Tatian in *Ad Grecos*, 5, and by Theophilus of Antioch in *Ad Autolyicum* 2, 4, and 10, circa A.D. 185.

⁷See my footnote 4. Roberts’s ideas about creation are fairly common among LDS authorities. See Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 158, 350; John A. Widtsoe, comp., *Discourses of Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 18, 48–50, 258–59; Orson Pratt in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855), 19:286; John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1943), 112; John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960), 150; and Hugh B. Brown, *Conference Report*, April 1964, 82, and October 1966, 101.

⁸Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 350–52.

⁹On this point, Roberts departs from his policy of not citing LDS sources and in support of “the reign of law” quotes D&C 88:37–44.

¹⁰Analogously, Roberts explains, a group or community of minds may cooperatively work together as a unit in constructing a city. The group of people supposedly cause their city, just as the one man caused his house to come into existence.

¹¹The question as to whether causal order was originated should not be confused with the questions of whether God is the cause of all things and whether there is a beginning to God's creative activity.

¹²On the eternal existence of matter and mind, see D&C 93:29; Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 158; Widtsoe, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 48–50, 258–59; Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 150; and Orson Pratt in *Journal of Discourses* 19:286.

¹³Roberts in chapter 6 seems to be making three claims about the nature of the universe. They are:

1. There is no limit to space;
2. Matter, energy, and mind or spirit have always existed and will always exist; and
3. Creation is merely the combination or recombination of these eternally existing things.

Claims two and three basically accord with what scientists believe today, with two added provisions. The first is that the distinction between matter and energy is not so clear. Matter can be made into energy and, in theory, energy can be transformed into matter. The second is that contemporary scientists tend to doubt that there is a distinction between mind and matter. Yet none would deny that matter-energy has always existed and will continue to do so forever. So claim two is not totally out of harmony with science. However, claim one is more problematic. In the current standard model of the universe, the cosmos was once a tiny point—obviously this constitutes at least one point where the universe was limited in some sense. However, according to what many scientists believe about the universe now, it would seem that the universe will continue expanding forever. Hence, in some sense, claim one also agrees with the current cosmological model.

¹⁴Roberts's understanding of miracles is common among Church authorities. See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954–56), 2:314; James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 200 (in other editions, see "Miracles," chapter 12); Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 129–30. Either explicitly or implicitly, each of these authors supports Roberts's belief that the universe is governed by laws. With the belief in the reign of law, they all come to the reasonable conclusion that miracles are not violations of law, but operations we do not understand. For example, on page 200, Talmage writes: "Miracles are commonly regarded as occurrences in opposition to the laws of nature. Such a conception is plainly erroneous, for the laws of nature are inviolable. However, as human understanding of these laws is at best but imperfect, events strictly in accordance with natural law may appear contrary thereto."

¹⁵See pages 609–13 above.

¹⁶Although versions of the first-cause argument can be found in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, the classic Christian formulation of the argument is found in the famous five ways of Thomas Aquinas (1225–74). See his *Summa Theologiae*.

¹⁷Roberts's other sustained works on the LDS understanding of God include *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity: The Roberts–Van Der Donckt Discussion* and *The Seventy's Course in Theology*, vol. 3. Almost all of his material on God and the Godhead is taken from these two earlier works.

¹⁸For references to the Holy Ghost as God or deity, see Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 370; G. Homer Durham, ed., *Discourses of Wilford Woodruff* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), 5; and Edward L. Kimball, ed., *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 4.

¹⁹In chapter 23, from his analysis of what he calls the Mosaic and Abrahamic fragments (published now in the Pearl of Great Price), Roberts concludes that these revelations, and all revelations given to seers on our world, are local only—that is, they pertain only to our earth and (without attempting to specify how far they might extend) its heavens. Our Godhead, then, constitutes the supreme governing council for our world or world system. Roberts conjectures that other worlds or world systems may each have a presiding council or presidency comparable to our Godhead, and that progressively vaster systems of worlds may also be governed by “a number of divine, and of course, harmonized Intelligences” (224). Proceeding forth from these divine intelligences to fill the immensity of space is an intelligence-inspiring and world-sustaining power which Roberts calls “the Spirit of God,” and on our earth, “The Light of Christ.” In this way, Roberts suggests, God is immanent in the world and omnipresent in both power and knowledge. With this brief speculative excursion into worlds beyond our own, Roberts focuses again on our Godhead—the only gods with whom we have to deal.

²⁰As to what “proceeds from the Father” may mean, Roberts is content to merely repeat the New Testament language without any attempt to explicate its meaning.

²¹This view, now called social trinitarianism, is winning increasing acceptance among Christian theologians. See, for example, Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., “Social Trinity and Tritheism,” and David Brown, “Trinitarian Personhood and Individuality,” both in Ronald J. Feenstra and Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., eds., *Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989).

²²For recent defenses of the doctrine of divine embodiment, see David L. Paulsen, “Early Christian Belief in a Corporeal Deity: Origen and Augustine as Reluctant Witnesses,” *Harvard Theological Review* 83 (April 1990): 105–16; David L. Paulsen, “Reply to Kim Paffenroth’s Comment,” *Harvard Theological Review* 86, no. 2 (1993): 235–39; and David L. Paulsen, “Must God Be Incorporeal?” *Faith and Philosophy* 6 (January 1989): 76–87.

²³Given that humans are created in God’s image (and not the other way around), some LDS thinkers have suggested that it would be more accurate to say that humans are theomorphic—Godlike in form.

²⁴Again, perhaps it would be better to say that humans have Godlike powers of knowing, willing, feeling, judging, loving, and so on.

²⁵It is doubtful that the doctrine of anthropomorphism fell out of favor so quickly after the death of the apostles. As late as the end of the fourth century, enough monks in Egypt still believed in a corporeal god that when Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, endorsed the concept of an incorporeal God there was such a stir that Theophilus recanted. See references in note 22 above.

²⁶For a careful analysis of how mainline Christians have understood the doctrine of divine eternity, see Nelson Pike, *God and Timelessness* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970).

²⁷A number of important twentieth-century thinkers prefer Roberts’s understanding of divine eternity as everlastingness. See, for example, Nicholas Wolterstorff’s “God Everlasting” in Steven M. Cahn and David Shatz, eds., *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 77–98, and the

tradition known as process theology, which was based upon the thought of Alfred Lord Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. The traditional view, of course, also has its contemporary defenders, recently the most notable being Norman Kretzman and Eleonore Stump.

²⁸Roberts's claim that God is not immutable was nothing new. Many Latter-day Saints both explicitly and implicitly advanced this same doctrine. For explicit references to God's change or progress, see the following: Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 390 (in other editions, see "The Comprehensiveness of Our Faith," chapter 24), 474 (in other editions, see appendix 24, note 4); John A. Widstoe, *A Rational Theology* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1915), 24-26; Wilford Woodruff in *Journal of Discourses* 6:120; and Widstoe, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 20, 22. Among those whose writing implies that God is changing are Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 1:349; and John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses* 1:159, 8:5.

²⁹On this point, Roberts refers to a similar suggestion made by Sir Oliver Lodge.

³⁰That is, based on the nature of what is.

³¹Based on the semantics and syntax of our language.

³²Roberts's belief about God's power being subject to eternal existences is similar to sentiments expressed by others. See Lorenzo Snow, *Conference Report*, April 1901, 2 (speaking of exalted beings in general); Widstoe, *A Rational Theology*, 24 (mentioning the attainment of godhood by obedience to laws); and Wilford Woodruff in *Journal of Discourses* 6:120 (stating that "God himself is increasing and progressing in knowledge, power, and dominion"). Orson Pratt authored at least two essays which advanced the contrary thesis that there was a terminus of progress. Both the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve wrote messages which denounced these essays because of their content. James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 2:214-23, 229-40.

The belief that there are any limitations to the attributes of God is seldom expressed by more recent Church authorities. Indeed, some have considered the supposition of a god who progresses in power or knowledge to be a heresy. Bruce R. McConkie, "The Seven Deadly Heresies," *1980 Devotional Speeches of the Year* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1981), 74-85 (teaching that God progresses by multiplying kingdoms); Bruce R. McConkie, *Conference Reports*, October 1980, 75; and Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 1:7-9 (declaring that God does not progress in knowledge but in bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of his children).

³³The committee of the Quorum of the Twelve that reviewed Roberts's manuscript lodged a protest against his conjecture that God may increase endlessly in knowledge (418). They wrote:

Progression of God in knowledge. This thought is not accepted by members of the committee. We do not feel that it is wise to express a thought limiting God in this manner, which will cause needless controversy. While we believe in eternal progression and that God is progressing, it is not in quest of hidden truth or laws yet undiscovered to Deity. We prefer to believe with Nephi: "O how great the holiness of our God! For he knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it." (2 Ne. 9:20).

Science: The Universe, Creation, and Evolution

(Chs. 3–5, 9–10, 12, 21, 23–25, 29–32)

William E. Evenson

In *The Truth, The Way, The Life*, Roberts grounds his theological and religious views upon a carefully laid metaphysical framework. He develops natural philosophy, using the scientific knowledge and philosophical understanding available to all plus the additional advantage provided by religion and modern revelation. He describes a physical universe in which God and the gods are able to do their work, in which the earth was created, and in which life came to the earth. He then interprets the scriptures and teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, setting forth a remarkably comprehensive and systematic picture of relations between human and divine beings, of God's creations, the place of human beings therein, and the way to joy and happiness provided by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Science and Religion

Roberts shows in this work that he takes science very seriously, demonstrating a view of truth that allows for multiple sources while expecting logical consistency among truths that come from different sources. He uses science to clarify religious ideas, and he requires religious and theological statements to be consistent with scientific knowledge.

Nevertheless, he gives precedence to insights from revelation over those from science or philosophy,¹ and he is selective in his use of statements by scientists. For example, Roberts is critical of Herbert Spencer's definition of truth in chapter 1, but he relies heavily upon Spencer's "truths" throughout the rest of the work. Roberts's relative priority for

science as compared with revelation is illustrated by a comment in chapter 10 on the purpose of the earth:

Here I cannot refrain from adding the voice of revelation, the “more sure word of prophecy” (2 Pet. 1:19) to these tentative admissions of scientists, their more or less weak “probabilities,” “possibilities,” and their tentative “perhapses” in relation to the habitancy of other worlds and world systems than our own. The Prophet of the New Dispensation brought forth and developed more or less this “sure word of prophecy” upon the subject in the Mosaic fragment—book of Moses, chapter 1. (99)

Perhaps most important for understanding Roberts’s attitude toward science is his clear and deep commitment to the insights of modern revelation through the Prophet Joseph Smith. He emphasizes repeatedly that Joseph Smith correctly understood fundamental issues, whereas no one from the world of science or philosophy has done so. For example, in chapter 1 he writes:

Again, in 1833, but unknown to Mr. John W. Draper, who in 1875 declared that no satisfactory definition of truth had yet been written; and before either Mr. Spencer or Mr. Fiske had written their definitions of truth, there had another voice spoken upon this subject which claimed for itself a divine authority to speak upon this and kindred questions, and this is what it said of truth: “Truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24). If this is spoken with a divine sanction, under inspiration of God, then it ought to be the completest definition of truth extant among men. I hold it to be so. It deals with truth under several aspects: relative truth; absolute truth; and truth in the “becoming” or unfolding; and truth in the sum. (22)

Joseph Smith’s revelations take priority in other areas, including the indestructibility of matter. After citing modern revelation, Roberts says:

This somewhat antedates Dr. Millikan’s remark (1928) that Lord Kelvin (an astronomer of the 19th century . . .) would be shocked “if he should hear the modern astronomers talking about the stars radiating away their mass through the mere act of giving off light and heat! And yet this is now orthodox astronomy.” (47)

Examples of respect for the revelations of Joseph Smith may be found throughout the work, on the reign of law (ch. 6), the relationship of mind and matter, the existence of “that which acts and that which is acted upon” (ch. 7), the purpose of the earth (ch. 10), the creation (ch. 22), and the eternal existence of humans and the nature of intelligences (ch. 26). In chapter 22, Roberts emphasizes the divine source of

Joseph Smith's understanding. There Roberts contrasts the Prophet's insights on the Creation with those of learned scientists:

Let it be remembered that these wonderful statements were made by a confessedly unlearned youth, unschooled in the sciences, even of his time, unlearned in the lore of astronomy, and the speculations as to origins; and it is not until recent development that modern science and modern instruments of science have brought to light such fullness of knowledge concerning the universe and the extent of it as is here proclaimed by the Prophet of the new age of revelation in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. That is to say, a knowledge of the immensity of the universe, and the notion of worlds passing away and others created to take their place, or the recreation of those which had passed away coupled with the notion, already referred to, that all this obtains under a reign of law in the universe, holding that the destructive forces—so called—as well as the creative forces in the universe are under the dominion of law, which will conserve and perpetuate through eternity the orderly cosmos. (218)

Taking science seriously but giving definite priority to insights from revelation leads Roberts to view the world on three separate lines of evidence: revelation, tradition, and the works of nature (ch. 12). Roberts simply assumes that these three lines of inquiry are mutually consistent, and he apparently sees no need to probe the knotty problems arising from the differing standards of evidence and methods of interpretation that are inherent in the three approaches.

Readers should be alert to Roberts's approach to ideas. It is rational in the sense that it takes thought and ideas very seriously, but it is not strictly rationalist because Roberts believes deeply in divine revelation and in human abilities to interpret that revelation both with the mind and with the help of personal inspiration. In fact, Roberts's approach in this work is very similar to what some non-LDS thinkers attempted in the nineteenth century, namely the development of a "natural theology." One of his sources, William Paley's *Natural Theology* (1802, American edition 1854), may have served as a model for parts of *TWL*. Roberts is doing natural theology for an LDS audience, perhaps with the hope that he can also show non-LDS thinkers that the LDS framework allows one to carry off this program more satisfactorily than others have been able to do.

Both strengths and weaknesses can be found in any program that, like Roberts's, seeks to interpret scriptures and religious teachings in terms of current science and to comprehend science in terms of current religious understanding. This effort to integrate has great value because of its potential to yield lasting insights, to provide experience in pursuing deep understanding of large and fundamental issues, and

to focus attention on matters of cosmic and eternal significance. Nevertheless, *TWL* provides another reminder that one can only be very tentative in drawing inferences from such efforts and that one must clearly distinguish conclusions dependent on specific scientific theories or theological assumptions and those consistent with generally established facts. Roberts is not generally as cautious as is warranted, but rather is given to sweeping generalizations and strong assertions.²

Roberts viewed science as inevitably supporting and validating faith, but today's science, still tentative with respect to many fundamental questions, is essentially neutral as to matters of faith. Those who use scientific evidence to support either faith or a speculative philosophy that seeks to justify faith (as Roberts does in much of *TWL*) may find the same scientific evidence used by others to challenge faith. Science has a large impact on both our conditions of life and our world view, and it must be taken seriously. Nonetheless, its relationship to faith depends on establishing faith on an independent foundation.

With faith, one sees everywhere evidence of God's hand in creation, as Alma declared to Korihor: "All things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator" (Alma 30:44). Without faith, on the other hand, one may see the natural beauty of the world, one may wonder about the purpose of it and whether there is a creator, but one cannot see any sure evidence for God—even in the majesty of his creations—without faith to guide the vision. Roberts's use of science suggests that he realized that people of faith need science to guide their interpretations of the revelations in order to clothe those pronouncements with concreteness. Only by integrating human knowledge with revelation to the best extent possible can people avoid building vain theories that do not relate to reality.

The Physical Universe

In chapters 3, 4, and 5, Roberts discusses both the physical universe in which God acts and the scientific knowledge of that universe. Readers will find these chapters dated, both as to data and concepts. Roberts includes specific data about the properties of the solar system and the star systems, but any current textbook of astronomy, such as those cited in the footnotes, will provide contemporary information. Roberts also uses scientific concepts to interpret the data and relevant scriptures and prophetic teachings. In light of the changes in scientific knowledge that have occurred since he wrote, it is ironic that Roberts

closes chapter 5 with the statement that this scientific information is “of unquestioned authority” (58).

Nevertheless, as Roberts sets forth his view of the physical universe, beginning with the notions of time, space, matter, and force (ch. 3), and then moving to the solar system (ch. 4) and the star (or sidereal) system (ch. 5), his central purpose is only to demonstrate the greatness of God’s creations. Changes in the scientific understanding of the properties of the planets, for example, detract not at all from this central point. A discussion of the planets and stars based on more current information³ would carry and perhaps extend the same affirmation of the beauty and grandeur of creation for anyone coming from the attitude of faith that Elder Roberts exhibited. And undoubtedly, any current exposition of astronomy and cosmology will itself seem dated in twenty years: scientists are constantly learning more about the specific properties of God’s creations, confident that current facts are good approximations but that interpretations may change in light of additional knowledge in the future.

Roberts puts forward “time, space, matter, and force” as “building stones of knowledge” (ch. 3). Why these? There are several problems here. First, since the formulation of Einstein’s theories of relativity and their validation in observations, scientists can no longer speak of time and space separately and independently, and even matter is inextricably linked with the properties of space-time. This realization means that the measurement of time and space and the properties of matter are always connected to each other, and each influences the other. How one perceives space-time depends on the motion of the observer; matter distorts space-time, and force (which Roberts confuses with energy) is not a clear and useful concept in the microscopic world of quantum mechanics. Are Roberts’s notions, then, the appropriate “building stones of knowledge”? Einstein argued that the solution to the confusion over the interpretation of quantum mechanics was to be found by developing new concepts for microscopic systems to replace the ideas of position and momentum. While he acknowledged that he could not see how to proceed with this effort, one is left to wonder if more appropriate “building stones of knowledge” are as yet undiscovered.⁴

Roberts writes of “time” as if it flows eternally and uniformly from infinity to infinity (ch. 3). He seeks to deduce the properties of “time” and thereby arrive at “necessary truths”—that is, to show that time could not be other than he has described. Specifically, he says that “it is impossible to postulate to consciousness the contrary, viz. that duration, future, or past has limitations. This brings us to what in philosophy is

held to be ‘a necessary truth’” (39). Similarly, Roberts writes of space as necessarily infinite in extent.

General relativity theory, however, contemplates a curved space-time, perhaps curved upon itself in such a way that there is no boundary. So space-time could be of finite extent, like the surface of a sphere: having finite area, but no boundaries. Then time and space would not be limitless. Moreover, current big bang cosmology postulates a beginning event of space-time for our universe. But other universes, not accessible to us, may be possible. Regardless, strong observational evidence supports some form of big bang cosmology.

How can one, then, think of time as an eternal on-rolling, such as Roberts describes, even in a single reference frame or for a single observer, if there may have been a beginning and possibly will be an end to time? Roberts conceives space and time in terms of a standard plane Euclidean geometry, and he makes the mistake, more than a decade after the discovery of the theory of general relativity, of assuming that this is the only conceivable space-time geometry. But more general geometries, including those now used to describe curved space-times, have been studied by mathematicians since the late nineteenth century, and these mathematical constructs have been applied by physicists to understand the space-time of the universe since 1916. In addition, it is possible that the known world of space and time has more dimensions than four. People are used to thinking of three-dimensional space plus one more dimension for time, but modern physics at least holds open the possibility, even likelihood, of a higher dimensional space-time. Roberts seems to assume that three-dimensional space is necessary and that anything else is inconceivable.⁵

Present concepts of space-time and big bang cosmology may be replaced in the future by very different views. These present concepts, however, remind us that Roberts takes a far too restricted view when reasoning toward “necessary truths.” We should be careful, as we now wish Roberts had been, when we reason about the nature of the ultimate reality of the physical universe.

Roberts’s ideas run into additional problems with relativity theories in connection with the concepts of “matter” and “energy.” He confuses force and energy, which are distinct physical concepts measured in different units. Energy is the more fundamental of the two concepts by current scientific understanding. Moreover, the transformability of matter and energy into one another has been well established since Einstein proposed his famous equation, $E = mc^2$, in 1905. Matter and energy are just two forms of the same thing. Roberts knows of this result of relativity, but he dismisses it as unimportant, missing the

point when he says, “Let it be noted that the definite amount of matter has not been annihilated, but merely changed to something else, namely into ‘energy’” (46). While he is right to say that “matter has not been dissolved into ‘nothing,’” he is not correct to say that “the old truth on the conservation of matter and force has not in reality been changed” (46).

In fact, it is not appropriate to speak of matter and energy as separate basic building blocks of the universe; therefore, Roberts’s reasoning toward necessary truths about these building blocks is invalid. He relies on Professor Duncan’s 1905-vintage distinction between matter and non-matter (42), a distinction which founders when one learns that “light, heat, electricity and magnetism”—“forms of non-matter” (42)—also possess mass. And his use of “Haeckel’s Law of Substance” as an important scientific generalization will be unfamiliar to modern students of science (44). This obsolete “law” is inconsistent with the principles of relativity and quantum mechanics, being subject to the difficulties discussed above regarding a limited conception of space-time.

While specific scientific anachronisms or errors are not particularly troubling and, indeed, may not significantly decrease the force of the central point that Roberts seeks to establish by their use, problems of greater concern arise in using science to support some of his broad philosophical positions. His discussion of a monistic versus a pluralistic universe in chapter 9 is a case in point. This is a philosophical issue that goes back to the ancient Greeks. The question is whether all phenomena can be referred “to a single, ultimate, constituent or agent” (85) expressed in a nearly infinite variety of forms and combinations (monism), or whether more than one ultimate constituent or agent is necessary (dualism or pluralism). One wonders why Roberts gives so much attention to this issue in *TWL*. His concern may be related to the nineteenth-century debate over mechanism versus vitalism: are living things simply physical entities or is there a nonphysical spirit that animates life? Since Roberts focuses directly in chapter 9 on the question of the spirit in humans and the source of intelligence, this issue seems to be his central concern. Furthermore, he characterizes dualism in terms of two fundamental elements: spirit and matter. He says, “The phase of this matter, however, which concerns us chiefly is with reference to mind and intelligence outside of our own world” (87). He then goes on to discuss the nature of God, the gods, and the necessary union of spirit and matter, thus combating sectarian notions of monism which arise from the oneness of God and the unity of nature.

In addressing the issue of monism versus pluralism, Roberts seems to adopt a predetermined philosophical position based on his understanding of the scriptures. However, he tries to argue the inevitability of dualism or pluralism from atomic theory, starting from a naive description of the relevant scientific concepts and continuing with, at best, an incomplete argument. His use of science in this case might be viewed as simply an attempt to provide a plausibility argument, but Roberts is not always careful about the tentativeness of the arguments he makes, and he actually claims that reason has led him to “necessary truths” about the universe.

Roberts uses the divisibility of the atom into positive and negative charges as evidence for a pluralistic universe. In addition, he argues that atomic structure supports a division of things into those that act and those acted upon:

All the new knowledge, however, respecting the atom and all that comes of it, including resolving it into electrons, leaves us with the fact that it has within it something which “acts,” and something which is “acted upon”; a seemingly necessary positive and negative substance in action and reaction out of which things proceed an atom; an aggregation of atoms, a world; or a universe of worlds. (86)

Roberts does not identify the active substance in the atom or that which is acted upon. Furthermore, he does not make clear the relevance of this simplistic discussion of atomic theory to the pluralism of the universe. In light of modern science, the argument about atomic theory seems almost irrelevant to dualism versus monism. The fact of positive and negative charges in atoms does not mean that more than one kind of fundamental entity exists in the universe, which is thereby dualistic. Instead, these charges might be viewed as two manifestations of the same fundamental property.

Scientists would not claim that their ability to calculate atomic properties in remarkable detail and accuracy establishes the reality of their model of the microscopic world. And, especially, they would not claim that these successful scientific theories, in turn, clarify the philosophical issues. In fact, in this case as in some others, Roberts has apparently worked out the answer before asking the question. He accepts first the answer he believes comes from revealed sources. But instead of arguing that the revelations teach the concept at issue, he casts the question in a form in which he believes science will support the predetermined answer. This is the equivalent of proof-texting using scientific evidence rather than scriptures. It is a risky procedure, given the inevitable evolution of scientific understanding. It may also

appear to elevate science to some special position as a source for truth, when a wiser course would be to keep clearly before the reader the tentativeness of knowledge both of science and of interpretations of scriptures.

In general, Roberts's approach to religion and science exhibits a deep need to integrate religion and well-established scientific knowledge, and he expends much effort to make rational sense of various religious and scientific ideas. Making sense of science was much easier at the turn of the century, however, than it is today. Much of modern quantum mechanics (proposed in 1926), special relativity (1905), and general relativity (1916) can be interpreted only in ways that seem strange to everyday notions of time, space, and matter. Therefore, these theories, while stunningly successful in predicting physical phenomena, do not admit the kind of commonsense interpretation Roberts seems to seek. Their interpretation is, in fact, generally counterintuitive with respect to commonsense ideas of the world. For example, relativity teaches that the measured sizes of objects and durations of events depend on the speed of the person observing the object or event. These effects lead to an intrinsic connection between matter and energy. All these effects are very different from what people think they know from everyday experience, yet such effects are validated in great detail by precise experiments.

Quantum mechanics is even stranger than relativity. Quantum mechanics postulates that all microscopic objects in the universe, like electrons, are connected in some way, instantaneously, across the vast reaches of space. This connection is necessary to satisfy symmetry requirements on the quantum mechanical wave function. The symmetry requirements underlie all of chemistry and are well validated.

Because these effects have no counterpart in ordinary experience, scientists do not really try to make simple sense either of the microscopic atomic world or of the world of very rapidly moving and massive objects in the cosmos. Instead, we have beautiful and consistent mathematical theories, and we view these domains almost exclusively through the mathematical abstractions of those theories. We have needed to develop new intuitions that either seem inconsistent with our everyday notions or that are outside our ordinary experience and considerations. So when Roberts argues that the universe must behave in particular ways, that "necessary truths" follow from pure reason (chs. 3 and 9, for example), he comes into immediate conflict with important fundamental theories of modern science that have been confirmed meticulously by experiments during the last sixty years.

From Humans to the Gods

Roberts gives considerable attention in *TWL* to reasoning from what we know in order to deduce answers to deep questions. He argues both syllogistically (reasoning from what we know) and analogically (for example, using analogies with human communication to argue the plausibility of divine revelation). Unfortunately, modern science since the early 1900s has opened many possibilities in the nature of the universe that Roberts considered inconceivable. With these constraints removed, Roberts's argument is vulnerable. Even his analogical arguments have difficulties due to new insights into constraints on very fast or very distant activities.

In chapter 10, Roberts elaborates a theme introduced in chapter 9 and continued later in chapters 12 and 32, namely, the theory that one can extrapolate from information about the best of humanity to reveal the likely state of the gods or other "higher intelligences." Given his own checkered political career, it is ironic that he expresses this remarkable view in terms of the wisdom of political leaders:

By choosing the most highly developed intelligences of the community as representatives, and bringing them together in councils of various kinds, parliaments, congresses, cabinets, courts, and other national assemblies—from these, nations and the world finally get expressed the wisest and therefore the best judgments as to what ought to obtain as public policies and provide for the best securities for the freedom of men and the welfare of nations. From the deliberations of such bodies rise the wisest and best systems of governments and laws. (88)

He explicitly assumes that greater intelligence entails greater moral development:

Higher intellectual life and higher states of civilization produced exalted moral feelings, resulting in higher states of righteousness and love of truth and sympathy for fellow men, leading to desire for the uplift of those less highly developed, and thus is produced among our own earth-people a desire to restrain the strong and vicious by laws and group agencies under forms of governments, and to uplift and better the conditions of the lowly and undeveloped peoples. (97)

I am puzzled about the basis for Roberts's faith that more advanced civilizations will be more humane and altruistic. The reader has an advantage over Roberts, having a perspective on the German nation shortly after the writing of *TWL*. Germany was one of the nations most advanced in knowledge at the time, yet within a few years German

Nazis perpetrated some of the world's greatest atrocities. The same could be said of ancient Egypt or China. History has not borne out the claim that civilizations more advanced in knowledge will be more humane and altruistic.

Roberts viewed the relationship between humans and the gods as one of natural development. He referred to the gods as higher intelligences from more advanced worlds (chs. 9, 10, 12, and 32). While this view is consistent with the LDS belief that humans are literally the spirit children of God, Roberts did not address the present gap between the human and the divine: Are resurrection and immortality possible simply through natural development? Or is some form of divine intervention or setting in motion necessary? If not, how is the Atonement valuable, and why is it necessary? The reader may want to consider how these views on higher intelligences relate to what Roberts teaches later, where he is very clear about the necessity of the Atonement in the Plan of Salvation.⁶

Chapter 10 also deals broadly with cosmology and the existence and nature of extraterrestrial life, Roberts once again seeking to extrapolate from what makes this world purposeful to us now and thereby conclude what makes all worlds purposeful. He concludes that life—human life—is the only object of the existence of the physical universe, and that the earth without humans would be “stale, flat, unprofitable, and meaningless” (95). But was the earth meaningless during the long preparation period before humans entered it? Roberts appears to believe that human beings waiting in the wings are sufficient potential to give purpose to the earth. This is a case where Roberts seems to assume the answers before asking the questions—answers which determine the form of the questions he asks. He accepts from science and scripture that there was an extensive preparation period for life on earth and he uses scientific evidence to support his view of the purpose of the universe. However, he has not used science entirely fairly in this case. If science is to shed light on the purpose of the universe or any other religious issue, it must be used in accordance with its rules of procedure, which are designed to protect us from misleading ourselves in the name of science. The methods of science require that questions be asked of nature without preconditions on what scientific answers may be acceptable. One cannot determine the answers in advance and then legitimately claim that science supports the predetermined conclusions.

Chapter 12 deals with revelation, treating it as a matter of intergalactic communication and transport. In this chapter, Roberts also discusses the three lines of support for theology (revelation, tradition,

and the works of nature) to argue that the advances of modern technology in this world provide plausible grounds for comprehending and believing in God's powers, for example, his ability to communicate across vast distances of the universe or to travel across interstellar distances. This naturalistic argument assumes that God uses physical mechanisms to accomplish his work, including physical means known to mortals on earth or that could be made known or discovered. This argument is consistent with the view Roberts espouses that God operates by law, even eternal law. However, the particular physical means used by God to accomplish any specific purpose may be as yet undiscovered and hence unknown to human beings. Thus, Roberts's argument is reasonable as a plausibility argument that helps lift our sight from human limitations to human accomplishments and thence to divine possibilities, but it remains inconclusive. While it may open imagination and provide reassurance for faith, it gives no assurance that we understand how specific physical or biological processes operate in particular divinely ordained events.

Just as Roberts did not address other problems of relativity theory, he does not address the effect of a universal speed limit (namely, that within the confines of relativity theory no information can be transmitted or carried from place to place faster than the speed of light) on interplanetary travel and communication. In addition, his statement that "telepathy, or the power of one mind to be in such sympathetic affections, feelings or emotions with another as to make thought transference possible between them is now accepted by men of science as a reality" (114) is wrong today and was wrong when it was written. Much scientific evidence exists to the contrary; and while scientific evidence continues to be put forward from time to time in support of the reality of mental telepathy, up to the present, upon closer examination, these studies have each been found lacking.⁷ Most scientists do not accept telepathy as a reality. Nevertheless, Roberts uses the interplanetary travel and communication arguments in chapter 12 to lay groundwork for his theory that Adam and Eve were transplanted to the Garden of Eden from some other world (ch. 32).

In chapter 32, Roberts returns to the discussion of time, specifically, time as experienced by the gods. He says, "For the God-mind all distinctions of time as to past and present and future, so stand that they live and work in the eternal '*now*.'" In what physical sense is God in an "eternal now"? Speaking to his son Corianton, Alma commented that "all is as one day with God, and time only is measured unto men" (Alma 40:8). On the other hand, the book of Abraham refers to "the Lord's time" and "celestial time," both of which are identified with the time

of the revolutions of Kolob (Abr. 3:4, 9; 5:13; Facsimile 2:1). Moreover, Roberts does not address the tension that may exist between any concept of a divine “eternal now” and his general reliance on the idea that man can know God’s ways and attributes by relating temporal conditions to those of higher spheres.

Chapter 23 addresses Abrahamic cosmology and the nature of the Godhead. Readers may wish to compare this chapter with other LDS writings on astronomy and the book of Abraham.⁸

Creation and Evolution

Chapters 21, 24, 25, and 30 deal with the Creation. Chapter 21 addresses the doctrines of the Christian world regarding *ex nihilo* creation, the origin of humans, and God’s purpose in creating the earth and human beings. Chapter 24 considers the time period in which the earth was created and the manner of creation. Roberts leaves a very open interpretation of the time period of the earth’s creation, allowing the widest possible accommodation to scientific evidence. Here and in chapter 25, Roberts reviews the various theories of the evolution of life forms on the earth that were most commonly held at the time of his writing.

Roberts addresses three forms of evolutionary theory with which he was familiar from science: materialistic or mechanical evolution, agnostic evolution, and theistic (or purposeful or creative) evolution. He finds all three approaches to be inadequate and rejects all current theories as he understands them. Instead he puts forward his own theory of evolution, which he calls “developmental theism.” This view

starts from the eternity of life—the life force; and the eternity of some life forms, and the possibilities of these forms, perhaps in embryonic status, or in their simplest forms (save as to man) are transplanted to newly created worlds there to be developed each to its highest possibilities, by propagation, and yet within and under the great law of life of Genesis 1, viz., each “after,” and within, “its kind.” (240)

Roberts’s opinions are not those of an evolutionist. The differences of opinion between Roberts and Elder Joseph Fielding Smith on the subject of evolution⁹ were not centered on the scientific theories of origins of life forms. Rather, the central point of concern was whether death occurred on earth before the fall of Adam. Roberts found both scriptural and scientific support for pre-Adamite humans and other extinct life forms. Elder Smith, on the other hand, interpreted 2 Nephi 2:22 quite literally as applying to all life at all times on earth and took it to mean that there was no death on earth before the Fall. Although



James E. Talmage. Talmage's August 9, 1931, speech, "The Earth and Man," about the age of the earth and the origin and nature of Adam's race won approval from the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve. This speech emphasized that geology and scripture "cannot be fundamentally opposed, . . . though man's interpretation of either may be seriously at fault." Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

Mormons have a long history of discussion about different views of evolution and the origins of life forms, the Church has adopted no settled and detailed position on the role of various physical or biological processes in these origins. Statements made by the First Presidency in 1909, 1925, and 1931 contain the position of the Church on evolution;¹⁰ anything else is opinion—including much of what Roberts says in *TWL*.

In the last part of chapter 24, Roberts describes “the gloomy outcome of evolution,” that is, the winding down of the earth to a thermal equilibrium in which no further development is possible.¹¹ This concept is sometimes termed the “heat death” of the universe. Chapter 24 deals with two fundamental scientific concepts whose relationship and mutual interaction are still not widely understood. These two are the concepts of entropy, associated with the second law of thermodynamics, and evolution. After quoting Herbert Spencer’s definition of evolution and giving an explication of this definition by Will Durant, Roberts follows Durant in setting out a description of the “heat death” of the universe as a logical consequence of the definition of evolution. This winding down of the universe is, however, a consequence of the second law of thermodynamics, a result that follows if the universe does not exchange energy with some outside entity or region. All evolutionary processes and all other large-scale physical processes are subject to the second law of thermodynamics. Contrary to Durant’s misapprehension, the “heat death” is not intrinsically connected to the theory of evolution. Instead, any purely physical theory of the universe will be faced with an eventual equilibration of energy and motion. Hence, heat death is an effect that should not be laid at the door of evolution; it is part of a much larger issue and not a defect of evolutionary theory.

In addition to the various theories of evolution discussed above, chapter 25 deals further with the manner of creation, addressing the role of God in creation and the possibility that life was transplanted here from other worlds. Because Roberts takes life forms to be eternal, with no beginning, he sees “no problem of the origin of life or of forms of life” (238). But what was God’s creative role? Did the various life forms exist coeternally with God in a fully developed form? The origin of both spirit bodies and physical bodies for plants and animals and humans seems still to be a significant question of deep import. Roberts’s view simply pushes the origin question for Adam back to another world, but he does not dispose of the problem.

Roberts also enunciates in chapter 25 “the great law of life” from Genesis, that reproduction is within “kinds,” but he fails to address the main question that haunts those addressing the origins of life forms from religious, philosophical, or scientific points of view. Specifically,

Roberts ignores the question of how one defines “kinds.” Can one ever be sufficiently clear about “kinds” to know whether an observed change in a life form is a change within or between “kinds?” Without such a clarification, one cannot address the consistency or inconsistency of organic evolution theories with the revelations. Do modern hybridizations between species or developments of new species violate this perceived barrier by crossing “kinds?”

Roberts did not envision any genetic connection between pre-Adamites and humans. Then why did pre-Adamic humans exist? Are they a separate “kind”? Are they related to apes? Why are they extinct? Indeed, why have extinctions occurred at all?

Finally in chapter 25, Roberts discusses the nature of God, in whose image humans were created. He argues against the common Christian fear that God would be diminished if he had the form of man, holding instead that both God and man are elevated by their relationship.

In chapter 30, Roberts seeks to reconcile the two Genesis accounts of the Creation (Gen. 1-2), putting forward a theory of an earthwide catastrophe that allowed Adam and Eve to come to a new world that nevertheless carried geological traces of previous life and development. In Roberts’s view, Genesis 1 and 2 refer to different creative events: Genesis 1 to the creation of the earth itself, and Genesis 2 to the creation which prepared the world for Adam and his dispensation. Hence, Roberts accepts the existence of pre-Adamite races of humans as both scripturally and scientifically justified.

Chapters 31 and 32 consider these pre-Adamite humans, including a catalogue of types of early humans discovered by scientists up to the time of writing. These chapters also consider Adam and Eve, how they came to the earth, and the form of their bodies in the Garden of Eden. In chapter 31, Roberts elaborates further his interpretation of the command to “multiply and replenish the earth” as meaning to “refill” the earth, an unfounded interpretation that he used to support his theory of an earthwide catastrophe in chapter 30.¹²

In chapter 32, having set the stage in many previous chapters, Roberts finally develops his transplantation theory to explain the arrival of Adam and Eve on earth. He also argues here that Adam and Eve were translated beings in the Garden of Eden but not immortal. He never discusses the role of the forbidden fruit, however, in effecting any physical changes in Adam and Eve. In Roberts’s transplantation theory of the arrival of humans on earth, the transplantation was effected by “higher intelligences” from more advanced worlds. In other words, the gods brought Adam and Eve to the Garden. Roberts accepts geologic evidence for a very old earth and for pre-Adamite humans.

Then, as mentioned above, he argues that a cataclysm must have wiped out previous life to begin the Adamic dispensation, but he does not present scientific evidence for or against such a cataclysmic event. Can one find such evidence today? I do not believe so. Modern creationists have tried to argue for geologic evidence of a worldwide catastrophe or massive change in the earth at the time of the flood of Noah or the advent of Adam and Eve, but they have produced no credible evidence for the kind of event Roberts postulates.¹³

Roberts argues at length for the consistency of his theory of earth-wide catastrophe and the transplantation of Adam and Eve with the biblical account of creation and the origin of humans. Roberts believes that his formulation allows one to bring the biblical account and the scientific evidence into harmony. He does not explain, however, why God—knowing the confusion to be introduced by future scientific discoveries—would not speak plainly in the scriptures if they were intended to tell the story of actual creative events. Of course, this question can be asked much more broadly than in the narrow context of creation. It certainly arises today in connection with interpretations of Genesis and other scriptures. But Roberts does not address it at all. Is the detailed process of reconciling scripture with science necessary and appropriate in every case? The answer would seem to depend on the extent to which particular scriptures were intended to be read literally or figuratively. Again, Roberts does not address this kind of question here.

The foregoing are the main elements in Roberts's theories about the creation of the earth. I see significant value in his attempt to develop a comprehensive view of the world—in spite of the difficulties and dangers—that takes both religion and science seriously. In fact, I believe humans' divinely inherited intelligence requires the use of the intellect to struggle for understanding and meaning. Thus, in identifying some difficult issues that are raised by Roberts's treatment of the physical universe, the theory of evolution, the origin of life forms, and the origin of humans in this book, I do not seek to discourage the effort he so valiantly made, but rather to identify additional questions the contemporary reader might raise in light of current scientific understanding and to encourage tentativeness in all such efforts to merge science and theology.¹⁴

Many questions can and should be raised by modern readers of *TWL*. Such problems, however, do not seriously detract from the evidence this work gives of Elder Roberts's faith, his love of the scriptures and the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and his respect for the importance of using the spirit and the intellect together to seek to comprehend

the things of God. Elder Roberts rejected narrow sectarianism in all its forms, closing chapter 31 with a strong affirmation of his faith in human striving for knowledge, referring to “the researcher of science in modern times” as

the highest type in the intellectual and moral world; . . . among the noblest and most self-sacrificing of the sons of men—of the type whence must come the noblest sons of God, since the glory of God is intelligence; and that too the glory of man. These searchers after truth are of that class. To pay attention to, and give reasonable credence to their research and findings is to link the Church of God with the highest increase of human thought and effort. On that side lies development, on the other lies contraction. It is on the former side that research work is going on, and will continue to go on, future investigation and discoveries will continue on that side, nothing will retard them, and nothing will develop on the other side. One leads to narrow sectarianism, the other keeps the open spirit of a world movement with which our New Dispensation began. As between them, which is to be our choice? (318)

NOTES

¹In the lesson outline for chapter 3, in which he lays the metaphysical foundation for this work, he says, “All the works given in the column of ‘References’ should be read with discrimination; not accepting either all the premises laid down, or the conclusions reached. They are given merely as sources through which the student may pursue his thought-investigations, not for unquestioning acceptance.” The “References” referred to in this citation are scientific and philosophical works on which Roberts relies extensively.

²Roberts’s use of generalizations reflects an accepted rhetorical style of his generation, see the essays by Gary Hatch and Doris Dant above.

³See the textbooks cited in the editorial footnotes to chapters 4 and 5, above.

⁴Arthur Fine, *The Shaky Game: Einstein, Reality and the Quantum Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

⁵Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (New York: Bantam Books, 1988).

⁶This point demonstrates once again the need to approach *TWL* as a whole, as discussed further by John W. Welch, xiv–xv, xxxi–xxxiii above.

⁷Such a study is reported by Daryl J. Bern and Charles Honorton, “Does Psi Exist? Replicable Evidence for an Anomalous Process of Information Transfer,” *Psychological Bulletin* 115 (January 1994): 4–18, with a response and rebuttal, 19–27.

⁸Erich Robert Paul, *Science, Religion, and Mormon Cosmology* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1992); and R. Grant Athay, “Worlds without Number: The Astronomy of Enoch, Abraham, and Moses,” *BYU Studies* 8 (1968): 255–69.

⁹Duane E. Jeffery, “Seers, Savants, and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface,” *Dialogue* 8 (Autumn–Winter 1973): 41–75; Richard Sherlock, “A Turbulent

Spectrum: Mormon Reactions to the Darwinist Legacy,” *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 33–59; Duane E. Jeffery, “‘We Don’t Know’: A Survey of Mormon Responses to Evolutionary Biology,” in *The Appearance of Man: Replenishment of the Earth*, vol. 2 of *Science and Religion: Toward a More Useful Dialogue*, ed. Wilford M. Hess and others (Geneva, Ill.: Paladin House, 1979), 23–37; and Jeffery E. Keller, “Discussion Continued: The Sequel to the Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair,” *Dialogue* 15 (Spring 1982): 79–98.

¹⁰William E. Evenson, “Evolution,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:478. The approach to be taken in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* article on evolution was considered by the leaders of the Church in 1991, and the Church advisors to the *Encyclopedia* editorial board counseled that it should be a very brief presentation of official Church statements. A packet approved for use at Brigham Young University in June 1992 views only the published statements of the First Presidency as “the definitive source of official Church positions” on these subjects.

¹¹See B. H. Roberts, “Protest Against the Science-Thought of ‘A Dying Universe’ and No Immortality for Man: The Mission of the Church of the New Dispensation,” in *Discourses of B. H. Roberts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1948), 11–30.

¹²On “replenish,” see page xiii and accompanying note above.

¹³See Arthur N. Strahler, *Science and Earth History: The Evolution/Creation Controversy* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1987).

¹⁴For further reflections on research into physical evidence of human origins, see Richard G. Klein, *The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Donald C. Johanson, Lenora Johanson, and Blake Edgar, *Ancestors: In Search of Human Origins* (New York: Villard, 1994); Maitland A. Edey and Donald C. Johanson, *Blueprints (Solving the Mystery of Evolution)* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989).

History of Religion

(Chs. 11, 13–15, 20–22, 46)

William J. Hamblin

Comparative Religion

In chapters 11 to 15, Roberts presents a short discussion of the major religious traditions of the world. These chapters are brief summaries of materials he originally researched and published in his *Seventy's Course in Theology*, which essentially consists of summaries and quotations from various standard books on world religions written around the turn of the century. His secondary sources are, therefore, now nearly a century old. Due to the general advance of Western knowledge about Asian religions, the information presented by Roberts about the religious traditions of the world is both dated and frequently inaccurate, especially in the sections on ancient Near Eastern and Asian religions.¹

The two major problems in most works on comparative religion from the early twentieth century are implicit racism and imperialism—the view that Western civilization is inherently superior to non-Western civilizations. These problems tend to make sympathetic understanding of non-Western religions difficult. Although Roberts's writing reflects some of these problematic attitudes, his Latter-day Saint background provided a partial corrective. His position is that the great religions of the world represent, in part, broken fragments of revelations (108) which were given to Adam or other biblical patriarchs and have been diffused throughout civilization. Thus, for Roberts, some valid and valuable principles of truth can be found in all the main religious traditions.²

The Great Apostasy

Chapters 20 and 46 summarize Roberts's views on early Christianity and the Great Apostasy. More complete presentations of Roberts's interpretation can be found in his other works on the subject.³

Roberts's ideas basically parallel those articulated in James E. Talmage's better-known work on the same topic.⁴ Both men based their interpretations in part on their understanding of unique Latter-day Saint revelations and on standard turn-of-the-century Protestant ecclesiastical historians. Roberts's ideas on the universal apostasy in early Christianity fit well within the context of early twentieth-century Latter-day Saint ideas on the subject.⁵

NOTES

¹In notes to these chapters, I have provided bibliographical references where interested readers can obtain recent and accurate information.

²For a sampling of current Latter-day Saint views on the non-Christian religions of the world, see Spencer J. Palmer and Roger R. Keller, *Religions of the World: A Latter-day Saint View* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1989); the series of articles by Spencer J. Palmer and Arnold H. Green, "World Religions (Non-Christian) and Mormonism," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 4:1588-95; and Soren F. Cox, "Interfaith Relations: Other Faiths," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 2:696.

³See my annotation, page 188 above, and Roberts's introduction to vol. 1 of Joseph Smith, Jr., *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971).

⁴*The Great Apostasy, Considered in the Light of Scriptural and Secular History* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909).

⁵For a general discussion of the idea of the apostasy and a basic bibliography of Latter-day Saint writings on the subject, see Todd Compton, "Apostasy," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 1:56-59.

The Bible and the Dispensations from Adam to Abraham

(Chs. 16–18, 34–38)

David Rolph Seely

B. H. Roberts viewed the scriptures as the foundation for any serious study of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In particular, the Bible gives information about the teaching of the gospel in the various dispensations from Adam to Christ and sets the stage for the restoration of the gospel in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. In Roberts's *The Seventy's Course in Theology*, published 1907–12, volume one was subtitled *A Survey of the Books of Holy Scripture*; it systematically surveyed the origins and contents of each of the scriptural books. The second year covered the history of the gospel from the premortal existence to the Restoration. Virtually all discussions of biblically related themes in *The Truth, The Way, The Life* are drawn from these and other previously published works of Roberts, where the topics are typically more fully presented and more thoroughly documented.

The Bible

Roberts was a serious student of the Bible. While not a biblical scholar in the sense that he could control the primary sources in their original languages, he believed that biblical scholarship, to a point, was compatible with faith, and he was conversant with a wide range of biblical dictionaries and commentaries.¹ About certain elements of critical study he once wrote: "The methods of higher criticism are legitimate; that is to say, it is right to consider the various books of the scriptures . . . as a body of literature, and to examine them internally, and go into the circumstances under which they were written, and the time at which they were written, and the purpose for which they were written."²

Roberts was aware of the issues and movements in biblical scholarship in his day and was not afraid to discuss and answer them. In his research and writing, he relied heavily on secondary literature, for the most part well-respected and conservative Protestant biblical scholarship. At the beginning of the *Seventy's Course in Theology*, Roberts gives "A Suggested List of Books of Reference," including the LDS Standard Works and secondary literature. The secondary literature included various Bible dictionaries, histories, and commentaries, such as the works of Josephus, Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Kitto's *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, and Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown's *A Commentary Critical and Explanatory of the Old and New Testament*. These are the most cited scholarly biblical works in *TWL*.

Roberts had a healthy respect for scholarship, but he felt free to disagree when the conclusions of scholarship did not coincide with revelation. Regarding the commentary by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, Roberts twice noted in 1907:

This is a very excellent work, and frequently quoted in the references and also in the notes of the present year's course of study. As remarked in one of the notes, the Elders who make up our ministry may not accept the doctrinal interpretation of this or any other commentary, yet its historical and critical treatises are among the most recent and valuable. . . . It is one of the best works of its kind, and represents the latest orthodox interpretations of the Scriptures, and while the Elders which make up our ministry may not accept the doctrinal interpretation of this or any other commentary, its historical and critical treatise are among the most recent and valuable.³

Elsewhere, Roberts commented on Edersheim's distinguished work:

I take occasion here to remark that by making reference to works such as Edersheim's *Life of Jesus*, Bible Dictionaries, Ecclesiastical Histories, etc., it must not be understood that in making such references I approve the works, or even accept the correctness of the passages indicated. Such references are made that the student may consult the literature on a given point. He must make his own deductions as to the correctness of the statements and arguments of such authors. As for instance, in this very passage cited from Edersheim's really great work, I think him, in the main, wrong in his treatment of this subject of the Seventy, but our Seventies should know what so high an authority, as Edersheim is generally accepted to be, has said upon the subject.⁴

Similarly, in the outline accompanying chapter 35 of *TWL*, Roberts wrote:

Any of the standard dictionaries of the Bible or commentaries can be consulted sometimes with profit on these subjects, although they

may not be relied upon as sustaining the views of the text of this work which is so largely influenced by the “new knowledge” brought to light by the Prophet of the New Dispensation Joseph Smith. (351)

Such endorsements were not empty rhetoric. Roberts’s allegiance was to revelation and to the Restoration. In the face of any biblical problem, modern revelation always superseded that of biblical scholarship for Roberts. Nevertheless, he was fond of noting when ancient witnesses or biblical scholars supported that which was known from modern revelation. For example, he saw Josephus’s extended account of violence among Cain and his descendants as being “in harmony with the further knowledge we have of Cain in the Mosaic fragment familiar to us now as the Book of Moses” (364). In this regard, Roberts can be seen as a forerunner of subsequent Latter-day Saint scholars, like Sidney B. Sperry and Hugh W. Nibley, who would use this same method of identifying ancient parallels in support of the antiquity of the Book of Mormon and the Pearl of Great Price.

Roberts also believed that critical issues should be meaningfully discussed with the members of the Church. For example, in the *Young Men’s Manual* for 1903–4, Roberts defended the authenticity of the biblical Creation narratives that scholars were questioning in light of newly discovered Babylonian stories; he also defended the unity and Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, which were being challenged by the documentary hypothesis.⁵ Responding to the parallels found in the cuneiform sources, Roberts similarly acknowledged in *TWL* that the sources behind the biblical accounts had been written before the time of Moses, but he argued that they were fragments of truth known from the time of Adam:

The truth is that the outstanding facts of the creation, the fall of man, the flood, etc., have been known by the human race from the earliest historical times, from the days of Adam, in fact. . . . The variously distorted creation stories and other ancient events [were] possessed by nearly all people. But all this did not prevent the Lord from revealing the creation history to Moses, together with subsequent events; nor does this new knowledge require us to doubt the inspiration which rested upon him and that enabled him to weave into a splendid, coherent form the fragmentary truth among the ancient Egyptian, Babylonian, and other peoples. (155)⁶

Postulating a “common source” to account for the biblical parallels found throughout the ancient world has also been the basis of much Latter-day Saint scholarship, perhaps best exemplified by Hugh Nibley.

Possibly influenced by his familiarity with critical biblical scholarship, Roberts developed an understanding of inspiration that allowed

him to see both the hand of God and the hand of man in the Bible. Accordingly, in *TWL*, Roberts wrote that the Bible is

alleged to have been written under the inspiration of God. That does not mean that human elements are not to be found in it, but rather that a divine spirit is present in the midst of human elements, giving forth light and truth and wisdom such as is to be found in no merely human production. There is a divine spirit always present in these scripture narratives, prophecy and poetry, that makes the whole to contain a revelation of God and an account of his methods of doing things among men. All of which gives those writings an authority that does not pertain to the ordinary writings of men. (156)

Dispensations

Roberts shared the LDS understanding of dispensations. This understanding is traceable to the Prophet Joseph Smith, who taught that “the plan of ordinances for the salvation of his posterity unto the end” was made known to Adam, “to whom Christ was first revealed.”⁷ Roberts’s full understanding of dispensations is best understood from his presentation in other publications, especially his *Seventy’s Course in Theology, Second Year: Outline History of the Dispensations of the Gospel*. In that work, he gave a definition that is essential to understanding his reading of the scriptures:

But the word dispensation as connected with the Gospel of Jesus Christ means the opening of the heavens to men; the giving out or dispensing to them the word of God; the revealing to men in whole or in part the principles and ordinances of the Gospel; the conferring of divine authority upon certain chosen ones, by which they are empowered to act in the name, that is, in the authority of God, and for Him. . . . Strange as it may seem, in the face of such Scripture narratives, there are those among professing Christians who hold that the Gospel had no earlier origin than the time of Messiah’s ministry in the flesh. As a matter of fact, however, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has existed from the very earliest ages of the world.⁸

In *TWL*, Roberts discusses the Adamic dispensation (chs. 31–36); the Patriarchal period, from Adam to Noah (ch. 37); Abraham and Moses (chs. 37–38); Christ and the Meridian dispensation (chs. 39, 49–53); and finally the Restoration or the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times (chs. 47, 54–55).

The Fall of Adam. The discussion of the Fall in *TWL* (chs. 34–35) is a condensed narrative version of the materials outlined in the fourth volume of *Seventy’s Course in Theology*.⁹ Roberts’s explanation of the Fall is based more on modern revelation than the Bible. He relies most

heavily on doctrines found in the Pearl of Great Price (Moses 5–7) and in Lehi’s words (2 Ne. 2). He explains the Latter-day Saint view of the Fall by juxtaposing it with Catholic and Protestant views. Rather than seeing the Fall as a tragedy, as is stressed by these others, Roberts emphasizes the necessity of the Fall, the importance of Adam and Eve’s choice in the matter, and the advantages made possible by the Fall.

In this discussion, Roberts reflects the distinctive LDS belief in the positive aspects of the Fall. This positive attitude is best illustrated in the book of Moses, where Adam and Eve both rejoice in the blessings attained by the Fall—namely, knowledge, joy, posterity, and the opportunity to be redeemed and obtain eternal life (Moses 5:10–11).¹⁰ Roberts expresses the positive role of the Fall in various ways. Commenting on 2 Nephi 2:26–27, for example, Roberts says, “Then listen to the full organ-tones of the joy in which these things are recounted, and it will not be difficult to understand how the ‘Fall’ is really held to be ‘the beginning of the rise of man’” (344). Roberts delights in finding that the opinion of Harvard philosopher John Fiske

unwittingly supports the sober doctrine of the Book of Mormon that partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was an absolute necessity to a life worthwhile; for thereby was brought to pass the broken harmonies of the world out of which would be forged the experiences that would lead to virile manhood, high character, human freedom, morality, and loyalty to righteousness; and therefore the “fall” is not an incident to be deplored. (349)¹¹

The Descendants of Cain and the Cause of the Flood. Chapters 36–37 of *TWL* describe the Adamic dispensation’s end, Cain and his descendants, and the dispensations of Enoch and Noah. Roberts asserts that the Flood was necessitated particularly by intermarriage between the descendants of Seth (who held the priesthood) and the descendants of Cain (who did not). Roberts then speculates as to why the descendants of Cain were denied the priesthood. Roberts employs this analysis to discuss the pre-1978 LDS practice of not ordaining blacks to the priesthood.

Roberts begins with the biblical account of the cursing of Cain (Gen. 4), augmented by the account in the Pearl of Great Price (Moses 5). Roberts notes that Cain and his descendants were involved in secret combinations to work violence and to “murder to get gain” (Moses 5:31), and he cites a passage from Josephus that also describes Cain and his descendants as being involved in robberies and violence (364).¹² Roberts connects this report with the biblical mention of violence in the earth as one of the causes for the Flood (Gen. 6:5, 13).

Next, Roberts points out that the “sons of God” took wives from among the “daughters of men” (Gen. 6:1–4; Moses 8:13–14 says the “sons of men” took wives from the daughters of Noah’s sons, who were called the “sons of God”). Roberts concludes that the phrase “sons of God” refers to the descendants of Seth (because Moses 8:13 calls the sons of Noah the “sons of God”), while the phrase “daughters of men” refers to the descendants of Cain, who are “cursed . . . pertaining to the Priesthood” (Abr. 1:26).¹³

Roberts’s arguments can be better understood in light of his previous discussions of this topic in *Seventy’s Course in Theology*,¹⁴ as well as the scriptural evidence and secondary literature cited there, for he was not the first to form such opinions. As he often notes, the identification of the “sons of God” with the descendants of Seth and the “daughters of men” with descendants of Cain is made in Protestant Bible dictionaries.¹⁵ Roberts viewed this identification as confirmation of his interpretation of the Pearl of Great Price:

It is gratifying to know that the results of the latest deductions of Biblical scholars favors the views presented in the Book of Moses: “The interpretation, however, which is now most generally received, is that which understands by ‘the sons of the Elohim’ the family and descendants of Seth, and by ‘the daughters of man (Adam),’ the women of the family of Cain.”¹⁶

In addition, a note on Genesis 6:1–22 in the commentary by Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown, not cited by Roberts, states:

[Verse] 2. the sons of God saw the daughters of men—By the former is meant the family of Seth, who were professedly religious; by the latter, the descendants of apostate Cain. Mixed marriages between parties of opposite principles and practice were necessarily sources of extensive corruption. The women, irreligious themselves, would, as wives and mothers, exert an influence fatal to the existence of religion in their household, and consequently the people of that later age sank to the lowest depravity.¹⁷

In the *Seventy’s Course in Theology*, Roberts included a short outline and discussion on the “American Negro Race Problem.”¹⁸ In that section, he included a citation from a book entitled *The Color Line: A Brief in Behalf of the Unborn*¹⁹ that attempted to justify the segregation and social separation practiced in the South (where Roberts served as mission president, 1883–85) on the grounds that social relations between blacks and whites would eventually result in intermarriage and what the author called “mongrelization of the Southern people.”²⁰ Interracial marriages were, at the least, strongly discouraged in most

nineteenth- and early twentieth-century United States cultures.²¹ Because Roberts refers in *TWL* to the offspring of such intermarriages as a “mongrel race” that “was part of the wickedness which prepared [the] antediluvian world for its destruction” (370), he may have derived his terminology from *The Color Line*.

At the end of chapter 37, Roberts adds a discussion, not found earlier,²² in which he attempts to explain the reasons for the Latter-day Saint “denial of right to the priesthood” (372) to the blacks. Roberts argues that the “limitations of certain races” are due to their performance in the premortal life (371). The idea that blacks were denied priesthood based on some unworthiness in the previous existence was not original with Roberts.²³ While he supported the standard LDS practice of his day, it is notable that Roberts was sensitive enough to remove from his discussion any reference to skin color (363). The 1978 change in LDS doctrine reminds all of the perils of speculation such as Roberts’s and others’ on this matter. As Elder Bruce R. McConkie expressed shortly after the 1978 revelation:

Forget everything that I have said, or what President Brigham Young or President George Q. Cannon or whomsoever has said in days past that is contrary to the present revelation. We spoke with a limited understanding and without the light and knowledge that now has come into the world. . . . It doesn’t make a particle of difference what anybody ever said about the Negro matter before the first day of June of this year [1978].²⁴

Conclusion

This essay has introduced only a few of the main concepts and historical characteristics of Roberts’s use of the Old Testament. Other topics, such as his rejection of higher criticism as practiced by biblical scholars of his day, are discussed elsewhere (see xxiv–xxvi above and chapter notes below). In sum, Roberts made extensive use of the Bible in *TWL*, as he did throughout all of his doctrinal works. While he acquiesced in many of the normal preferences and some of the prejudices of his day, he supplemented his arguments with ideas found in standard biblical commentaries only so long as they were not inconsistent with revelation. He especially emphasized and understood the biblical word of God in light of his readings of the books of Moses and Abraham, the Book of Mormon, and the revelations received by the prophet-teacher Joseph Smith.

NOTES

¹Roberts is described by Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 112–22. Barlow states that Roberts “was, among Church officials, the best biblical scholar Mormonism produced in its first century. He possessed a formidable mind, a voracious appetite for learning, and a deep and rare candor to leaven his profound religious commitments.” *Mormons and the Bible*, 113.

²B. H. Roberts, “Higher Criticism and the Book of Mormon,” *Improvement Era* 14 (June 1911): 667–68. Cited in Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible*, 114. While he recognized such inquiries “as proper,” Roberts found “that when one enters into the details of those methods, . . . we must disagree as to the correctness of many of the conclusions arrived at by that method.” Roberts, “Higher Criticism,” 668.

³*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:xii, 23.

⁴*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:1.

⁵*Young Men’s Manual* 1903–4 (no. 7), ch. 1.

⁶See also Joseph F. Smith, *Journal of Discourses* 15:325–26.

⁷Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938), 167. For a survey of the Latter-day Saint understanding of this concept, see Courtney J. Lassetter, “Dispensations of the Gospel,” in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:388–90.

⁸*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 2:37–38, 100.

⁹*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 4:35–45.

¹⁰See also the statement by Robert J. Matthews: “The four standard works and the teachings of many prominent leaders of the Church are the sources for the LDS doctrine of the Fall. These sources dwell at length on the beneficial effects of the Fall as part of God’s ‘great plan of happiness’ (Alma 42:8) for his children and testify that Adam and Eve are to be honored for their actions.” “Fall of Adam,” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 2:485.

¹¹The distinctiveness of the LDS position on the Fall has been noted by those outside the Church. One Protestant dictionary of Christianity says, “In Mormon teaching, further, the fall of man is considered a fall upward!” Anthony A. Hoekema, “Mormonism,” in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1974), 678–79.

¹²See also Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 1.2.

¹³Joseph Fielding Smith interpreted Moses 8:13–14 in a broader sense as referring not to ethnic distinctions, but rather to the idea that the “daughters of God” were members of the covenant who were marrying outside of the Church. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957–66), 1:136–37.

¹⁴*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:163–66, 2:78–80.

¹⁵See the articles on “Noah” in Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible* as well as in Kitto’s *Cyclopaedia*. In fact, these articles trace this identification back to various of the early Christian Fathers.

¹⁶*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 2:80, quoting from Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, “Noah.”

¹⁷Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary*, 21.

¹⁸*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:163–66.

¹⁹William Benjamin Smith, *The Color Line: A Brief in Behalf of the Unborn* (New York: McClure, Phillips, 1905), 12. Earlier, Roberts quoted Huxley on “mongrels” and “hybrids” to argue against natural evolution in “Man’s Relationship to Deity,” published serially in the *Contributor* 10 (1889) and reprinted in B. H. Roberts, *The Gospel*, 3d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1901), 264.

²⁰*Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:166.

²¹For example, in 1858 Abraham Lincoln said, “I am not, nor ever have been in favor of . . . , qualifying [blacks] to intermarry with white people.” Quoted in Mark E. Neely, Jr., *The Last Best Hope of Earth: Abraham Lincoln and the Promise of America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 55. Some state laws prohibited interracial marriages until the United States Supreme Court’s decision in *Loving v. Virginia*, 388 U.S. 1 (1967).

²²At the end of *Seventy’s Course in Theology* 1:163–66, Roberts included a “Special Lesson” entitled “The Law of the Lord in Ancient and Modern Revelation Applied to the American Negro Race Problem,” in which he set forth a very brief outline of the race issue but did not mention priesthood.

²³For a discussion of the various explanations for the denial of priesthood to the blacks, see Lester E. Bush, Jr., “Mormonism’s Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 8 (Spring 1973): 11–68. See also Alan Cherry and Jessie L. Embry, “Blacks” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 1:125–27, and Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 526–28.

²⁴Bruce R. McConkie, “All Are Alike unto God,” a talk given to Seminary and Institute of Religion personnel at Brigham Young University, August 1978, published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (1981): 152–55.

The Atonement

(Chs. 19, 39–45)

Andrew C. Skinner

Early in life, B. H. Roberts obtained a deep conviction of the divinity of the Savior. That conviction became the core of his testimony of restored truth. In 1903 he wrote:

I know that my redeemer lives. I feel it in every fiber of my being. I am just as satisfied of it as I am my own existence. I cannot feel more sure of my own being than I do that my Redeemer lives, and that my God lives, the Father of my Savior. I feel it in my soul; I am converted to it in my whole being. I bear testimony to you that this is the doctrine of Christ, the Gospel of Jesus, which is the power of God unto salvation. It is “Mormonism.”¹

In *TWL*, his final treatise drawn together during the twilight of his life, Roberts continued to emphasize the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the culmination of all temporal and eternal events. For Roberts, the Atonement was the truth upon which all other truths are established, and the truth to which all other realities point. *TWL* ought to be seen as the ultimate manifestation of his conviction that the Savior’s sacrifice occupied the central place in history, which Roberts viewed as the unfolding of the plan of salvation according to the operation of universal law.

An introductory note to chapter 40 shows that Roberts intended chapters 40–45 to be taken as a unit. He asked readers to suspend judgment until all these chapters were read and digested together. These chapters form the pivotal part of Roberts’s explication of the grand sweep of God’s plan in earth’s history.

Roberts is indebted to earlier studies of the Atonement, including the writings of President John Taylor and Elder James E. Talmage.² In terms of format, chapters 40–45 in *TWL* are much like President Taylor’s classic *The Mediation and Atonement*.³ Both works quote numerous and sometimes lengthy passages of scripture and intersperse words of

explanation to tie the concepts together. This format creates a persuasive argument for the reality, need, and efficacy of the Atonement.

Roberts's discussion of the Atonement is in most respects a summary of concepts and doctrines taught previously in his many earlier writings, especially the fourth year of *The Seventy's Course in Theology*.⁴ *TWL* demonstrates that, at the very least, four points are beyond dispute for Roberts. First, the advent of Christ was a historical reality, long foretold by prophets (396, 403). Second, Christ was God, revealed in the flesh as the express image of God the Father (182, 185). Third, an atonement was necessary because "the inexorableness of law" demanded it (408-9). Fourth, "the Atonement of Christ is [also] a grand reality,"⁵ and the resurrection of Jesus a "stupendous fact" beyond the possibility of doubt (391-92). No incident is more emphatically proven (395). The Resurrection was and is as real as any other temporal actuality or certainty.

Roberts's chapters on the Atonement are prefaced by chapters 19 and 39, "The Revelation of God in Jesus Christ" and "The Meridian Dispensation," which describe the nature and mission of Jesus as "the Christ" and the "revelation of the person of God [the Father] to the children of men as well as a revelation of God's attributes" (185). For Roberts, Jesus is the complete and exact likeness of the character, personality, and attributes of God the Father. But Roberts also describes the dual nature of the person of Jesus, as when he makes reference to "Jesus of Nazareth, the great Peasant Teacher of Judea!" (186).⁶ In the words of Roberts, the revelation of Jesus Christ will leave no excuse for anyone to say "they know not God" (186).

For his purposes, Roberts believes that the most appropriate data on the "revelation of God through the person of Jesus Christ" is in the New Testament. Hence, Roberts uses the New Testament in his discussion of the Atonement more extensively than any other scripture. He is especially fond of the writings of the Apostle John.⁷

Roberts's conviction of the validity and inspired nature of the New Testament is plainly set forth in his earlier writings. This conviction is implicit in *TWL*. In 1888, Roberts had said of the New Testament that

as long as even one of these books remains unshaken as to its authenticity and inspiration, you have a witness for God and Christ in it. . . . But the preponderance of evidence is in favor of the inspiration of all the books of the New Testament. . . . [Therefore] it is not one witness for God and Christ, but a collection of the testimonies of a number of witnesses.⁸

Roberts believed that, properly presented, the biblical evidence for the existence, character, and attributes of God, as well as the existence,

character, and mission of God's son, Jesus Christ, is overwhelming and irrefutable among "intelligent men."⁹ Thus, one detects in *TWL* an attempt to craft a careful argument to persuade all "intelligent" human beings of the efficacy and reality of the atonement of Christ, and this argument is presented by appeal to what Roberts considered the unsailable evidence of the New Testament.

Today, Latter-day Saints expect Book of Mormon references to be used in support of certain doctrinal points. Widespread use of the Book of Mormon to answer doctrinal and theological questions, however, is a fairly recent development. In Roberts's day, LDS discussions about the Atonement did not usually draw heavily upon the Book of Mormon. James E. Talmage's systematic explication of the Atonement in *The Articles of Faith*, for example, utilizes the New Testament to a far greater extent than it uses the Book of Mormon.¹⁰ So, too, with *TWL*, which bears a certain resemblance to Talmage's work in terms of style and content. In fact, a statement by Elder Talmage, for whom Roberts was a friend and doctrinal confidant,¹¹ captures the scriptural tone of both atonement discourses: "The New Testament, which is properly regarded as the scripture of Christ's mission among men, is imbued throughout with the doctrine of salvation through the work of atonement wrought by the Savior."¹² This predilection for biblical proofs in doctrinal exposition appears in the records of Joseph Smith's sermons and teachings as well. Such proofs were largely formulated for the benefit of a particular audience.

The general tone of *TWL* and certain telling passages indicate that Roberts was not writing to a Mormon audience alone. When explaining the significance of Romans 5:14-16, for example, which addresses the free universal redemption from death through Jesus Christ, Roberts says: "In view of this, the Church of the Latter-day Saints say in their summary of faith: 'We believe that all men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression'" (412). Aside from the fact that he inserts a word ("all") into this Article of Faith to make a theological point, the tone of Roberts's statement is that of a Mormon apologist or, more precisely, a missionary attempting to win converts. In another passage, Roberts refers to baptism and the Lord's Supper as "The Two Great Christian Sacraments" (387). Such ecumenical-sounding terminology suggests that Roberts is trying to create some common ground with those he is attempting to persuade. Roberts goes on to say, in language somewhat unfamiliar to the typical Mormon ear, "This ordinance [baptism] is to be preceded by a *confession of faith*" (388; italics added). This kind of language, in addition to Roberts's appeals to non-Mormon experts in the fields of theology and moral philosophy,

supports the conclusion that he was addressing a broad, thoughtful audience, part of whom would accept biblical more than Book of Mormon evidence.

Roberts makes a valuable contribution to the general understanding and awareness of New Testament discussions on the Atonement by highlighting the few passages which explicitly state that Christ was *sinless* (410–11). Roberts also provides a simplified explication of Paul’s intent. Because Christ was sinless, he suffered not for his own sins, but for ours. God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to do for individuals what they could not accomplish for themselves “because of the flesh (human nature)” (411). Here, too, Roberts acknowledges the powerful effects of the fall of Adam. But because of the atonement of Christ, humans bear no personal responsibility for that Fall; Christ atoned for it as well, and the effects of this payment were in place even before Adam himself finished his mortal probation (410–11).

While Roberts relied primarily on biblical support for his atonement chapters, such reliance does not mean that Roberts neglected the Book of Mormon’s contribution to the doctrine of atonement. To the contrary, Roberts’s discussion is so full of Book of Mormon language that the careful reader soon realizes that the Book of Mormon was an integral part of Roberts’s vocabulary and thought processes. A case in point is his use of the phrase “infinite atonement”:

It was, then, an Atonement made by God; and by virtue of that fact it was the highest atonement that could in any way be made—a supreme sacrifice indeed! And that is why, no doubt, it is so frequently referred to as “an infinite atonement.” It is a supreme sacrifice because it was made by a Deity. (412)

Nowhere in this excerpt is explicit reference made to the Book of Mormon. But surely Roberts had the Book of Mormon in mind, for nowhere except in the Book of Mormon is the phrase “infinite atonement” ever used, let alone “frequently referred to” (see 2 Ne. 9:7; 25:16; and Alma 34:10–14).

In addition to using Book of Mormon language, Roberts employed some of the Book of Mormon’s important atonement passages in *TWL*. He quotes Alma 34:8–14 in its entirety, but in a fascinating and unexpected way. Specifically, he uses Amulek’s atonement pericope to refute the suggestion of Origen, the great third-century theologian, that God—owing to his supreme sovereignty—could forgive “out of hand.” According to Roberts, Origen adopted this view in the belief that “remission of sins is made to depend upon arbitrary will without reference to retributive justice” (426). In refuting Origen’s view, Roberts uses Amulek’s words

and certain New Testament passages (Hebrews 9 and 10) to argue that even the ancient practice of sacrificing animals could not satisfy the “claims of justice for man’s transgression of the law” (426).¹³

Roberts’s primary emphasis in his atonement chapters is the consistency, immutability, and overarching governance of law. For Roberts, “inexorableness is of the essence of law” (404). Law reigns in the universe; everyone and everything is “under the dominion of law” (404). For Roberts, the “reign of law” (a favorite phrase) has several features. The law guarantees regularity. That regularity, however, makes atonement absolutely necessary. Each violation of the law brings a penalty which must be exacted. Hence, atonement “is but the vindication of the law” (422).

Roberts’s concept of the universal reign of law dictates his views about the attributes of God. Because law is absolute and unchangeable, for example, God does not have to be immutable. He can, in Roberts’s view, progress even in knowledge: “new thoughts and new vistas may appear” (417). God’s other attributes depend upon law as well. God is limited in power, might, dominion, and knowledge by the reign of law. Thus, one can only believe in the traditional “omni’s” attributed to God if those “omni’s” are qualified. As Roberts states:

The attribute “Omnipotence” must needs be thought upon also as somewhat limited. . . . [There] are things that limit even God’s Omnipotence. What then, is meant by the ascription of the attribute Omnipotence to God? Simply that all that may or can be done by power *conditioned* by other eternal existences—duration, space, matter, truth, justice, reign of law, God can do. But even he may *not* act out of harmony with the other eternal existences which condition or limit even him. (418; italics added)

Roberts does allow in a minimal way for the possibility that God reigns supreme, above the law:

If the idea of the “reign of law” be set aside and there be substituted for it the “reign of God” by his sovereign will, independent of law, even then we must postulate such conception of the attributes of God that regularity will result from his personal government, not capriciousness, today one thing, tomorrow another. (404-5)

But for Roberts, this possibility is merely an obfuscation of the true picture. Law reigns! Hence, “the law that was broken in Eden must stand vindicated at *the bar of the reign of law*” (412; italics added). That vindication, of course, comes through the atonement of Christ.

Roberts’s views on law and the nature of God did not go unchallenged. In one way or another, most of the objections raised by the Twelve concerning *TWL*’s atonement chapters were related to Roberts’s

emphasis on the reign of law. Specifically, the committee of the Quorum of the Twelve argued that the scriptures teach that God is the author of all things, including law (D&C 88:42), and that God is therefore the supreme sovereign over everyone and everything. Furthermore, the committee argued, God does not progress in knowledge because he knows *all* things (2 Ne. 9:20).¹⁴

Roberts's views on the reign of law seem much more emphatic, strident, and expanded in *TWL* than in his *Seventy's Course in Theology*. A comparison of the two reveals that in the latter the term "justice" is used sometimes in place of "law" (for example, "the inexorableness of justice"). In addition, the justice and law discussion in *Seventy's Course in Theology* was immediately juxtaposed with a section on "mercy," thereby softening the discourse somewhat.¹⁵ Still, that softening does not nullify the fact that Roberts's basic view of a universe under the reign of law was published there in 1911 without significant objection many years before *TWL* became an issue.¹⁶

Perhaps the best way to summarize the difference between the views expressed in *Seventy's Course in Theology* and those in *TWL* is this: the views found in *TWL* are more explicit and thus more evocative of opposition. Those views reflect the increased influence of John Fiske's *Studies in Religion*. That book had significantly influenced Roberts's initial views;¹⁷ Roberts subscribed even more intently to Fiske in the last years of his writing career (408). Hence, *TWL* challenged the absolute dominion of God in a more direct way than did *Seventy's Course*. Indeed, Roberts's undeniable belief in the "perfect reign of law, and reign of perfect law" (424) probably sounded blasphemous to some.¹⁸

While the committee objected to Roberts's idea about the reign of law and its ramifications for God's sovereignty, Roberts nevertheless held an exalted conception of God and Jesus Christ. They are divine and perfect. Humans, to the extent they violate divine law, are fallen and sinful. A careful reading of *TWL*'s atonement chapters discloses Roberts's reverence for the calling and mission of the Messiah. That reverence is evidenced in Roberts's consistent reference to Jesus not simply as Christ but as "the Christ"; this reference reflects Jesus' salvific office in relation to humanity. The vicarious suffering of this "one Divine Intelligence" (453) is the especial doctrine on which the gospel is based. Roberts's noble purpose in writing was:

To teach and to demonstrate, first of all, God-love for man, by a sacrifice that tasks God that man might be saved; and second, to inspire man-love for God, by the demonstration that God first loved man, and how deeply God loved him; and third, to teach man-love for man. (453-54)

NOTES

¹B. H. Roberts, *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1903), 294–95.

²Talmage's influence is discussed later in this article.

³John Taylor, *The Mediation and Atonement* (1882; reprint, Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1970).

⁴B. H. Roberts, *The Seventy's Course in Theology, Fourth Year: The Atonement* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1911). See Truman G. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts: The Book of Mormon and the Atonement," in Monte Nyman and Charles Tate, eds., *The Book of Mormon: First Nephi* (Provo: Religious Studies Center, 1988), 297–314.

⁵B. H. Roberts, *The Gospel and Man's Relationship to Deity*, 11th ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1966), 10.

⁶This epithet has a familiar ring owing to the title of a recently published biography of Jesus which refers to him as a "Mediterranean Jewish Peasant." John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991).

⁷He makes reference to John's Gospel and Epistles three times more than the next most cited book, which is also found in the New Testament (Romans). The references to passages in the Gospel of John alone are almost twice as many as any other book of scripture.

⁸Roberts, *Gospel*, 62–63.

⁹Roberts, *Gospel*, 80.

¹⁰James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, 25th ed. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1947), 74–93.

¹¹Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 79, 176, 194, 239, 320, 346.

¹²Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, 74.

¹³In addition, *TWL* ch. 44 contains several explicit references to Book of Mormon passages. Roberts also used the Book of Mormon in his discussion on the mode of baptism, stating that "the official formula for this ordinance [was] given by the risen Christ to the Nephites in America" (3 Ne. 11:23–26). Roberts also declares that 3 Nephi 11 presents a "most dramatic and soul-thrilling testimony to the resurrection of Christ" (394). This is hardly the language of someone who has problems with the Book of Mormon. Even more impressive is the fact that Roberts's declaration (394) follows immediately after his quotation of Joseph Smith's witness of the resurrected Christ (D&C 76:22–23).

¹⁴Similar expanded doctrinal expositions that argue against Roberts's position on the nature of law may be found in more recent treatments of the issue of law and the nature of God. For a general introduction to the positions, see Carl S. Hawkins and Douglas Parker, "Divine and Eternal Law," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:808–10. Two recent articles by one author refute Elder Roberts's position: LaMar E. Garrard, "What Is Man?" *Hearken, O Ye People: Discourses on the Doctrine and Covenants* (Sandy, Utah: Randall Book, 1984), 133–52; and LaMar E. Garrard, "God, Natural Law, and the Doctrine and Covenants," in *Doctrines for Exaltation* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 55–76.

¹⁵Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 4:105-9, 82-86.

¹⁶Sometimes the wording of certain parts of the same topics being discussed in both *Seventy's Course* and *TWL* is exact.

¹⁷Roberts, *Seventy's Course in Theology* 4:86.

¹⁸Another significant reason for the objections being raised about *TWL* and not *Seventy's Course* may have been changes in the membership of the Quorum of the Twelve.

The Renewal of “the Way”

(Ch. 47)

Richard C. Roberts

In chapter 47, Roberts outlines the history of the Restoration and the opening of the dispensation of the fullness of times, during which “the Way” was expanded to its greatest lengths. Being knowledgeable about many significant events in the story of the Latter-day Saints—from the life of Joseph Smith to the Missouri persecutions, the rise and fall of Nauvoo, and the pioneer settlement of the West—Roberts could have approached this story in many ways. Consistent with the themes of other chapters in *TWL*, however, he chose to mention only the visions of the Restoration in which heavenly messengers revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith the knowledge and power necessary to the plan of salvation.

Summary

Roberts first presents the New Testament prophecies of Peter, Paul, and John found in Acts 3:1-21, Ephesians 1:8-10, and Revelation 14:6-7. (Roberts also cross-referenced his personal Bible to 2 Peter 3:1-9.) Roberts found that these prophecies unitedly refer to a future “in-coming” of the dispensation of the fullness of times.

Roberts next recounted the early history of Joseph Smith and his role as the prophet who opened the new dispensation. Roberts calls James 1:5-7 the “Golden Text,” for it led Joseph Smith to pray for an answer to the question, “Who of all these parties are right; or, are they all wrong together?” (JS-H 1:10). Roberts called the answer that Joseph received the “first vision of the New Dispensation.”

The term “first vision” implies a “second,” and Roberts denominates the coming forth of the Book of Mormon as the “second vision of the New Dispensation.” In his explanation of the Book of Mormon, Roberts describes the Jaredites as a people who came “from the tower of Babel

at the time of the dispersion of the people from the Euphrates Valley,” and he locates them in the New World in the “southern part of Central America for a period of sixteen centuries from 2200 B.C. to about 600 B.C.” He then describes how the Nephites, augmented by the Mulekites, eventually lost touch with faith and righteousness until their civilization was overthrown, surviving “only in the tribal relations such as existed at the advent of the Europeans” (469). Roberts maintains that the Book of Mormon was a record of the “hand-dealings” of God with ancient people and points out that the risen Christ visited them and introduced the fullness of the gospel to them with all the principles and the ordinances “necessary to salvation. Therefore it contains the fullness of the gospel” (470). This book was a “New Witness” to things also contained in the Bible. Joseph Smith was given the power and the means through the Urim and Thummim to translate the golden plates into English. Roberts was happy to report that the Book of Mormon had subsequently been translated into fifteen of the world’s languages.

Roberts presents as the “third vision” the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood, the visitation of John the Baptist to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on May 15, 1829. During that appearance, John conferred upon Joseph and Oliver the “keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins” (D&C 13:1).

The “fourth vision” was the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood by Peter, James, and John. Those three bestowed upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the “keys of the kingdom under which plenary power they were authorized to proceed with the preaching of the gospel, organizing the church, and doing whatsoever might be necessary to bring it in and establish the New Dispensation of the gospel, and prepare the world for the glorious coming of the Lord Jesus, and the founding of his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven” (471). In addition to describing Peter, James, and John’s visit, Roberts spends some time candidly dealing with the estimated date (June 1829) of this event.¹

Roberts next treats the “development of the new dispensation.” Here he shows how The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized through “continuous revelation.” Holders of the Aaronic Priesthood were charged with administering in the temporal things of the Church—“the outward ordinances of the gospel and the administration of the details of the financial affairs of the church, in gathering tithes, and accounting for them and distributing the charities of the church” (471)—under the supervision of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The Melchizedek Priesthood held authority to “act for God,” especially

in spiritual matters—including performing ordinances in the holy temples, preaching the gospel and administering in all its ordinances, teaching and expounding gospel truths, and “warning the nations of judgments to come, and of the approaching time when the Son of Man shall again appear on the earth and open up the promised reign of righteousness and peace” (472). The two priesthoods were to conduct their functions in the spirit of unfeigned love, “by persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness, by meekness and by love unfeigned, by kindness and pure knowledge” (472). According to Roberts, this was the same organization, though somewhat amplified, as was established by Christ in the great meridian dispensation. The Church, so organized, has two functions: to teach God’s revealed truth to all people and to perfect the lives of those who accept God’s message—the Truth.

Roberts next describes the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830, in Fayette, New York. This action restored to the world “the Way,” which is the full and complete restoration of the everlasting gospel, “uniting in one all the previous dispensations of it,” and allowing for the “expanding toward that fullness of knowledge through the revelations of God” which would come later to “gather together all things in Christ,” both things which are in heaven and in earth, “even in him” (473).

Roberts next shows how the newly established Church of the dispensation of the fullness of times is an “enlargement of the new dispensation over others.” He does so by telling of the visions in the Kirtland Temple in 1836. These visions are enlargements on the gospel that were not fully understood until this time. The first Kirtland vision was the “vision of the Savior” in the temple. In that vision, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery saw the Savior in his glory and he proclaimed to them, “I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 110:4). He also said that their sins were forgiven, and he accepted “this house.” A marvelous vision.

Next came a vision in which Moses appeared to Joseph and Oliver and “committed unto them the keys of the gathering of Israel.” This conferral of keys would open the way to restore Israel to its proper place in God’s plan of things—something to be accomplished in the new dispensation.

There followed the vision of one Elias, whom Roberts identifies as Melchizedek, the important high priest from the era of Abraham. The purpose of Melchizedek’s appearance was to deliver the keys relating to the blessing of Abraham’s seed and all subsequent generations. Roberts also noted that Melchizedek restored “something of patriarchal power and blessing since he said unto the brethren that in them and

their seed all generations after them should be blessed and this is of patriarchal character” (474).

Finally, Roberts describes the vision of Elijah, which was characterized by those who received it as “great and glorious” (D&C 110:13). Elijah said that he came in fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi (Mal. 4:5–6). Roberts emphasizes in his discussion the extension of the Atonement not only to the living, but also to those who have died. From 1 Peter and 1 Corinthians, Roberts reasons that in addition to baptism for the dead, early Christians also performed “other ordinances . . . vicariously administered in behalf of the dead” (475). These ordinances included confirmation, baptism by the Spirit (conferral of the gift of the Holy Ghost), ordination to the priesthood, marriage, and eternal marriage. Roberts concludes that “the gospel of Christ is not limited, then, in its power to save to this earth life, or this world alone. Its powers enter into the spirit world” (476). In light of this power, Roberts emphasizes how important the work of Elijah is in turning the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers. Indeed, Roberts points out that Mormons have continually sought to build temples to carry out these necessary ordinances for themselves and their progenitors.

When this “renewal of the way” is consummated, it will usher in the coming of the kingdom of God on earth, and things will be done on earth as in heaven. Always the missionary, Roberts concludes that “the Way” needs to be preached to the world and that hearers of the word, through faith and the spirit and their agency, will discern that it is true. As Paul said, “Faith cometh by hearing the word of God.” Roberts similarly affirms that the Prophet of the New Dispensation relied “upon that hearing of the word of God” for the convincing power of its truth. In that same spirit and in “confidence of its [the word’s] innate power of convincing men of the truth,” Roberts submitted “this brief account of the restoration of the Way of eternal life to the children of men” (477).

Sources

B. H. Roberts used a variety of sources in writing this chapter. For his scriptural sources, he used mainly the New Testament and the Doctrine and Covenants. His personal Bible contains many cross-references (for instance, 1 Thessalonians 4:14; 2 Peter 3:1–9; and Alma 11:45) to points that appear in this chapter. The B. H. Roberts Collection in the LDS Church Archives contains a 1922 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants that was evidently Roberts’s personal copy.

Sections 1, 20, 110, 127, and 128 have Roberts’s handwritten notations in the margins. In section 20, Roberts refers to the Articles of Faith and Galatians 6:1. Section 127:8 has the following note: “The ritual of the priesthood to be revealed. Important announcement as to temple ritual in P.” In section 128:5, Roberts notes “things of salvation of dead arranged before foundation of world.” His comment on section 128:18 says, “New things to be revealed.” These cross references and notes indicate that Roberts studied many of the ideas in chapter 47 over a long period of time.

The summary page for chapter 47 lists several references not specifically cited in the chapter’s footnotes. Reviewing these references, I note that Roberts refers to Orson Pratt’s *Remarkable Visions*,² a pamphlet first printed in 1841. *Remarkable Visions* deals with the visions of Joseph Smith and the receiving and translating of the gold plates, themes also articulated by Roberts. Another reference, Osborne Widtsoe’s *The Restoration of the Gospel*,³ written by a principal of the Latter-day Saint High School, was a small book used in 1910–11 as a course of study for the Young Ladies’ MIA program. This straightforward account of the restoration of the Church cited Roberts’s “History of the Church” in *Americana Magazine*.⁴

Two of Roberts’s references were apparently given to add evidence to the truthfulness of the Restoration by demonstrating the antiquity of the doctrine of salvation for the dead. Specifically, Roberts mentions an *Improvement Era* article on “The Epistle of Kallikrates,” a Greek manuscript found in North Africa in 1927.⁵ Reputed to be an early Christian letter sent by a Corinthian Christian convert to the Apostle Paul in Rome, the Epistle of Kallikrates featured a fragmented account of baptism for the dead. Another source, Huidekoper’s *Christ’s Mission to the Underworld*, could not be found in the B. H. Roberts Memorial Library, but it was apparently cited to bolster the LDS doctrine that Jesus opened the preaching of the gospel to the spirits of the dead.

Part four of Roberts’s *Outline of Ecclesiastical History*⁶ is titled “The Restoration of the Gospel.” This appears to be the main secondary source from which the material in this chapter derives. *History of the Church*, which B. H. Roberts edited and helped prepare for publication in 1902–12,⁷ provides the main primary source materials for this chapter.

NOTES

¹He refers the reader to Doctrine and Covenants 128:20 and *History of the Church* 1:40–42 and footnotes. See also Larry C. Porter, “Dating the Restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood,” *Ensign* 9 (June 1979): 5–10; and Jae R. Ballif, “Melchizedek Priesthood: Restoration of,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:885–87.

²Orson Pratt, *Remarkable Visions* (Liverpool: R. James, 1848).

³Osborne John Peter Widtsoe, *The Restoration of the Gospel*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1912).

⁴This series became the basis for Roberts’s *Comprehensive History of the Church*.

⁵“Epistle of Kallikrates,” trans. J. M. Witherow, *Improvement Era* 32 (September 1928): 899–909.

⁶B. H. Roberts, *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1902).

⁷Joseph Smith, Jr., *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971).

Christ: The Life

(Chs. 48–55)

Michael D. Rhodes

In Part III of *TWL*, Roberts arrives at the third element in the title of his book: “The Life.” As Jesus Christ is “the Truth” and “the Way,” so is he also “the Life”—the one perfect example of how everyone should live. These chapters are written in a direct, declarative style with such clarity and plainness that they require little explanation or elaboration.

For Roberts, the hallmark of Christ’s life was a total submission to God’s will and total fidelity and obedience to God’s commandments. Christ’s is “the Life” that each person should strive to emulate in mortality. This emulation is necessary, Roberts says, because mortal life must be understood in the context of our premortal existence. Mortal life is a period of testing to prove one’s worthiness to return to God’s presence.

Roberts defines “the Life” almost exclusively by reference to the scriptures. He uses very few other sources in these chapters. In his use of the scriptures, he concentrates especially on the New Testament; he turns to the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, or the Pearl of Great Price only when no biblical reference is available for the point he is trying to make or when the scriptures of this dispensation offer stronger or more specific readings.

Roberts points to the law of sacrifice revealed to Adam and then to the Ten Commandments given to Moses as a foundation for “the Life.” Christ’s teachings during his mortal ministry more clearly teach and define “the Life,” which Jesus summed up in the two great commandments: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matt. 22:37–39). These commandments are most significant in *TWL* because Roberts sees the love of God as a natural consequence of coming to know God. The same is true of loving others. As humans come to understand that they are literally children of God and have the

potential to become like him, they will come to love each other and want to help each other to reach their full eternal potential.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, “the Life” is more than a system of ethics or humanitarianism. The ordinances of the gospel are also essential (486). In Roberts’s words: “It [the Life] is a new birth, a spiritual power; it is a conformity to the purpose of God, a spiritual union with God, and a submission to his will, and a careful performance of all that he has ordained as necessary to the completion of ‘the Life!’” (486).

Robert devotes two chapters to the Sermon on the Mount, which he regards as Christ’s blueprint for “the Life,” a life that Christ not only fully taught but perfectly lived. Christ expresses the ideal of his teaching in the statement: “Be ye therefore perfect” (Matt. 5:48). In his handling of the Sermon on the Mount, Roberts concentrates primarily on the account in Matthew (he considered Luke 6 to be a report of Jesus’ words on a different occasion). He supplements the Matthean text, however, with the version of the sermon found in 3 Nephi 12–14. For example, he uses 3 Nephi to show that Christ’s admonition to “take no thought for the morrow” was directed only to the twelve disciples and not to members of the Church in general.

In chapters 52–53, Roberts deals with what he calls the “Christian character,” which is set forth in the teachings of the ancient apostles and Church leaders (Peter, Paul, James, Jude, and John).¹ Fundamental to these New Testament teachings, Roberts maintains, is the central principle of God’s plan from the beginning: “We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abr. 3:25). In other words, Roberts again emphasizes the theme of obedience.

For Roberts, the purpose of earth life is to obey the commandments and submit to God’s will in all things, to live “the Life” that Christ taught and lived. By fulfilling this purpose, the faithful can return to live eternally with God. Roberts thus sets forth the same eternal principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ that all the prophets and apostles have taught since the beginning.

In chapter 54, Roberts presents briefly the main laws and commandments of the New Dispensation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Not surprisingly, the Word of Wisdom is explained first, since this law of health and wisdom was a favorite theme at this time in the administration of President Heber J. Grant,² who in 1930 made “abstinence from the use of alcohol, tobacco, coffee, and tea . . . an official requirement for those seeking temple recommends.”³ Roberts, however, does not dwell on abstinence from alcohol as the essence of the Word of Wisdom,⁴ but rather emphasizes the philosophical and spiritual aspects

of this revelation, which promises that those who observe its principles will find “wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19). This key to the pursuit of knowledge ties directly into the themes of *TWL*.

In addition, Roberts outlines briefly the laws of charity, consecration, and obedience. Roberts draws these religious duties largely from the doctrines of the temple. Hence, the weight that Roberts places on these particular laws and commandments is understandable and appropriate. The law of tithing, implementing the law of consecration and stewardship, is seen primarily in its capacity of caring for the poor. In the 1920s, prior to the organization of the Church welfare program, local bishops and Relief Societies cared for the poor, drawing upon funds supplied by fast offerings, tithing, and Relief Society donations.⁵

In chapter 55, Roberts discusses chastity, marriage, and the family. As the culminating temple ordinance that follows the LDS endowment ceremony, eternal marriage serves as a fitting conclusion to *TWL*.⁶ Roberts, himself still married at this time to plural wives under pre-Manifesto practices, praises those who had sacrificed so much to live the law of plural marriage when it had been commanded by the Lord. Chapter 55 and its addendum, however, teach strict monogamy. These sections give very interesting perspectives on LDS attitudes toward society, marriage, morality, and ethics in the 1920s.

NOTES

¹Paul, in Gal. 1:18–19, refers to James, the brother of Christ, as an apostle. Perhaps James was ordained an apostle to replace James, the brother of John, after the latter was killed by King Herod. There is no evidence, scriptural or otherwise, that Jude, another of Christ’s brothers, was an apostle.

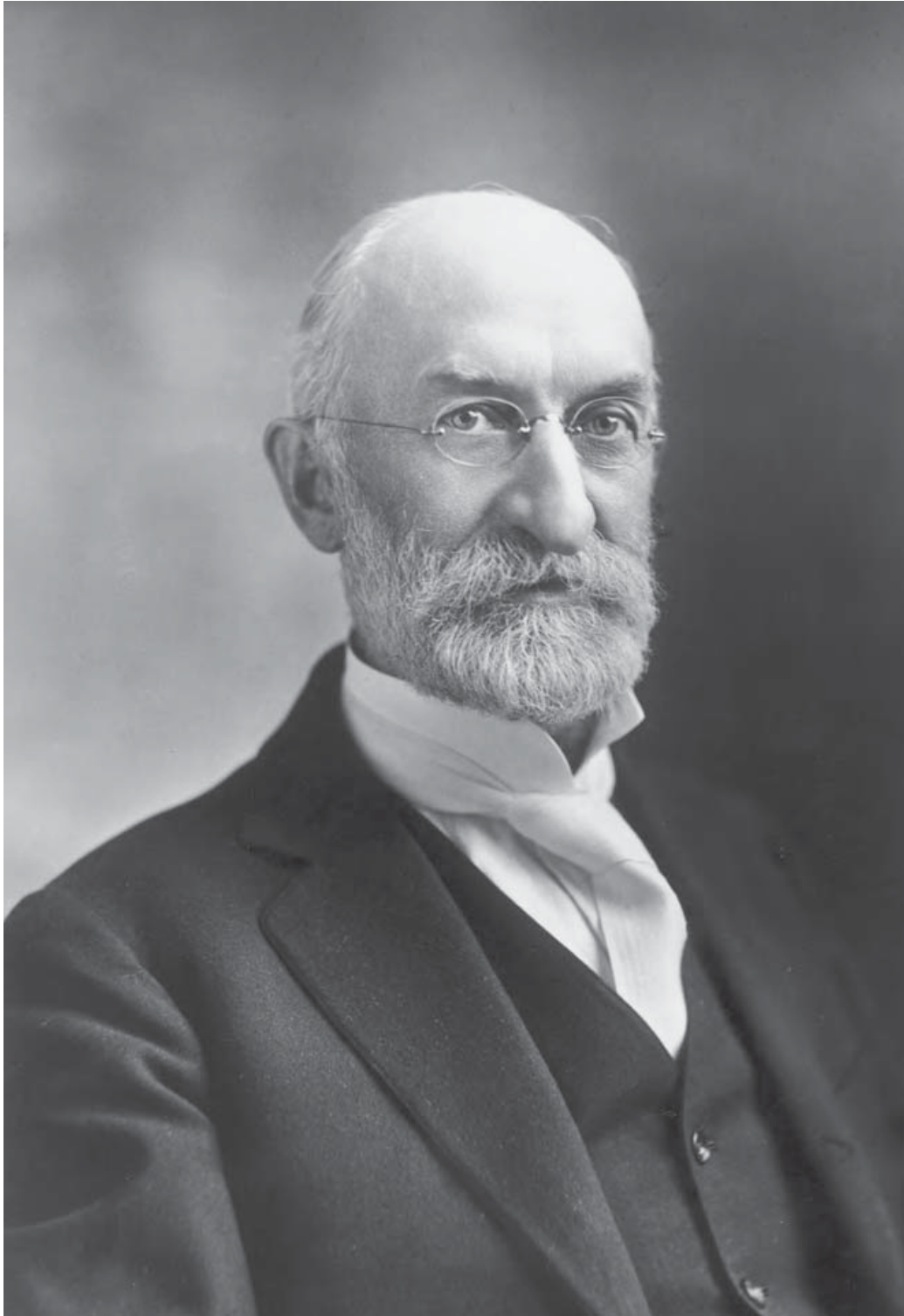
²President Grant favored prohibition, which was repealed in 1932. Thomas G. Alexander, “The Word of Wisdom: From Principle to Requirement,” *Dialogue* 14 (Autumn 1981): 78–88; and Brent G. Thompson, “Standing between Two Fires: Mormons and Prohibition, 1908–1917,” *Journal of Mormon History* 10 (1983): 35–52.

³Joseph L. Lyon, “Word of Wisdom,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 4:1584.

⁴Roberts himself favored the repeal of prohibition. Alexander, “The Word of Wisdom,” 84.

⁵Bruce D. Blumell, “Welfare before Welfare: Twentieth Century LDS Church Charity before the Great Depression,” *Journal of Mormon History* 6 (1979): 89–106.

⁶The final chapter in Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology* (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855), is also about the laws of marriage and procreation.



Heber J. Grant. President Grant and his counselors authorized Roberts's stay in New York and provided him a stenographer. Because *The Truth, The Way, The Life* was considered an excellent work in many respects, President Grant sorrowed that Roberts insisted on including in it "some things that I think [are] problematical and cannot be demonstrated." LDS Church Archives.

The Story of *The Truth, The Way, The Life*

James B. Allen

B. H. Roberts was a highly complex person, impossible to characterize fully in any simple terms.¹ With respect to his mental capacity and scholarly activities, however, he has frequently been identified as perhaps the most eminent intellectual in the history of the Church.² Roberts himself probably would not have flaunted such a distinction,³ but it is one he may have appreciated hearing. As a young, illiterate British immigrant to Utah, he was bright, eager to learn, and anxious to master all the knowledge he could. He attended Deseret University (predecessor to the University of Utah), where he learned something from John R. Park about the value of independent thought. He also graduated at the top of his class. Mainly, however, he was self-taught, reading everything he could get his hands on and eventually becoming one of the most learned men in Utah. As a scholar, writer, and Church leader, he showed all the characteristics of one who loved the life of the mind, thirsted for both secular and spiritual knowledge, and was willing to discuss all the implications of anything he learned. His personal library, now housed in the LDS Church Archives, comprised 1,385 books, a substantial portion of which dealt with some aspect of theology, history (including Christian history and American antiquities), and philosophy.⁴

Roberts was the epitome of what one might call the “faithful intellectual.” He believed that the quest for knowledge involved both the life of the mind and the life of the spirit—that intellectuality and faith must go hand-in-hand in their search for truth. As his leading biographer has written:

He loved simple faith if simple meant uncluttered and strong. But he was troubled that the phrase is sometimes used as a synonym for “simpering acquiescence.” And he could find nothing in the scriptures, ancient or modern, to excuse anyone from brain sweat and from the arduous lifetime burden of seeking “revelation upon revelation,



John R. Park. As head of the Deseret University and as Roberts's language and literature instructor, Park impressed upon Roberts the value of independent thought. Photographed by Fox and Symons. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

knowledge upon knowledge,” the expansion of truth and light until one is “glorified in truth and knoweth all things.”⁵

During his lifetime, Roberts produced a library of books and articles on history, theology, and defenses of the faith that outstrips, in sheer volume, anything produced by any other General Authority of the Church: over thirty books, three hundred articles, numerous tracts and pamphlets, and over a thousand sermons and discourses (many of which were published in newspapers and magazines).⁶ His forensic talents, moreover, fully matched his intellectual prowess, a fact which helps explain why he was frequently called upon to represent the Church in highly visible public appearances.

Sometime early in his career, Roberts began to read the works of John Fiske. Indeed, Roberts quoted extensively from two of these works in *The Truth, The Way, The Life*.⁷ Fiske, a philosopher and historian, was a popular lecturer and writer who became known as the United States’ chief proponent of the theory of evolution. Though it is apparent from *TWL* that Roberts did not accept evolution as the explanation for the origin of Adam and his descendants, Roberts nevertheless admired Fiske and his way of thinking. No doubt because of this admiration and his own proclivities toward intellectualism, Roberts was profoundly impressed by the characterization of religious discipleship in Josiah Royce’s introduction to Fiske’s *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*. The use Roberts later made of Royce’s words suggest that they epitomize as well as anything could how Roberts viewed his own role in promoting the truths of Mormonism. There are, said Royce, two sorts of religious disciples:

There are, first, the disciples pure and simple,—people who fall under the spell of a person or of a doctrine, and whose whole intellectual life thenceforth consists in their partisanship. They expound, and defend, and ward off foes, and live and die faithful to the one formula. Such disciples may be indispensable at first in helping a new teaching to get a popular hearing, but in the long run they rather hinder than help the wholesome growth of the very ideas that they defend: for great ideas live by growing, and a doctrine that has merely to be preached, over and over, in the same terms, cannot possibly be the whole truth. No man ought to be merely a faithful disciple of any other man. Yes, no man ought to be a mere disciple even of himself. We live spiritually by outliving our formulas, and by thus enriching our sense of their deeper meaning. Now the disciples of the first sort do not live in this larger and more spiritual sense. They repeat. And true life is never mere repetition.⁸

In one sense Roberts may have been this “first sort” of disciple. No one can read his sermons or his life story without seeing him

repeat, time and time again, his faith in what he considered the essentials of the gospel. These included the “first principles” defined in the fourth Article of Faith, the atonement of Christ, the restoration of the priesthood through Joseph Smith, and the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon. His great personal goal, expressed repeatedly throughout his life, was to be a powerful witness of these things. On the other hand, he hardly kept himself tethered to a single formula or angle in presenting those truths or exploring their depths. Many of his theological writings were examples of his willingness to explore new ways to present old truths, casting them in imaginative new formulas. *TWL* was, in large part, a summary of much of what he had done before—his synthesis of his life’s study and his effort to cast the truths he felt so deeply in new, more advanced, and more well-integrated formulas. In that sense, he was much more like Royce’s disciples of a “second sort.” Such disciples, said Royce,

are men who have been attracted to a new doctrine by the fact that it gave expression, in a novel way, to some large and deep interest which had already grown up in themselves, and which had already come, more or less independently, to their own consciousness. They thus bring to the new teaching, from the first, their own personal contribution. The truth that they gain is changed as it enters their souls. The seed that the sower strews upon their fields springs up in their soil, and bears fruit,—thirty, sixty, an hundred fold. They return to their master his own with usury. Such men are the disciples that it is worth while for a master to have. Disciples of the first sort often become, as Schopenhauer said, mere magnifying mirrors wherein one sees enlarged, all the defects of a doctrine. Disciples of the second sort co-operate in the works of the Spirit; and even if they always remain rather disciples than originators, they help to lead the thought that they accept to a truer expression. They force it beyond its earlier and cruder stages of development.⁹

In 1906, paraphrasing much of what Royce had to say about such disciples, Roberts seemed to spell out what he hoped would be his own intellectual and spiritual contributions to Mormonism:

I believe “Mormonism” affords opportunity for disciples of the second sort; nay, that its crying need is for such disciples. It calls for thoughtful disciples who will not be content with merely repeating some of its truths but will develop its truths; and enlarge it by that development. Not half—not one-hundredth part—not a thousandth part of that which Joseph Smith revealed to the Church has yet been unfolded, either to the Church or to the world. . . . The Prophet planted by teaching the germ-truths of the great dispensation of the fulness of times. The watering and the weeding is going on, and God is giving the increase, and will give it more abundantly in the future as more

intelligent discipleship shall obtain. The disciples of "Mormonism," growing discontented with the necessarily primitive methods which have hitherto prevailed in sustaining the doctrine, will yet take profounder and broader views of the great doctrines committed to the Church; and, departing from mere repetition, will cast them in new formulas; co-operating in the works of the Spirit, until they help to give to the truths received a more forceful expression, and carry it beyond the earlier and cruder stages of its development.¹⁰

The intellectual milieu of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provided the broad historical backdrop for the work that Roberts would consider his *magnum opus*. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., has depicted the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when Roberts was in the midst of his early studies, as a "critical" period in American religion.¹¹ Orthodox American Christianity faced crucial challenges both to its fundamental system of thought and to its social programs. Perhaps most serious was the challenge of biological evolution, which most scientists solidly supported by the 1870s and to which many of the "thoughtful public" had been converted by such intellectual lights as Herbert Spencer, Thomas H. Huxley, and John Fiske. The famous 1925 Scopes trial in Tennessee was only one manifestation of a long-time tension that, in some way, affected nearly all church-going Americans.

Another bone of contention in the ongoing contest over religious modernism was higher criticism of the Bible, for such scholarly activity seemed to call into question the very divinity of the sacred work itself. Likewise, the growing study of comparative religion became a scholarly preoccupation that also seemed to threaten Christian orthodoxy as scholars looked at all religions, finding similar patterns from the standpoint of mythology, folklore, psychology, and anthropology. Schlesinger observes that these intellectual movements may not have affected the "average mind," but "they deeply affected the thinking of more intelligent readers."¹²

The practically inevitable result of all this scholarly activity was internal dissent and schism in American religions. Some ministers embraced the new scientific dogma, believing they could find a way to reconcile it with the essentials of Christianity. Others entrenched themselves against the dogma even more tenaciously than earlier, while churches sometimes split and professors at schools controlled by various denominations were dismissed for espousing the new, seemingly more rational, theological ideology. Modernism also affected the social and political programs of many churches.

The theological tensions created by these issues in other churches in the latter nineteenth century reached their peak a bit later within Mormonism. At Brigham Young University, for example, three professors were dismissed in 1911, not because they believed in evolution, but because they defiantly persisted in advocating it in the classroom along with personal dicta not compatible with Church teachings.¹³ At the same time, some Church leaders recognized that religion teachers needed greater intellectual training and more awareness of modern scholarship. A few of those teachers were assigned by the Church to study at the University of Chicago under some of the most important biblical scholars and higher critics in the country. In addition, during two summers in the early 1930s, schools for religion teachers were held at BYU's Aspen Grove camp. Edgar J. Goodspeed of the University of Chicago was invited to provide some of the instruction.

Between 1920 and the time of his death in 1933, Roberts met his greatest intellectual and spiritual challenges and prepared for publication the two items that he believed would become his most important contributions to the literature of the Church: *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, published in 1930, and *TWL*. When judged by the standards of its time, the *Comprehensive History* comes off well. Roberts wrote with the eye of faith, but he was willing to discuss important weaknesses and failings when he saw them. Compared with other LDS Church histories of the time, it was a model of balance. Davis Bitton wrote in 1978 that it was still "far superior to any history of Mormonism which has yet appeared; even today it is a work which no serious student of the subject can afford to ignore."¹⁴ Though considerable subsequent scholarship has provided new insight into many aspects of Mormon history, the *Comprehensive History* remains essential for students of the Mormon past, and much of the material is far from outdated.

TWL, on the other hand, even if it had been published during Roberts's lifetime, might have suffered a different fate. Whatever Church history *TWL* contained was cursory in nature, for the major focus was on philosophy, the universe, and theological understanding. Though it represented the culmination of Roberts's thinking about theological matters, some of its theology was not acceptable to his colleagues among the General Authorities and probably would be no more acceptable today. It is doubtful that *TWL* would have had a life anything like that of the *Comprehensive History* or remained in the collective memory of the Saints any longer than Roberts's other theological works, most of which are remembered only by scholars and other highly committed students of Church history.

For understanding Roberts himself, however, *TWL* is of prime importance. There he attempted to present to the Church the most important conclusions from his lifetime of study. But he also made a statement, in one way or another, on most of the major theological issues that were causing so much friction within other churches. He considered biological evolution, for example, and did not specifically reject it within “kinds” (239), but he rejected all three of the usually recognized varieties of evolution and proposed a “developmental theory” that started with “the eternity of life” to explain the ultimate development of life on earth, “save as to man” (240). He did not accept evolution as the way in which Adam and his descendants came into being. Rather, Roberts believed that God brought Adam from another world after a monstrous cataclysm had destroyed all pre-Adamic life on the earth. Roberts also demonstrated his awareness of higher criticism, even though he rejected most of its methodology. His fundamental acceptance of the Bible as authentic history and revelation was clear. He showed his acquaintanceship with the study of comparative religions. He did much of that in the first part of *TWL* but in such a way that the comparisons fit into the grand scheme of things that he saw being worked out by Deity. *TWL* was Roberts’s ultimate statement of his own beliefs.

The Book of Mormon and Its Relationship to *TWL*

Clearly, the scientific, theological, and philosophical currents of his day helped form the intellectual backdrop for *TWL* and for many of B. H. Roberts’s other writings. This was true of his works on the Book of Mormon, including three manuscripts compiled in 1921, 1922, and 1927 that were not intended for publication but represented his continuing efforts to recognize and seek responses to the challenges presented by some forms of higher criticism. Despite whatever questions he may have considered, he retained his faith in the authenticity of the Book of Mormon and he let it guide much of what he said in *TWL*, which he completed after those three manuscripts. He also concluded his final testimony to the world, given in his last discourse in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, by reminding his listeners that God gave to Joseph Smith “power from on high to translate the Book of Mormon, and thence followed all which brought forth the New and Last Dispensation.” He listed the translation of the Book of Mormon among the many events “and numerous revelations to the Prophet which brought forth a development of the truth, that surpasses all revealed truth of former dispensations.”¹⁵

On the morning of August 7, 1933, less than two months before his death, Roberts received a visit from Wesley P. Lloyd, a seminary teacher and one of Roberts's former New England States missionaries. During the conversation, Roberts said some things that seemed surprising to Lloyd, who recorded them in his journal. Partly on the basis of that journal entry, Roberts's continuing faith in the Book of Mormon has sometimes been questioned. This issue has been thoroughly examined elsewhere,¹⁶ but because the Book of Mormon is so important to the spiritual and intellectual integrity of *TWL* itself, it seems essential to comment briefly here about Roberts's lifelong work on the Book of Mormon as part of the story of *TWL*.

Long before he began work on *TWL*, Roberts was pursuing all the intellectual problems relating to the origins of the Book of Mormon. He began his intensive studies as early as the 1880s, partly in response to the numerous challenges to that volume's authenticity based on secular scholarship and higher criticism. The result was his *New Witnesses for God*, largely a defense of the Book of Mormon, published in 1903. Later (1909–11) it appeared as a three-volume work. In August 1921, Elder James E. Talmage of the Council of the Twelve received a letter from William E. Riter, who asked some very searching questions about a few of the apparent inconsistencies and anachronisms in the Book of Mormon. Elder Talmage, in turn, asked Elder Roberts to prepare a response.

Roberts's work on this assignment raised issues he had not considered before. By the end of December, he had put together a 141-page manuscript entitled "Book of Mormon Difficulties: A Study." He asked for an opportunity to present his findings at a meeting of all the General Authorities, hoping that through their collective wisdom and the inspiration of the Lord they could find solutions that would "maintain the reasonableness for the faith of all in the Nephite scriptures."¹⁷ He was given that opportunity in two long days of meetings, January 4–5, 1922. At the end of the manuscript he expressed his major concern: "how shall we answer the questions that arise from these considerations of American archeology?" Silence, he pleaded, was not the answer, for it would be an acknowledgment of defeat. "Most humbly," he said, "but also most anxiously, I await the further development of knowledge that will make it possible for us to give a reasonable answer to those who question us concerning the matters herein discussed."¹⁸

The Brethren did not think it was time to pursue the matter further, even though they allowed Roberts another meeting on January 26 and formed a short-lived committee to pursue the matter with him. In that connection, Roberts completed a 450-page manuscript, "A Book of

Mormon Study,” which he also planned to present to the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve. In the cover letter he intended to send with it he made a significant comment:

Let me say once [and] for all, so as to avoid what might otherwise call for repeated explanation, that what is herein set forth does not represent any conclusions of mine. This report . . . is what it purports to be, namely a “study of Book of Mormon origins,” for the information of those who ought to know everything about it *pro et con*, as well [as] that which has been produced against it, and that which may be produced against it. I am taking the position that our faith is not only unshaken but unshakable in the Book of Mormon, and therefore we can look without fear upon all that can be said against it.¹⁹

In April 1922, however, Roberts was called to be a mission president. Given the choice as to where in the United States he wanted to go, he chose the Eastern States Mission, which encompassed all the area relating to the origin of the Book of Mormon and the Church. He was set apart on May 29 and promptly dropped the matter of the manuscript.²⁰

Roberts was an ardent, hard-working mission president. Despite the still-not-answered intellectual questions relating to its origins, he had complete faith in the Book of Mormon and used it as his most important missionary tool. “It has survived all the ridicule and mockery of those who have scorned it,” he wrote to his missionaries. “Its voice is testimony of the Christ as Eternal God.”²¹ He also spent a little time in 1922 in libraries doing some additional research on how much was known about American antiquity prior to the time the Book of Mormon was published. This research eventually resulted in a few changes, minor in nature, in the 450-page manuscript he had prepared before he left on his mission.²²

After his five-year mission, Roberts made another attempt to bring about a discussion among the General Authorities of the problems relating to the Book of Mormon. He never delivered “A Study of the Book of Mormon,” but in October 1927 he sent to Elder Richard R. Lyman an eighteen-part “Parallel” between the Book of Mormon and Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*. He wrote to his daughter in 1932 that he had made “one feeble effort” to get the larger manuscript considered. He called it an “‘awful’ book” but said it contained facts the General Authorities ought to know.²³

Roberts had thus produced three manuscripts,²⁴ none of which were intended for publication. He hoped, rather, that they would be the means of helping prepare the Church to address the problems he believed defenders of the faith eventually would face as scholars examined the Book of Mormon more critically. As he wrote to Richard R.

Lyman in 1927, “Such a question as that [that is, whether Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews* might have provided a structural outline for the Book of Mormon] may possibly arise some day, and if it does, it would be greatly to the advantage of our future Defenders of the Faith, if they had in hand a thorough digest of the subject matter.”²⁵

The teachings of the Book of Mormon were still central to Roberts’s theological understanding and remained so throughout his writing of *TWL*. Nevertheless, his determination to leave no stone unturned in his quest for truth allowed him to raise the kinds of questions he did and to seek solutions for the problems. He realized that the Book of Mormon could not be held up to the world as the “strongest evidence we have of Church Divinity.” Instead, he told Wesley P. Lloyd in 1933, it was “the one which needs the most bolstering.”²⁶ This statement hardly meant that he had lost faith in the book. Rather, his scholarly proclivities suggest that he meant exactly what he said: the Book of Mormon needed more “bolstering,” more scholarly efforts to answer the questions he or others raised. Roberts also told Lloyd that “his greatest claim for the divinity of the Prophet Joseph lies in the Doctrine and Covenants.” If that is true, then there is just that much more evidence for the Book of Mormon itself, for the Doctrine and Covenants is replete with affirmations of the Book of Mormon.²⁷

That Roberts maintained his faith in the Book of Mormon, even while exploring in depth all the possible problems, is consistent with his personality.²⁸ He was firmly convinced of the truth of all the principles of the restored Church, especially as he presented them in *TWL*, his *magnum opus*. There he frequently and unequivocally referred to the Book of Mormon in terms such as an “ancient” volume of American scripture (21, 152, 259) or as a book that “contains the revelations of God to the ancient inhabitants of America” (275). At the same time, Roberts’s deeply ingrained commitment to scholarship made him a “disciple of the second sort” who was always open to new information and willing at least to entertain new ideas and suggestions. This did not mean that Book of Mormon “problems” convinced him that the book was not what Joseph Smith said it was. It only meant that he was willing to look at every possible challenge while maintaining his long-time convictions.

The statements recorded by Lloyd can easily be interpreted as reflecting Roberts-as-intellectual, raising questions and recognizing the hard realities of scholarly studies. Clearly, some of the statements in Lloyd’s journal do not portray the events of the 1920s quite accurately, though one cannot know whether this was the result of Roberts’s memory being unclear or Lloyd’s misunderstanding of what was said.²⁹

Nevertheless, it is the nature of people like Roberts to maintain faith even while being willing to seriously investigate questions that could alter some implications of that faith. Roberts's greatest disappointment was in the fact that he could not get his brethren to take his concerns more seriously, a fate that would also befall some of his doctrinal expositions in *TWL*.

The Manuscript of *TWL* and the Disagreement: An Interpretive Chronology³⁰

Roberts's disappointment over not getting his brethren to consider Book of Mormon problems was minor compared with his frustration over not getting his last manuscript published. Following is a chronological narrative concerning the events that related more directly to the production and review of *TWL*. I will attempt here to sort out the available facts relating to that effort, although I will not deal in detail with the doctrinal differences that arose as a result.³¹ Those differences are analyzed elsewhere.³²

Roberts's term as mission president lasted from May 1922 to April 1927. During that time—in 1924—he became the senior member of the First Council of the Seventy. Also during that time, Roberts began thinking about *TWL*. His “second sort” discipleship was compelling him to begin to crystalize and condense his lifetime of study into one grand, comprehensive statement of belief. As his mission drew to a close, he concluded that it was essential for him to remain in New York to begin this work.

On Friday, April 8, 1927, Roberts contacted President Heber J. Grant and asked permission to stay in New York to write a book.³³ The First Presidency approved Roberts's request and authorized his hiring a stenographer. Roberts planned at first to devote his time to “evidences regarding the authenticity of the Book of Mormon,” but soon his attention broadened, and the excitement of writing *TWL* became vastly more fulfilling. As he wrote to President Rudger Clawson of the Council of the Twelve on September 17, 1928, “I have been working [on it] definitely for over one year, and I might say for many years.”

Living alone in an apartment overlooking the Hudson River, Roberts worked tirelessly for the six-month leave of absence he had been granted. He collected notes, made outlines, and dictated, often for four hours at a time, to his secretary, Elsie Cook. In some ways, perhaps, these were the most spiritually exhilarating months of Roberts's life. He was working on his crowning achievement—the work he hoped would have the most important impact on the Saints of anything he

had written. Often, his biographer observes, he engaged in “faithful vigils of the night,” kneeling in prayer, analyzing the scriptures, and conducting deep personal introspection. Such vigils sometimes lasted for as long as three hours.³⁴ His intellectual methodology, if you will, combined ardent study of history, science, and philosophy with intensive scripture study, fervent prayer, and deep introspection. He wanted his *magnum opus* to combine all important knowledge into one orderly system, thus carrying the exposition of Mormonism a step beyond anything his predecessors had done.

But he had interruptions. Diabetes plagued him, and its complications sometimes kept him in bed. He also had other responsibilities. At the end of May 1927, for example, he went back to Salt Lake City to dedicate the new Mormon Battalion monument. Nevertheless, he could report to President Grant in a letter of June 15 that he had been making favorable progress and that about four chapters were in rough draft. He finished dictating a draft by the time he left New York in the fall; he revised and rewrote it in the summer of 1928.

Roberts initially anticipated fifty-three chapters. By mid-September 1928, he had forty-three chapters ready to go to press. At that point, he saw a golden opportunity to have them published. As yet, no course of study had been approved for the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums for 1929. In his September 17, 1928, letter to Rudger Clawson, Roberts observed that the First Council of the Seventy had received many inquiries from seventies quorums around the Church about their course

Elsie Cook ca. 1924. Cook served as Roberts’s secretary not only in transcribing *The Truth, The Way, The Life*, but also in preparing his *Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* and his autobiography. At the time the group photograph was taken from which this image was enlarged, Cook was a missionary serving under Roberts. Courtesy Truman G. Madsen.



of study for the coming year but that the requests could not be answered because no decision had been made. In view of that indecision, Roberts enclosed two chapter outlines and asked permission to submit his manuscript for consideration. He had designed it from the beginning to be a course of study for the seventies quorums, but it would be suitable also for the high priests and the elders. It might even provide study material for two or three years. He then reiterated what the work meant to him: "I hope to incorporate within its pages a full harvest of all that I have thought, and felt and written through the nearly fifty years of my ministry, that is, on the theme of the title."

Roberts considered this work to be something that the seventies, especially, should have. Twenty-one years earlier, from 1907 to 1911, he had published his five-volume *Seventy's Course in Theology*. The outline approach to the material used in that work was adopted and expanded in *TWL*. The First Council of the Seventy, he said, believed that this method would be "as successful as in our former experience." He then told Elder Clawson that *TWL* was "an offering on the part of the First Council of the Seventy for a course of study . . . and we feel that in this book we are following a line of subject-matter that will give to them [all Melchizedek Priesthood quorums] the proper comprehensive outline upon the Gospel as a whole and prepare them for presenting more intelligently the simple, specific message that we have to offer the world." This, indeed, was an ambitious goal.

Roberts was also ambitious, and probably unrealistic, in his plans for quick publication. He told Elder Clawson that he could put the forty-three completed chapters in the hands of the printer immediately and that the remaining chapters would be rewritten and ready for the press by the middle of October 1928. The Deseret News Book Printing Department, he said, had informed him that they could produce the book within four or five weeks after the manuscript was in their hands. By the middle of November, the book could be off the press.

By modern publication standards, at least, it is difficult to believe that an 847-page manuscript could be turned over to the printer and be ready for distribution within thirty days. More interesting, however, is the question of whether Roberts was realistic in his expectation that the Council of the Twelve could approve a book like this in such a short time. He must have sensed that it would evoke some disagreement, and one wonders how he expected a committee of extremely busy General Authorities to read, discuss, and approve such a momentous manuscript in thirty days. On the other hand, perhaps Roberts was so confident of the soundness of his doctrine and the persuasiveness of his reasoning that he really expected little difficulty.

In any case, the President of the Council of the Twelve appointed a committee, chaired by Elder George Albert Smith, to consider Elder Roberts's suggestions, though not necessarily to read and evaluate the manuscript. On September 26, 1928, Elder David O. McKay, a member of that committee, wrote to Elder Smith and his committee and expressed reservations about the procedure. Although Elder McKay had seen nothing of the book, not even its prospectus, he had no doubt that *TWL* would "deserve a meritorious place in the library of the Church." There were several reasons, however, why he did not believe it practical to consider adopting the book as a text for 1929. First, he said, *TWL* was not even completed and had not been approved. Next, he cautioned that the committee appointed to review the book should take time enough to do its work thoroughly. He did not see how this review plus the revision could possibly be done before November; hence, publication "with all its attendant difficulties" must come after November. This publication difficulty precluded *TWL* from consideration because a post-November publication would not provide time for January lessons to be in the hands of teachers. Elder McKay then noted that the 1929 Melchizedek Priesthood course of study was already prescribed, and lessons for January were already prepared. For all these reasons, Elder McKay believed that using *TWL* as a text in 1929 was "wholly inadvisable," though it might be considered for 1930.

The committee adopted Elder McKay's reasoning *in toto*. The next day, George Albert Smith wrote a letter to Ruder Clawson on behalf of the committee, listing exactly the same concerns as Elder McKay in almost exactly the same words. Smith added the committee's recommendation that another committee be appointed "to read carefully Elder B. H. Roberts' manuscript and make report of their findings."

At that point, the Sunday School became a more realistic outlet for the manuscript. In his letter, George Albert Smith raised the possibility that this new committee might recommend to the First Presidency that the manuscript be published for use in the Sunday School as a Gospel Doctrine manual. That suggestion may have come from David O. McKay, who was General Superintendent of the Church's Sunday Schools. On October 2, 1928, at the quarterly meeting of the Council of the Twelve, Ruder Clawson reported that the First Presidency had suggested that the manuscript be submitted to a committee of the Twelve, who should read it carefully with the thought in mind that if it were found suitable it should be used as a text, "presumably in the gospel doctrine department of the Sunday School." There was hardly time, he said, to get a proper reaction from the priesthood quorums in connection with the plans already in operation.

Committee Assigned to Review *The Truth, The Way, The Life*



George Albert Smith—Chair



Joseph Fielding Smith



David O. McKay



Stephen L. Richards



Melvin J. Ballard

Individual photographs courtesy LDS Church Archives.

Roberts, meanwhile, was becoming impatient. On October 18, Elder Clawson reported to the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve that Roberts had come to his office wanting to know if the book was being adopted as a priesthood course of study in 1929. Clawson explained to him that a committee had been appointed to “properly consider” the manuscript, but there had not been time to go over the book and if it were to be used at all it would not be before 1930. In that event, Roberts answered, he would have the work published privately and then, if it were found suitable, it could be adopted as a priesthood text. The First Presidency and the Twelve asked Elder Clawson to inform Roberts of their desire that he not publish it until it had been studied by a committee appointed by the Twelve and permission given for its publication. There was no hint that anyone, as yet, had serious objections. There was, however, a clear consensus that nothing of this nature should go out as an official Church text until it had been fully approved by the leading authorities.

Roberts nevertheless continued to press for quick action. On October 20, he wrote a note to the committee saying again that he had been assured by Deseret News Publishers that the book could be printed and bound within thirty days after the manuscript was in their hands. He added that the manuscript was now “perfected.” On October 25, Elder Clawson informed the Council of the First Presidency and the Twelve that he had notified Roberts of their desire that the manuscript not be published without approval by the committee, and Roberts, in turn, handed it to Elder Clawson. President Grant, apparently trying to smooth Roberts’s impatience, asked that it be considered as soon as possible.

The committee appointed to read the manuscript consisted of George Albert Smith, chair, David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, Stephen L. Richards, and Melvin J. Ballard. They took their time because they were extremely busy and they were determined to do a thorough job. Perhaps Roberts should have realized that five members of the Quorum of the Twelve did not have the luxury of a great deal of time to spend just reading his manuscript. On February 26, 1929, George Albert Smith wrote to Elder John A. Widtsoe, who was living in London and presiding over the European Mission. Elder Smith’s letter reflected some of the time-consuming work in which the Twelve were involved. In addition to all their regular duties, which included ten to twelve stake conferences every week, there were several committees functioning. Interestingly, the three committees he mentioned all involved works of Roberts. One committee was studying the matter of celebrating the Church’s centennial in 1930. Another was reading the

historical material Roberts had previously published in *Americana*, with a view toward having it updated and published by the Church during the centennial. Another, Elder George Albert Smith's committee, was reading *TWL*. Elder Smith was impressed with what he had read so far. *TWL* "will be the most comprehensive treatise of the Gospel that has yet been published," he reported to Elder Widtsoe. Elder Smith also gave some indication of how methodically the committee was proceeding. They had been reading it together twice a week, two hours at a time, for two months. They were hoping to be finished by the end of the month.

On the same day, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith also wrote to Elder Widtsoe. Like George Albert Smith, he commented on how extremely busy the Twelve were, noting that "it has fallen to my lot to draw a place on most of the committees." He also commented on Roberts's "very voluminous manuscript," hinting at a bit of concern for the author's ambitious desire to publish it "as a text book for the Priesthood, Church Schools and everybody in general." He also suggested that the committee was beginning to have some apprehension, for, he said, the manuscript "contains many very excellent things, but also has in it some things which cause us considerable worry." He did not say what those things were, or who was worried about them.

Meanwhile, Roberts's own patience was wearing thin. With hindsight, one can see that the Twelve were acting responsibly, and probably as rapidly as could be expected. But one can also understand what was happening to Roberts, and why, at least in private, he was growing restless and not a little gruff. He was having increasingly serious health problems connected with the diabetes that had begun to afflict him while on his mission; he was deeply involved in various administrative duties connected with his position as President of the First Quorum of the Seventy; he was on the committee planning the Church's centennial; and he was beginning to pull together his *Americana* material for what would become, the following year, his six-volume *Comprehensive History of the Church*. In addition, he was deeply annoyed that his career-long struggle to more clearly define the role of the seventies was getting nowhere, and he was becoming increasingly discouraged at what he considered an all-too-slow process of approving his life's greatest work. The death of a beloved grandson in a violent automobile accident early in January 1929 only added to his despondency.

The foregoing challenges explain the gloom he shared privately with his friend, Howard R. Driggs, in a letter of January 8, 1929. They may also explain why, during the next few years, Roberts sometimes seemed so stubborn and crotchety. His manuscript, he told Driggs, had

been in the hands of the committee for nearly three months and they were only halfway through it. “Oh the slowness of large bodies!” he complained. He had no idea what the committee was thinking, though individual members had given him private words of commendation. But, he complained,

this long wait for a reading is taking all the joy out of the initiative and spontaneity that I hoped to impart to the work, and I find myself a good deal depressed over our cumbersome and slow methods, much of which I have found in the past to be so unimportant—I am tired of it and I feel myself growing a bit restive under the formalities and waiting one upon another.

Then, after a complaint about his dissatisfaction in connection with his efforts to more clearly define the role of the seventies, he commented on his own apparent petulance: “Grouchy! Well, maybe a little. The effect of old age! Perhaps. What will come of it? I don’t know You will see I am a bit depressed.”³⁵

It is important to observe here that in this and most other available documents, Roberts did not castigate or demean individuals among his brethren. His concern was more with the *process*, which he considered too cumbersome to allow things to happen as quickly as he desired.

By March 9, Roberts was more optimistic. He reported in a letter to F. T. Pomeroy, editor of the *Genealogical and Historical Magazine of the Arizona Temple District*, that the committee had finished reading his manuscript and was preparing its report. He hoped that the book would now be published very soon.³⁶

Again, Roberts was too optimistic. He may not have been aware, at this point, of Joseph Fielding Smith’s concerns, but Elder Smith had serious reservations over a few particular points of doctrine. On April 1, Elder Smith prepared an eleven-page document explaining and supporting with scriptures his views that humans were the last of God’s creations, that Adam was the “first man of all men on the earth,” that Adam was not a translated being brought to the earth from some other world, and that Adam was not subject to death before the Fall. Elder Smith did not specifically mention either Roberts or the manuscript, but his document is clearly a direct refutation of the points that bothered him most as a member of the committee reading *TWL*. Presumably, Elder Smith’s document was read, at least by the committee.

Apparently, members of the Twelve began working with Roberts at about this time, attempting to persuade him either to change his views or to eliminate the controversial pre-Adamite material. But Roberts was not about to cut away a theory that he had arrived at so painstakingly and that, he believed, helped reconcile the conflicts

between the biblical account of the Creation—which seemed to place Adam on the earth around 4000 B.C.—and evidence that was, to him, incontrovertible that human and numerous other forms of life lived and died on this earth for eons prior to the appearance of Adam. According to Roberts, the pre-Adamites, along with all other life, had been wiped off the earth in a great cataclysm, after which Adam, a “translated being,” was brought from another world and told to “replenish” (“refill,” as Roberts interpreted the word) the earth.

Such doctrine flew in the face of Joseph Fielding Smith’s interpretation of scripture, and the two views as stated were simply irreconcilable. The reader of *TWL* should find Roberts’s reasoning interesting. While Roberts did not use *TWL* to support the theory of evolution with respect to humans, he skirted close to evolution of plants and animals with his “development theory” (see ch. 25). Thus, *TWL* could have raised further alarms in the mind of Elder Smith, who was determined, above all, to protect what he perceived as the traditional truths of the gospel from any corruption by modernism.³⁷

In May 1929, Roberts expressed his unyielding attitude on the matter when he wrote that “some learned men don’t see some of its chapters so I am letting it ride until I have more time. Will not change it if it has to sleep.”³⁸

Clearly, the Twelve were unable to make a favorable publication decision until Roberts was willing to eliminate the sections to which Elder Smith objected, or until Elder Smith was willing to let *TWL* be published anyway. Neither was very likely. An impasse was in the making, and it caused problems in connection with plans for course material in 1930. In a quarterly meeting of the Council of the Twelve on July 2, 1929, Elder Smith noted David O. McKay’s concerns over what the Sunday School was going to use as a gospel doctrine manual. The Sunday School had hoped to use Roberts’s manuscript, Elder McKay said, but unless Brother Roberts would consent to eliminate “some of the personal opinions which do not conform to the revelations of the Lord,” *TWL* could not be used as a manual.

At a similar meeting three months later on October 1, Elder McKay’s recommendation that the Sunday School study Church history the following year was approved. At the same meeting, the Roberts manuscript was again discussed, and again it was reported that Roberts had refused to eliminate the “objectionable teachings.” There were several objections, but none so serious as the “pre-Adamite” theory and the interpretation of Adam as a “translated being subject to death.”

Members of the committee, meanwhile, worked with Elder Roberts, but failed to persuade him to eliminate these “objectionable features.”

Finally, on October 10, 1929, the committee sent their report to the Council of the Twelve. In a cover letter of that date, George Albert Smith graciously affirmed the committee's feeling that for the most part Roberts's work was "very worthy" in its treatment of the mission of Jesus Christ and gospel principles, though "the manuscript could be greatly reduced without injury to the thoughts expressed." There were, however, objectionable doctrines of a "speculative nature" that, the committee said, "appear to be out of harmony with the revelations of the Lord and the fundamental teachings of the Church." A three-page discussion of twenty-seven points questioned by the committee was given to Roberts, apparently in preparation for this meeting, but he was both dismayed and irritated—not just at the year-long ordeal of waiting, but also at some of the objections. His personal copy of the list is covered with his underlining and handwritten reactions to nearly every point. Already he was preparing his thoughts for the more extensive discussions that would come in January 1930.³⁹ Indeed, Roberts had informed them that if he could not obtain their approval he would, perhaps, publish it on his own at some future time. This, of course, was only a reiteration of what he had said a year earlier. The committee then recommended "that in its present form, the manuscript not be published."

Several events over the next few months suggest that the differences were about to become more intense and more public, even as most of the actors in this interesting drama wanted to maintain a harmonious spirit despite their differences of opinion. Elder Roberts, perhaps unwisely, became more bold and began preaching his theories in various Church meetings and on the air. Alarmed, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith reported at the November 26 meeting of the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve that Roberts had been doing this for months, "thereby causing a great deal of commotion among our young people." He thought Roberts should be enjoined from such preaching. He also reported that in a meeting of the Twelve that morning, Elder Roberts said that he would gladly review his manuscript and make modifications if he could find his way clear to do so. Failing that, Roberts would publish it on his own.

In a meeting of the Twelve held approximately one month later (January 7, 1930), Elder Smith expressed his dismay at the "dangers lurking in modern thought." James E. Talmage voiced his concern that any literature sent out by the Church should be "accurate," saying that his experience in reading manuscripts convinced him that many people are careless in what they say and in how it appears in print. The minutes do not suggest that these statements were aimed directly at

Roberts, but given the climate of the time and the fact that the issue clearly was coming to a head, the Roberts manuscript could not have been far back in the minds of the apostles. Elder Rudger Clawson, who found the spirit of the meeting attractive, noted what must have been the sense of unity they all were striving for: “We are all different,” he said, “but have the same spirit and testimony.”

Four months later, however, Joseph Fielding Smith felt it was his responsibility to bring his own understanding of the doctrines in question more clearly to the attention of the public. On Saturday, April 5, 1930, he gave an address at a conference of the Genealogical Society of Utah. There, without mentioning Elder Roberts or his manuscript by name, Smith addressed directly the doctrines in *TWL* that he objected to, which doctrines were apparently being taught by Roberts in some of the wards and stakes. “I denounce as absolutely false the opinions of some,” he said, “that this earth was peopled with a race before Adam.” Smith also complained that this and other doctrines were being preached by “elders” in an attempt to reconcile some of the beliefs of the Church with those of some scientists.⁴⁰ The address was reported briefly in that evening’s edition of the *Deseret News*, but Roberts’s immediate reaction is not available.

Roberts, meanwhile, was finding enough time in his busy schedule to follow through on the request of the committee that he go over the chapters in question and report by May 1 on the likelihood of changing them so they could be used as a priesthood text for 1930–31. In a letter dated April 28, 1930, he reported to Elder George Albert Smith and the committee. “[I] have again come to my former conclusion (and more firmly),” Roberts declared, “that it cannot be changed or given up without destroying the very genius and purpose of my work.” Even minor concessions, Roberts felt, would undermine the whole. The impasse was clear: the uncertain doctrines were simply too central to Elder Roberts’s thinking to be abandoned; Elder Smith’s opposing views were the same for him.

Roberts tried, however, to show that he was not intransigent. “I do not put forth my work as absolutely accurate or beyond fault,” he wrote, “that can only be said of the scriptures.” He was still willing to be shown where his book was wrong or at variance with the scriptures, but, he said, “I cannot convince myself in this case that I am wrong.” He also noted (as he had with respect to his Book of Mormon studies) that one of his main concerns was with the youth of the Church. He hoped his text would be helpful to many of them in “solving their intellectual problems.” That was a high expectation, but it suggests how devoutly Roberts believed he had reconciled the major scientific problems of the day with the scriptures.

Roberts concluded his letter by conceding the right of the committee to examine his work as to its fitness for a priesthood text and to decide against it. Therefore, he said, "I withdraw it from further consideration by your Committee for such uses." However, he declared his continuing independence when he said that he did not concede the right of the committee to determine what he should write or say personally, on his own responsibility, "not of text book standard, but as a contribution to Mormon literature dealing with doctrine and other subjects." Clearly, he was still thinking of private publication.

On May 15, Elder Clawson reported Roberts's response at a meeting of the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. He also gave to the First Presidency a copy of Roberts's April 28 letter, along with a one-page summary of the points in question. A week later, Elder Roberts had a lengthy interview with the First Presidency in which the contents of the book were discussed. After being told again that the First Presidency and the Twelve could not approve some parts, Roberts reiterated his determination to make no changes.

President Grant later reflected in his journal his sorrow that Elder Roberts was determined to include "some things that I think problematical and cannot be demonstrated." But, he noted, the Church had furnished Elder Roberts a stenographer, both in New York and since his return to Salt Lake City, for the purpose of completing the book. President Grant clearly felt the Church therefore had the right to determine what went in it, if it were to be used as a Church manual. He thought that before publication they must come to an understanding on its content, "and we object emphatically to his putting anything in it that the Presidency and the Apostles cannot approve."

The matter was not closed. Joseph Fielding Smith continued to be troubled over the "worldly philosophies" and "theories of men" that were "creeping in among the Latter-day Saints" and, he believed, injuring their faith. He urged repentance and more humility among the people. He also saw too many "modernistic tendencies" among the instructors in the priesthood and other organizations. These were "a grave danger" to the Church, and something should be done to remedy the situation.⁴¹ Then, in October, he allowed his April 5 speech to be published in the *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*.⁴² There he sketched the plan of salvation and declared that the doctrine of "pre-Adamites" was not a doctrine of the Church and that there was no death on the earth before the fall of Adam. He stressed the incompleteness of our knowledge about the Creation, the need for faith, and the importance of patiently placing more confidence in the work of God and less in the passing theories of men. This publication

became the catalyst for a chain of events that led to a series of crucial discussions in the meetings of the Council of the Twelve. These discussions also constituted a major element in the saga of *TWL*.⁴³

Elder Roberts was beside himself at the publication of Elder Smith's speech, but he did not make a public reply or show any public rancor toward Elder Smith or any of the General Authorities. Privately, however, this was the one time in the history of *TWL* that Roberts came close to criticizing one of his colleagues personally.

With hindsight, one can view the unique *TWL* story as one of the major historic conflicts of perspective among honest, dedicated Church leaders who were unified in their commitment to the essentials but disagreed on things that the Church had not officially defined. On the one hand, Elder Roberts believed that one must accept the findings of modern science and find a way to reconcile them with the scriptures. On the other, Elder Smith feared such methodology as the path toward undermining the scriptural foundations of faith in the Lord. These views were at an impasse. The most significant thing about the eventual outcome, however, was the fact that in the end, the leaders of the Church officially declared that neither view was the doctrine of the Church. The final answer was not essential to salvation. It was therefore better, in the long run, for ambiguity to remain than for a mistake to be enshrined.

On December 15, 1930, Roberts wrote to the First Presidency about Elder Smith's Genealogical Society address. Roberts wanted to know if the address had been submitted to and approved by the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve before it was published. Was the address an official declaration or merely "the unofficial and personal declaration" of the opinions of Elder Smith? If it was unofficial, Roberts said, that fact should have been made clear in the discourse. It is understandable, of course, after the seemingly interminable reading of the *TWL* manuscript and its final rejection, that Roberts should have been upset when the opposite view got into print with no review at all (even if in an unofficial journal). One wonders, however, if Roberts would have been willing to state clearly in his own book that it reflected merely his own opinions and not the doctrine of the Church. Perhaps, if he had published it on his own, he would have made this qualification. Nothing in the documents, however, suggests that this occurred to anyone as a possible solution.

Roberts went further in his letter. He objected to the "dogmatic" spirit of the speech and its "finality," as if "speaking with final authority." He also challenged Elder Smith's "competence," if the address was his own and not an official pronouncement, to speak with authority on



Rudger Clawson. Elder Clawson served as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles during the time *The Truth, The Way, The Life* was being considered by the Twelve as a possible lesson manual. Courtesy LDS Church Archives.

such subjects. He also declared that Elder Smith's views were in conflict with a statement by an "earlier Apostle" that had been endorsed by none other than Brigham Young, a statement that therefore carried more weight than the "dictum" of Elder Smith.

At the same time, on December 16, Elder Smith felt greater concern and anxiety than ever before about certain books that were being published on the Bible for use in Church schools. Those publications appeared to have Church approval, but they had not been reviewed by any of the Brethren.

The First Presidency gave Elder Smith's article and Elder Roberts's letter to the Council of the Twelve, asking them to investigate the matter and try to reconcile the differences of opinion. On December 30, in a telephone conversation, Rudger Clawson asked Elder Roberts for a more definite statement regarding his objections to Elder Smith's treatise. Roberts wrote to Clawson the next day, stating his position in practically the same terms as before. He also added a statement of belief that Elder Smith's remarks were contrary to the scriptures and would tend "to reduce the Church of the New Dispensation to the character of a narrow, bigoted sect." He also asked for an opportunity to defend his statements, a request that he repeated in person in an extemporaneous address at the meeting of the Council of the Twelve on January 2, 1931.

Elder Roberts was granted his request. On January 7, 1931, he appeared before the Council of the Twelve (with Elder Smith present), armed with Draft 2 of chapter 31 of *TWL*, constituting a fifty-page statement of his position (318-22). He quoted extensively from leading scientists, and in support of his position that the earth was peopled before Adam and that Adam was commanded to "replenish" (refill) it, Roberts quoted a sermon by Orson Hyde of October 9, 1854, which, Roberts said, had been endorsed by Brigham Young. On January 16, Elder Clawson told the First Presidency of the discussion but did not give a full report. Rather, the Presidency decided that the Twelve should hear the entire case before reporting to them; since Elder Roberts had stated his position before the Twelve, it was only fair that Elder Smith be given the same opportunity.

On January 21, Joseph Fielding Smith had his turn. He appeared before the Council, with Elder Roberts also present, carrying a fifty-eight-page paper.⁴⁴ He answered all of Roberts's arguments with obvious mastery of both the scriptures and the sermons of earlier leaders of the Church. In this meeting, as well as in the meeting two weeks earlier, there was little discussion. In both instances, the Apostles simply listened as the brethren read their papers.⁴⁵

While it is hardly fair to judge who “got the best” of these proceedings, it is interesting to note that Elder Smith seemed to be on somewhat firmer ground than Roberts as to Roberts’s assertion that Brigham Young had endorsed Orson Hyde’s doctrine of pre-Adamic men. Elder Smith observed that in the sermon in question Orson Hyde was not really preaching on pre-Adamites. Rather, Hyde was preaching about marriage and referred to pre-Adamites only incidentally. Indeed, he noted, President Young never at any time talked about pre-Adamites. When President Young said, “We have had a splendid address from brother Hyde, for which I am grateful,” he was not necessarily endorsing the pre-Adamite theory.⁴⁶ Elder Smith was also on more solid ground concerning the Hebrew behind the word *replenish* in Genesis 1:28.

Between these two meetings, Elder James E. Talmage, who was clearly aware of the opposing viewpoints, delivered a Sunday sermon from the Tabernacle. This January 18 address was reported in the *Deseret News*. He spoke of revelation as “the source of all true knowledge and genuine wisdom.” Retracing many themes in *TWL*, he covered spirit life before mortal birth, “the Adamic Dispensation,” and the subsequent dispensations of the gospel; he used science and scriptures to demonstrate the orderliness of God’s ways, the purposefulness of earth life, and the directive intelligence behind all phenomena of nature. He affirmed that he had found nothing in the gospel “contrary to reason and common sense,” and he cast aspersions on “higher critics” who did not accept the simple scriptural account. Prescient of the eventual outcome of the discussions about *TWL*, Talmage struck a middle ground and ventured no opinion on the areas in controversy.

Three days later, on January 21, 1931, Ruder Clawson, on behalf of the Council of the Twelve, sent a report to the First Presidency about the presentations of Roberts and Smith. Elder Clawson briefly reviewed the arguments, then indicated that Elder Roberts’s language about Elder Smith’s competence was “very offensive” because it failed to show brotherly deference to one of higher priesthood rank. However, at the close of the meeting, Clawson said, the two brethren had affirmed “*that they entertained no ill feeling, one toward the other.*”⁴⁷ This point should be emphasized, for it reflects the fact that both men, despite their deep differences, respected each other as fellow servants in the Kingdom. In the end, the Council of the Twelve made no recommendation; they simply awaited instructions from the First Presidency, who wanted all of the General Authorities to be present when the matter was discussed “so that all might become united.”

Meanwhile, the discussion was expanding, for other General Authorities were also concerned about the implications of modern science and their views were sought. On January 13, Elder Melvin J. Ballard wrote to Elder John A. Widtsoe (who was still on assignment in England). Ballard mentioned that the General Authorities were giving “great attention” to important doctrinal matters, and particularly the question of pre-Adamites that had been suggested in Elder Roberts’s book. “If you have any views on the subject,” he wrote, “I am sure the brethren would be glad to hear from you.” Elder Widtsoe’s reply, written on January 27, provides a very important statement about his own attempt to find the kind of balance that would not fly in the face of either well-documented scientific fact or revealed religious truth. The wisest plan, Widtsoe thought, was to do what they had been doing for years:

Accept all well-established and authenticated facts; and refuse to base our faith on theories whether scientific or theological. One may be led into all manner of absurdities if he clings strictly to the changing theories of science; and one may quite as easily find himself in mistaken notions if he attempts the interpretation of the scriptures without getting a full perspective of the subject and adequate knowledge of human events that led to the giving of the scriptures, including origins and translations.

He did not comment directly on pre-Adamites, but his attitude toward science and religion was clearly akin to that of Roberts.⁴⁸ He appealed to “reasonable wisdom in guiding the [new] generation brought up under the domination of new ideas, modern ideas.”

One of the impressive realities that pervades this entire story is the seriousness, concern, and goodwill toward the participants demonstrated by the First Presidency and the Twelve in these discussions. Few people understood or appreciated how hard these leaders worked on the task. The General Authorities were deeply concerned to avoid making statements or endorsing positions that were not clearly in accord with revealed truth. None seemed to lean as far one way or the other as either Elder Roberts or Elder Smith, but there is no evidence that anyone criticized either of them for their positions. The General Authorities were searching for truth, but they also knew that whatever public statement they authorized would be accepted by the Saints as final truth. They wanted to be sure that no private opinion was so dignified.

After receiving the Twelve’s report about Roberts and Smith, the First Presidency took the matter under advisement and began to read all the relevant documents themselves. On Sunday, January 25, 1931, President Grant spent the morning in the office with his first counselor,

Anthony W. Ivins, reading the material. At noon they decided that since President Ivins had read all the material the day before, President Grant should finish it at home. They would not make a decision, however, until the other counselor, Charles W. Nibley (who was out of town) had also seen the documents. President Grant spent part of the afternoon and evening finishing his reading. He later recorded in his journal a marvelously well-balanced statement that set the tone for the final disposition of the case. "After reading the articles by Brothers Roberts and Smith," he wrote,

I feel that sermons such as Brother Joseph preached and criticisms such as Brother Roberts makes of the sermon are the finest kind of things to let alone entirely. I think no good can be accomplished by dealing in mysteries, and that is what I feel in my heart of hearts these brethren are both doing.

Roberts, meanwhile, brooded about the possible outcome of the hearings and finally, on February 9, wrote a letter to the First Presidency. The letter brought the issue right back to the matter of his book. He complained again about what he considered the weaknesses of Elder Smith's arguments, then declared, perhaps intemperately, that it was on the basis of "such pabulum" that the publication of *TWL* was suspended. The book, he declared again, "is the most important work that I have yet contributed to the Church, the six-volumed Comprehensive History of the Church not omitted." He asked for a chance to respond to Elder Smith's reply to his paper before a final decision was made, for he now had much more to present. If he could have the chance, he believed, the principal cause of suspending his work would be removed. Elder Roberts got a second chance on February 25, when he met for over two hours with the First Presidency.

The First Presidency was fully aware of and undoubtedly impressed by the fact that both James E. Talmage and John A. Widtsoe were finding a common middle ground of agreement and belief.⁴⁹ They also continued prayerfully to consider the matter. Finally, sometime before April 5, the First Presidency reached a decision. It was incorporated into an eight-page report (dated April 5) that was addressed to the Council of the Twelve, the First Council of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric. The report thoroughly and thoughtfully reviewed the entire matter, beginning with Elder Smith's address to the Genealogical and Historical Society a year earlier. Then, on April 7, in a four-hour meeting of all the General Authorities, who were happy finally to be all together, the First Presidency announced and discussed in detail their decision. "After prayerful consideration," they said, they had

“decided that nothing would be gained by a continuation of the discussion of the subject under consideration.”

The First Presidency included in their report several statements that should have special importance to Latter-day Saints, for these statements are powerful cautions against doctrinal extremes. Speaking specifically to the issues in the controversy, the First Presidency declared: “The statement made by Elder Smith that the existence of pre-Adamites is not a doctrine of the Church is true. It is just as true that the statement: ‘There were not pre-Adamites upon the earth,’ is not a doctrine of the Church. Neither side of the controversy has been accepted as a doctrine at all.”

Later in the document, the First Presidency quoted from Joseph Smith, who on April 8, 1843, declared:

Oh ye Elders of Israel, harken to my voice; and when you are sent into the world to preach, tell those things you are sent to tell; preach and cry aloud, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel.” Declare the first principles, and let mysteries alone, lest ye be overthrown. . . . Elder Brown, when you go to Palmyra, say nothing about the four beasts, but preach those things the Lord has told you to preach about—repentance and baptism for the remission of sins.⁵⁰

Interestingly, this quotation is from the same sermon in which Joseph Smith made his oft-quoted statement that he did not like the fact that Pelatiah Brown had been called before the High Council for “erring in doctrine.” Nor did he like “creeds,” Joseph said, but, rather, wanted “the liberty of thinking and believing” as he pleased. Furthermore, “it does not prove that a man is not a good man because he errs in doctrine.”⁵¹ These words should not be construed as pleading for “freedom of thought” in the sense of teaching false doctrine after being cautioned by Church leaders not to do so. The Prophet was pleading with Elder Brown (who was going on a mission) and others to preach first principles, not the mysteries. This was indeed an appropriate background for using the quotation in the setting of the 1931 deliberations. “We believe,” said the First Presidency, “this admonition to be as applicable to us as to those to whom the Prophet addressed it.” The First Presidency continued by suggesting how all could be agreed:

Upon the fundamental doctrines of the Church we are all agreed. Our mission is to bear the message of the restored gospel to the people of the world. Leave Geology, Biology, Archeology and Anthropology, no one of which has to do with the salvation of the souls of mankind, to scientific research, while we magnify our calling in the realm of the Church.

They then reaffirmed that “we can see no advantage to be gained by a continuation of the discussion to which reference is here made, but on the contrary are certain that it would lead to confusion, division and misunderstanding if carried further.” They ended with one doctrinal pronouncement upon which they felt all must agree. It came from a 1909 statement by the First Presidency: “Adam is the primal parent of our race.” Anything more or less than that was not official Church doctrine.

The First Presidency’s decision was neither a refutation nor an affirmation of Roberts’s position, but the decision meant that his speculative work could not be published by the Church nor could Elder Smith’s heartfelt responses be preached as official doctrine. James E. Talmage recorded in his journal (April 7) his satisfaction with the decision: “I think the decision of the First Presidency is a wise one in the premises. This is one of the many things upon which we cannot preach with assurance and dogmatic assertions on either side are likely to do harm rather than good.”⁵²

The leaders of the Church could have let the matter drop at that point, but they were too deeply concerned about the feelings of Elder Roberts and too impressed with the noncontroversial parts of his manuscript not to make another attempt at reconciliation. In a meeting of the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve on April 9, Elder Stephen L. Richards proposed that it would be a “splendid thing” if the First Presidency would once more refer to the Twelve the matter of considering *TWL*⁵³ so that “a further attempt might be made to effect some reconciliation with Brother Roberts which would make possible the publication of his book.” President Grant called the suggestion commendable, a motion was made and approved, and the matter went back to the Twelve. The following day the same people who had served on the initial committee were appointed by Rudger Clawson to serve on a new one. They were to call on Roberts, making an “earnest effort to compose matters and induce him, if possible, to consent to the elimination from his manuscript of any illusion [*sic*] to the theory of a pre-Adamic race or races,” as well as other minor objections. In the letter of appointment, Elder Clawson again affirmed the general feeling that this was an “excellent work” that should not be lost to the Church by going unpublished. Unless Roberts made the changes, however, *TWL* could not be used by the priesthood quorums.

There is no record of what happened with this committee, but it is apparent that Elder Roberts still declined to make the changes. Meanwhile, he sought some comfort in what certain other General Authorities, particularly Elder James E. Talmage, were doing.

On August 9, 1931, at the request of the First Presidency, Elder Talmage delivered an address entitled “The Earth and Man” that was soon made available by the Church in pamphlet form and published in several periodicals.⁵⁴ In his address, Elder Talmage recognized not only that the earth was extremely ancient, but also that life and death occurred on the earth long before the advent of humans. This teaching was clearly contrary to what Joseph Fielding Smith believed. The address included more, but the most significant thing in connection with this discussion is Elder Talmage’s explanation as to why he gave the talk.

The conclusion of the hearings and discussions in relation to the disagreement between Elders Roberts and Smith did not bring to an end the need for Church leaders to consider the issues related to modern scientific knowledge. In his lengthy journal entry for November 21, 1931, Elder Talmage briefly reviewed all the recent discussions, then noted that many LDS students had inferred from Elder Smith’s 1930 address that the Church refused to recognize the findings of science if there was even a seeming conflict with scripture and that therefore the policy of the Church was opposed to scientific research. In other words, because Elder Smith’s statement had been published and Elder Roberts’s had not, Elder Smith’s view was catching on among the youth of the Church. Elder Talmage knew that the April 7, 1931, decision meant that General Authorities were not supposed to discuss such things in public any more. He had also been present at a later discussion, however, in which the First Presidency had commented favorably on the suggestion that “sometime, somewhere, something should be said by one or more of us to make plain that the Church does not refuse to recognize the discoveries and demonstrations of science, especially in relation to the subject at issue.”

Talmage noted that President Anthony W. Ivins presided and three other members of the Council of the Twelve, including Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, had been present at his August 9 address. He also observed that Elder Smith and all the others recognized that his address was “in some important respects opposed to [Elder Smith’s] published remarks,” but the other brethren nevertheless expressed their “tentative approval” of what he said. Then, in a tender expression of his deep concern for harmonious relationships even in the midst of some difference of opinion, he expressed his gratitude that on November 16 his address had been very thoroughly considered by the First Presidency, who approved its publication, with slight changes. It appeared in the Church Section of the *Deseret News* on November 17. Talmage’s journal entry concludes:

The discussions throughout . . . have been forceful but in every respect friendly, and the majority of the Twelve have been in favor of the publication of the address. . . . I have hoped and fervently prayed that the brethren would be rightly guided in reaching a decision, and, as the Lord knows my heart, I have no personal desire for a triumph or victory in the matter, but have hoped that the address would be published or suppressed as would do for the best. The issue is now closed; the address is in print.

One result of the publication of “The Earth and Man” was another brief discussion about the possibility of publishing *TWL*. The impact of the address on Roberts must have been exhilarating, for here, at last, was a public statement by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve that opened a door for some of Roberts’s own most cherished attitudes. Talmage had not really clarified the question of pre-Adamic man, but he had said enough that Roberts was led to renew his request to the First Presidency to have his book reconsidered. As Elder Talmage wrote to John A. Widtsoe on February 5, 1932, Roberts’s request was based on his claim that Talmage’s address went “beyond what he [Roberts] had ventured to say in his book concerning our recognition of the facts in science relating to the age of the earth and of the human race thereon.” On March 18, Elder Roberts sent a chapter from his manuscript (probably chapter 31) to Elder Talmage. After it had been returned from the Twelve, Roberts wrote, he had added a few more pages of evidence relating to the antiquity of humanity. He emphasized that “the spirit and facts of the chapter, however, are in no way changed, but the evidence has been a little increased.” He did not want it copied by anyone.

Less than a week later, on March 24, President Grant reported to the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve that the Young Men’s and Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Associations had requested permission to use *TWL* in their adult classes the following year. Roberts himself was no doubt one of the instigators of this request, for he was the first assistant to George Albert Smith, the president of the Young Men’s association. The leaders discussed the matter at length, some emphasizing again their belief that *TWL* was the best work Roberts had ever written and that the material was “very timely and will appeal to young people.” But the First Presidency and the Twelve were also convinced that chapters 30 and 31 would lead to contention and “no end of trouble.” As in the case of all the earlier discussions, the leaders agreed again that *TWL* should not be published without the recommended modifications nor should it be used as a course of study in the Mutual Improvement Associations.

President Grant agreed to inform Elder Roberts of the council's decision. He did not do so immediately, however, but waited until after the forthcoming general conference. Again, President Grant waited because he wanted to hold a meeting of all the General Authorities and explain the attitude of the First Presidency and the Twelve toward matters of this kind, so there could be "perfect harmony" among them. This was apparently the last time the issue was taken up during Roberts's lifetime.

The final decision grated on Roberts as deeply as had each of the others. Roberts continued in his tireless, steadfast way to carry out his ministry as a Church leader, and he did all he could, publicly, to bear witness of the divinity of the restored gospel. Privately, however, he was sometimes discouraged and despondent, showing signs of impatience and, perhaps, depression. One reason for this depression was connected with his failure to achieve all he hoped for with respect to the organization of the seventies. Another was the dashing of his hopes for *TWL*. His despondency must also be seen in terms of all the other things that were happening in his personal life.

During his last few years, Roberts recognized that his health was going fast, and he was not sure how long he would remain alive. In May 1931, he was released from the hospital, where he had had part of a foot removed as a result of circulatory problems related to diabetes. According to his biographer, Roberts was beginning to shift his priorities in order to end his life exercising "my duty as a special witness for the Lord Jesus Christ." But he also longed to lay the doctrines of *TWL* before the Saints and continued to present themes from *TWL* in his sermons.⁵⁵ His *magnum opus*, which was also one of his most eloquent testimonies of Christ, was very much on his mind as part of what he wanted to leave as his religious heritage.

Sometime in January 1931, about the time Roberts and Elder Joseph Fielding Smith were making their presentations before the Council of the Twelve, Roberts wrote: "I have been passing through the severest mental and spiritual strain of my life during the past two months—Doctrinal questions before the Twelve and the First Presidency in connection with my book *The Truth, the Way, the Life*, respecting which there seems to be little prospect of settlement."⁵⁶ In his February 9, 1931, letter to President Heber J. Grant he again showed his anxiety: "Life at my years and with an incurable ailment is very precarious, and I should dislike very much to pass on without completing and publishing this work." Sometime in 1932, after the final rejection of his manuscript, he wrote with resignation to President Grant: "That book may not likely be printed in my lifetime. Comment will not be necessary."⁵⁷

Elder Roberts died on September 27, 1933, of complications related to diabetes.

Two months after Roberts's death, Elsie Cook looked back on the time she spent working with Elder Roberts. "He was inspiring in everything he did," she wrote, "in his speaking as well as in his dictating the several volumes [10] of books I helped him with." Cook's work included *TWL*. She remembered that her patriarchal blessing promised her that she would find "hidden treasures." "What I have learned from this wonderfully intellectual, and spiritually powerful [man], President, are the 'hidden treasures,' which perhaps I could not have had otherwise."⁵⁸ Roberts himself could have asked for no better tribute. It was his dream that *TWL* would provide such spiritual strength for all the Saints.

Modern scholars may say that *TWL* fell short of Roberts's dream,⁵⁹ but it nevertheless represented Roberts's long-held aspiration to be a "disciple of the second sort." Most of his theological discussion was not unique to this manuscript—much, indeed, was taken from earlier works. But that is just the point. He considered all he had done previously to be only a prelude to this work. "I am trying to summarize and reconcile all truth—all truth," he told a former missionary after his return from New York. "But it is so hard. So hard!"⁶⁰ This, too, was part of both his life as a faithful intellectual and his effort to become a disciple of the second sort.

The question remained as to what to do with the manuscript of *TWL*. On October 12, 1933, just sixteen days after Elder Roberts's death, the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve discussed it once again. Rudger Clawson said that the Twelve were anxious to use it as a course of study for the priesthood the coming year, after making whatever changes the Council approved. An important question, of course, was whether the Church had the right to make such changes, now that Roberts was dead. President Grant, however, had been in contact with the family, who "acknowledged that the manuscript belongs to the Church." The only thing family members wanted was the right to file their protest if they did not agree with whatever changes were made. It was noted, too, that the seventies had furnished over five hundred dollars to assist in the cost of preparing the work. All this was sufficient to insure that the Church owned the manuscript and could do with it as it wished. In the end, however, the Council decided not to publish *TWL* at that time. Perhaps their continuing high esteem of Roberts made them hesitant to make the changes they knew he would so much oppose. In any case, it is propitious for modern readers, especially those who are anxious to explore more deeply the mind of this dynamic LDS

scholar and Church leader, that such a decision was made. Otherwise, little incentive would likely have existed to make *TWL* available today in its uncut form.

In the years since 1933, the question of publication has periodically reappeared. In the mid-1970s, for example, Assistant Church Historian Davis Bitton was asked to evaluate the manuscript for possible publication. His recommendation was that it should not be published by the Church, but that it should be made available for study at the archives. As late as 1982, another committee was formed to consider *TWL* again, but the committee was soon dissolved. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve had reviewed the 1931 decision and were impressed with the wisdom of the admonition given then that the Church's mission was "to bear the message of the restored gospel to the people of the world. Leave Geology, Biology, Archeology and Anthropology, no one of which has to do with the salvation of the souls of mankind, to scientific research, while we magnify our calling in the realm of the Church."

The publication of *TWL*, therefore, is by no means an official publication of the Church. Nevertheless, for those admirers of B. H. Roberts and for others who are interested in the rich intellectual and spiritual history of the Church, *TWL* should be a valuable addition to their libraries. Roberts did not succeed in having *TWL* published during his lifetime; those of us who have been involved in this project are pleased to now make it available, along with commentary on its historical standing and intellectual contexts.

NOTES

¹The leading biography of Roberts is Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980). See his epilogue for some apt and interesting characterizations.

²See Leonard J. Arrington, "The Intellectual Tradition of the Latter-day Saints," *Dialogue* 4 (Spring 1969): 13-26; and Stan Larson, "Intellectuals in Mormon History: An Update," *Dialogue* 26 (Fall 1993): 187-89.

³Roberts was, in fact, reluctant even to consider publishing an autobiography. In 1928, he declined an invitation to write a biographical sketch for the *National Encyclopedia* because, he said, "my biography is of such little consequence, my station in life so unimportant and my obscurity so complete." He also wrote to a former missionary in 1933 that "my life is not of sufficient importance for biography." T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 438 n. 25; 376.

⁴See Brigham H. Madsen, "Introduction," in B. H. Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Brigham H. Madsen (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 20.

⁵T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 387.

⁶See a list of some of his most important publications in T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 441–43.

⁷Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* (1874) and *Studies in Religion* (1902).

⁸As quoted in B. H. Roberts, “The Book of Mormon Translated,” *Improvement Era* 9 (April 1906): 712. The quoted passage may be found in Josiah Royce’s “Introduction” to John Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy* (c. 1874; Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1902), xxxvi–xxxviii.

⁹Roberts, “Book of Mormon Translated,” 712–13; and Royce, “Introduction,” xxxviii–xliv.

¹⁰Roberts, “The Book of Mormon Translated,” 713.

¹¹Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., *A Critical Period in American Religion, 1875–1900*, ed. Richard C. Wolf (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967).

¹²Schlesinger, *Critical Period in American Religion*, 7.

¹³See Ernest L. Wilkinson and Cleon W. Skousen, *Brigham Young University: A School of Destiny* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 200–212.

¹⁴Davis Bitton, “B. H. Roberts as Historian,” *Dialogue* 3 (Winter 1968): 25.

¹⁵B. H. Roberts, *Discourses of B. H. Roberts*, comp. Elsie Cook (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1948), 104–5.

¹⁶Roberts’s continuing faith in the Book of Mormon is questioned by B. Madsen, “Introduction,” 1–34; and Brigham H. Madsen, “B. H. Roberts’s Studies of the Book of Mormon,” *Dialogue* 26 (Fall 1993): 77–86. That view is rejected in John W. Welch, “B. H. Roberts: Seeker After Truth,” *Ensign* 16 (March 1986): 56–62; Truman G. Madsen and John W. Welch, “Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?” Preliminary Report, Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, c. 1985, rev. 1986; and Truman G. Madsen, “B. H. Roberts and the Book of Mormon,” *BYU Studies* 19 (Summer 1979): 427–45.

¹⁷B. H. Roberts to Heber J. Grant and Counselors, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the First Council of the Seventy, Salt Lake City, December 29, 1921, in Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, 46.

¹⁸Roberts, “Book of Mormon Difficulties: A Study,” in *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, 142–43. For more recent developments that offer reasonable solutions, see John W. Welch, “Finding Answers to B. H. Roberts’ Questions,” Preliminary Report, Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1985.

¹⁹B. H. Roberts to President Heber J. Grant, Council, and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, dated March 15, 1923, in Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, 57–58. This typewritten letter was not originally dated but later Roberts added a handwritten date, “March, 15th 1923.” Truman Madsen and John Welch argue that Roberts typed the letter hurriedly just before he left Salt Lake City in 1922, then took it and the manuscript with him to New York. The following year he considered again the possibility of submitting the manuscript, at which time he wrote the date on the letter. In the end, however, he never submitted either the letter or the manuscript. In a letter to his daughter Elizabeth, dated March 14, 1932, Roberts clarifies that the letter above was written before he left on his mission. He also says that he had “made one feeble effort to get it before them since returning home, but they are not in a studious mood.” Letter is Exhibit 8 in T. Madsen and Welch, “Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?”

²⁰B. H. Roberts to Richard R. Lyman, October 24, 1927, in Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, 59.

²¹Massachusetts Conference of the Eastern States Mission, President's records, as cited in B. Madsen, "Introduction" to Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, 25.

²²T. Madsen and Welch, "Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?" discusses the changes, when they were made, and why.

²³B. H. Roberts to Elizabeth, March 14, 1932, copy included in T. Madsen and Welch, "Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?"

²⁴For reproductions of those manuscripts, see Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*.

²⁵Roberts to Richard R. Lyman, October 24, 1927, in Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, 60.

²⁶Wesley P. Lloyd, personal journal, August 7, 1933, copy in Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Lloyd dictated his lengthy report of that meeting to his wife, who wrote it in his journal.

²⁷See, for example, D&C 1:29; 3:17-20; 10:38-48; 19:26-27; 20:8; 24:1; 27:5; 33:16; 38:39; 42:12; 84:57; 98:32; 128:20; 135:1, 3, 4, 6.

²⁸Many statements from Roberts illustrating the fact that even to the end of his life he bore witness of the Book of Mormon are compiled in T. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts and the Book of Mormon"; and T. Madsen and Welch, "Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?"

²⁹The most glaring mistake in Lloyd's entry is in the statement that the study was commenced while Roberts was president of the Eastern States Mission. Actually, it was finished (except for a few minor changes) before he ever left on his mission. Lloyd says that Roberts sent the "400 type written pages thesis" (it was actually 450 pages) to President Grant. There is no evidence that he ever did so. Lloyd indicates that Roberts called his manuscript "a contribution to assist in explaining Mormonism." When he prepared it for submission in 1922, Roberts wrote that it "does not represent any conclusions of mine," but was presented "for the information of those who ought to know everything about it *pro et con*, as well that which was produced against it, and that which may be produced against it." In addition, he said, he wrote it "for those who should be its students and know on what ground the Book of Mormon may be questioned, as well as that which supports its authenticity and its truth." (Roberts to Grant, et. al., March 15, 1923 [1922].) Lloyd's journal says that Roberts turned to "a psychological explanation of the Book of Mormon and shows that the plates were not objective but subjective with Joseph Smith, that his exceptional imagination qualified him psychologically for the experience which he had in presenting to the world the Book of Mormon and that the plates with the Urim and Thummim were not objective." Whether this is an accurate reflection of what Roberts said in 1933 is not clear, but if it is intended as a reflection of what Roberts put in his 1922 manuscript it is a distortion. The ninth section of Part I discusses the possibility that Joseph Smith got the idea of the Urim and Thummim from Ethan Smith, but does not propose this as a final explanation. The fourteenth section discusses the imaginative mind of Joseph Smith, and concludes that it was, indeed, *possible* for Joseph Smith to have written a manuscript, but it does not say that this is a valid alternative to Joseph Smith's own story. The idea that the plates were subjective rather than objective is not there, except, perhaps, by inference. It is certainly possible, however, that Roberts saw the implications of what he had written and spelled them out more clearly to Lloyd in 1933. But that is still not evidence that he accepted such conclusions.

³⁰Several previous articles have dealt with this controversy. The most detailed is Richard Sherlock, “‘We Can See No Advantage To a Continuation of the Discussion’: The Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair,” *Dialogue* 13 (Fall 1980): 63–78. Sherlock’s well-researched article covers much of the material contained in the rest of the present essay. I have been pleased, however, with the opportunity to examine the relevant documents and gain some significant new understandings of the period. See also Truman G. Madsen, “The Truth, the Way, the Life,” in *Defender of the Faith*, 338–45. Other articles dealing directly with this matter but also going beyond it include Jeffrey E. Keller, “Discussion Continued: The Sequel to the Roberts/Smith/Talmage Affair,” *Dialogue* 15 (Spring 1982): 79–98; and Richard Sherlock, “A Turbulent Spectrum: Mormon Reactions to the Darwinist Legacy,” *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 33–59. Thomas G. Alexander puts the controversy in its larger theological setting in *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), chapter 14, “Definition and Explication of Church Doctrine.”

³¹Many of the sources for what follows are generally restricted. They include extracts from the minutes of the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve; excerpts from the minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve; the journal of President Heber J. Grant; B. H. Roberts papers; committee reports of the Council of the Twelve; miscellaneous correspondence in the papers of the First Presidency; and the Rudger Clawson collection. With the permission and cooperation of the LDS Church Archives and its advisors in the Quorum of the Twelve who recognized the unusual need for accuracy in writing this history, *BYU Studies* had special access to these restricted documents. They are simply identified as “*TWL* collection.” It contains about sixty records, letters, minutes, memoranda, or journal entries. Unless otherwise noted, anything cited below derives from these sources. I gratefully acknowledge the collaboration of John W. Welch in this research.

³²For detailed comments on these doctrinal discussions, see the foregoing essays and several of the secondary sources cited in the notes to this article.

³³On Friday, April 1, 1927, Roberts was in Salt Lake City, where he wrote a letter to his wife Celia. He was leaving on Saturday, he said, to go back to New York, and he had been excused from attending the forthcoming general conference. See T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 332. Whether he meant Saturday, April 2, or the following Saturday is not clear. President Grant’s personal journal simply states that Roberts “called.” This phrasing could mean either that Roberts had telephoned or that he had not yet left Salt Lake City and actually called at President’s Grant’s office.

³⁴T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 340.

³⁵Roberts to Howard R. Driggs, January 8, 1929, *TWL* collection.

³⁶Pomeroy had written to Roberts questioning his views on the “eternity of intelligent entities.” Roberts answered emphatically that his convictions had undergone no change in late years, and that the eternity of uncreated intelligence was the noblest thing connected with humanity, as several of his publications demonstrated. He expressed impatience with people who “hold to partial truths and seek to demonstrate them to no good purpose on earth.”

³⁷For a fully developed exposition of Elder Smith’s views on creation, evolution, the Fall, and related points, see his *Man, His Origin and Destiny* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954). This volume was used as a text in the 1954 summer school at BYU for all the Church’s seminary and institute teachers.

³⁸Roberts to Elizabeth Hinckley, May 1929, as quoted in T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 343–44.

³⁹Though the most serious objections centered around Roberts's treatment of the creation, pre-Adamites, and the nature of Adam, there were several others. For the committee's points and Roberts's reactions written on the list of objections, see page xiv and the references in note 6, page xxxv above. The committee, for example, raised questions about Roberts's interpretation of "intelligence." Roberts wrote "misapprehension" (i.e., "misunderstanding") in the column, scribbled a note of explanation, then wrote "clarify" at the end of the paragraph. He was evidently willing to make clarifications in the manuscript. The committee said that his use of the phrase "mind, spirit, and soul" appeared confusing. Again Roberts wrote "clarify." On other points, Roberts apparently questioned the reasoning of the committee and just wrote "meaningless" in the margin.

⁴⁰Deseret News, April 5, 1930, 8. Interestingly enough, these statements did not appear in the published version of Elder Smith's talk.

⁴¹He made such remarks, for example, at the quarterly meetings of the Council of the Twelve Apostles on June 24, 1930, and September 30, 1930. Later, in a meeting on December 16, he warned his brethren that the "great danger" confronting the Church was "the fact that we have wolves in sheep's clothing within the fold wounding and destroying some of the flock." He referred more pointedly to "certain textbooks" published for use in Church schools that, he believed, carried such dangers.

⁴²"Faith Leads to a Fulness of Truth and Righteousness," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 21 (October 1930): 145–58. Joseph Fielding Smith was vice president of the Utah Genealogical and Historical Society at this time.

⁴³The following events are well summarized in a manner eminently fair to both sides in a communication from the First Presidency to the Council of the Twelve, the First Council of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric, dated April 7, 1931.

⁴⁴Elder Smith's paper, dated January 14, is extant. Elder Roberts's comments are found in Draft 2 of chapter 31 of *TWL* above, and a summary of Elder Roberts's presentation is in the April 7 report of the First Presidency, *TWL* collection.

⁴⁵Roberts to President Heber J. Grant and Counselors, February 9, 1931, *TWL* collection.

⁴⁶For Orson Hyde's sermon, see *Journal of Discourses* 2:75–87. For Brigham Young's, see *Journal of Discourses* 2:88–90.

⁴⁷*TWL* collection; italics added.

⁴⁸Significantly, several years later Elder Widtsoe wrote his own answer to the question of pre-Adamites, concluding that there were "human like beings" before Adam but recognizing that he was unable to explain either them or the creation of Adam. John A. Widtsoe, "Were There Pre-Adamites?" *Improvement Era* 51 (May 1948): 305.

⁴⁹Talmage's January 18 speech was published at this time in England, where Elder Widtsoe was serving as mission president and editor of the *Millennial Star*. James E. Talmage, "The Divine Purpose," *Millennial Star* 13 (March 26, 1931): 193–205. Widtsoe returned to Utah for meetings at the end of March and early April.

⁵⁰This quotation is found in Joseph Smith, Jr., *The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 5:344. The spelling and punctuation above conform to this source rather than to the minor differences in the First Presidency's report.

⁵¹Smith, *History of the Church* 5:340.

⁵²Personal Journal of James Edward Talmage, April 7, 1931, Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

⁵³In the minutes, the name was transposed to “The Way, The Truth, The Life,” which was probably a common mistake since the phrase appears that way in the New Testament.

⁵⁴See notes 9–11, page xxxv above. Over 10,000 copies of the pamphlet were sent out before February 1932.

⁵⁵T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 373.

⁵⁶As quoted in T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 344.

⁵⁷As quoted in T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 345.

⁵⁸Elsie Cook to President Heber J. Grant, November 23, 1933, *TWL* collection.

⁵⁹For comments on this conclusion, see T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 342.

⁶⁰As quoted in T. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, 342.

Appendix I

Further Materials Related to *The Truth, The Way, The Life*

Additional Introductory Comments by B. H. Roberts

[Two copies of the following introductory materials are found in Draft 2 of *TWL*, published in volume 2 of the BYU Studies facsimile edition of Roberts's manuscripts. One copy is heavily edited; the other is the fairly clean carbon copy (see pages 3-7 and 70-74, respectively). The information from both copies has been utilized in producing the following text.]

THE TRUTH THE WAY THE LIFE

INTRODUCTORY.

This ~~Treatise~~ **treatis** is to be a search for "The Truth, as it relates to **the Universe and** to man; ~~the Way~~ **a consideration of The Way** as it relates to the attainment of those ends which may be learned as **to** the purpose of man's **Earth** existence; and the contemplation of **The Life** that will result from the knowledge of the Truth and the Way.

It is to be a new study of ~~an~~ **old themes**: the Whence, the Why and the Whither of human existence. It intends to find out if there is any purpose in human life; any scheme or plan of things. ~~as they exist.~~ Is there a Way of life that may be sought and found? **A Way** that leads to the end proposed? If it turns out that there is an end proposed, may it be ~~organized and constantly~~ **cognized and** followed—this Way? Is there a ~~Way~~ **a Truth, a Way, a Life in this God's world** that appeals to reason as well as to faith? Will it satisfy the understanding as well as the longing of the **human** heart? Will it lead to something more than a ~~place of~~ "**pleasing** hope ~~or~~ a fond desire, a longing after immortality?" Shall there be a finding of life, and that abundantly? Such a knowledge of it

that there shall be no shadow of doubt hanging over it? ~~May one follow the Truth the Way the Life or will the search end in disappointment, if so, many inquiries on these themes have ended dissatisfied. Shall we learn that all our striving to know but ends in discouragement and that all that is is but the baseless fabric of a dream?~~ **To find all this out is the task we set before us in the proposed treatise:**

~~You see that in all these preliminaries I am proposing an a~~ **lofty flight** ~~into the realms of thought and feeling. As I read this outline of my purpose before attempted that flight begins, I marvel at the audacity that dares to attempt so much, and yet there is a great need that someone should seek to bring forth to the understanding of men the Truth, the Way and the Life; for there is much confusion among men even at this day on these matters of high import. All concede that the antique world—meaning by that time previous to the coming of the Christ—failed to solve the riddle of human existence by their religions or their philosophies; and that all teachers outside since His the advent of Jesus Christ, have continued to fail in their attempts to solve clearly the mystery of human life. Since the coming of Messiah, however, it is quite generally supposed, by his followers at least, that the purpose of human life is known; that the Truth, the Way and the Life are made clear. But is it? are they, even for Christians? Why then all the confusion and uncertainty that exists, not only among Christians as individuals, but as among Christians as creeds in the facts sects and Churches of Christendom? And all this confusion not on matters of mere detail or things indifferent, but upon essentials. For example: 1st. (1) Which is the ultimate source of Christian authority, the “Church” or the “Book”—the Bible? “The Church” says the Roman Catholic. “The Book” say the Protestant Churches and there is the babble of a thousand different voices in the Protestant division of Christianity on what the interpretations of the “Book” are to shall be.~~

~~2nd (2) The nature of the Christ? What is that nature? as when he arose from the dead? To be specific we will say his physical nature, does he now exist in physical, tangible form, or has he dissolved into some intangible essence and manifested only in a mysterious presence of what the Churches call the Holy Ghost? or has the personal Christ persisted in the tangible, resurrected form in which he appeared unto his disciples after his resurrection from the dead, a personage of flesh and bone and spirit, even eating and drinking with his disciples and saying unto them “handle me and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bone as ye see me have”; and to further convince them of the reality of the tangibility of his life he even ate and drank with them. If in the investigation of these high themes I was relying upon any~~

learning or wisdom of my own then I should not only shrink from the undertaking but abandon it—acquaintance with revelation and whole volume that encourages my flight.

3d. as to man? Will he exist in a personal immortality or As to the resurrection of man, what is to be the nature of the life. Is it to be like the reported immortality of the Christ, a real tangible existence, an individual life of form with the spirit united definitely and inseparably, with a body of flesh and bone, and is man so to persist in the attainments as we have reason to think that Christ is now so persisting in his immortality? or is all this to be ~~dismerged~~ **dismissed** as too material, too grossly material for consideration and is the life to be some ~~diaphase~~ **diaphamous**, intangible yet in some sense realized existence of mass spiritual essence as some of the Pagan philosophies hold, or shall it be resolved into nirvana of the Far East religions.

4th. If there is to be some definite, tangible, physical, as well as spiritual existence as the Christian faith under some interpretations holds, immortality would be, then what are to be the relations of such beings to each other, and what shall be the community life, aims, purposes, impressions? Shall we associate in relations **such** as those we have known in our earth live and that have brought to mortals their chiefest joys and contributed to the highest civilization? Shall we build and inhabit? Shall we make progress in our immortality to higher standards of **individual excellence and com.** civilizations? Shall we participate in creative acts, which from the exhaustless store house of nature and the illimitable space depths, new worlds to take forms out of chaos and become habitable for ever increasing multitudes of sentient and intelligent entities? Or is that future life to be resolved into some static state without increase of power and growth—resolved into a **monotonous** of twanging ~~hearts of harps~~ and senseless **noninenity**?

5th. What is the purpose of God in creation? I submit my question to Christianity in all its forms—Catholic, Protestant. I ~~demand~~ **ask** a positive answer based upon positive authority that shall be nothing this side of God. What is the answer of the Church as definitely representing and speaking for God? What is the answer of the Book—the Bible—as interpreted by the Protestants. You may assume without hesitancy that the **philosophies and religions outside of Christianity and generally called heathen have for** no answer to these questions. I hold also that Christendom so called is equally impotent to answer. Insufferably bold. This I know, but it is time to have done with timidity. Let Christianity as well as **all philosophers** heathen ~~saints~~ be brought to book and if they have an answer to these important questions, in God's name let some of them speak up and tell us what is the conclusion,

~~or beginning~~ **on some authoritative word of God, and without any begging** of the question. If they can not, then let ~~us~~ **them** face a fearless investigation of these matters and start from foundation ~~process~~ **principles.**

6 The universe pluralistic? I am aware in advance how egotistical ~~and perhaps impotent~~ all this sounds and if in this proposed investigation I would be relying upon my human wisdom and learning and strength, **in dealing with the problem** I would not dare to ~~make~~ **attempt** the ~~triumph~~, but I am not depending upon all that which I know to be so limited and so weak, I propose only to organize those truths which God in the Fullness of Times has made known so that common people may understand them and be convinced by them of the high things that God has devised for their life and for their glory. How well or ill I shall succeed this treatise must speak for itself. **Matter to be viewed in light of all that God has revealed—**

I propose to write this book in such a manner that it may be read in any one of three ways—or in **all** three ways.

First, as a treatise on a more or less exalted theme of philosophy and religion without regard to the sources of authority on which the building statements are founded. Such readers will be trusting to the self-evident truth of the matter as the author presents it, depending upon the self-appealing and innate reasonableness of the whole work, rather depending upon the general ensemble of all that is presented for conviction ~~rather~~ than upon any array of authorities however formidable in number or weighty ~~in~~ **of** influence. Such readers will most flatter the author because they would be trusting him and his method of treatment for conducting them to the conclusion to be formed as to the Truth of the whole matter. Naturally to say this is the reading method the author would first recommend, it would be the method of the general reader and the author is of the opinion that the spirit of his treatise will be soonest caught by such a reading and ~~his~~ rather confident that such method would lead most directly to such values as the book may contain. It would be a method of finding the spirit of the treatise rather than its letter correctness of conformity with authority and it is the spirit that still giveth life. Such readers will require no other help than the general text.

Second, the work may be read from the standpoint of an interested investigator of the general subject with constant reference to the citations of sources of authority in order that he may form some idea of the value of the several statements entering into many subdivisions of the work and of the whole this is the interested investigator's method of reading and surely it would be gratifying to be conscious that one

had a clientele of such readers, **who** would ~~be weighing~~ the evidence for the progressive unfolding of the theme and, of course, would form their conclusions upon the appeal the **authorities** would make when somehow woven into a more or less consistent system of thought to aid such interested investigators citation ~~numbers to authoritative~~ **scriptural or secular** will give the proper points in the text for quotations used or for authorities for statements that rest upon authority for their value or where comment or discussion wider than in the text would seem to be desirable. ~~These quotations, references, comments, notes and discussions will be found arranged immediately following the body of the text of the whole book, but arranged to correspond with the marked text in each chapter.~~

Third, the work ~~is designed and~~ may be used as a **class** text book for ~~class~~ students of the Gospel, ~~chiefly designed say~~ **quor. of High Priesthood of ch.** for the use of Chorums of the Seventy in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in that body of men grouped into general Chorums of the Church and on whom is laid the responsibility under the direction of the Twelve Apostles, of preaching the Gospel in all the world. This class of students will not only require the widest research of knowledge afforded by the notes, quotations, and citations to sources of knowledge and authorities at the end of the general text of the book, but they will need ~~a thorough going an~~ **outline in a** analysis of each chapter ~~after a lesson to sustain them~~ ~~most thorough going manner~~ the knowledge of the theme as it develops in the successive steps of the thought **content** contained. To give this aid ~~after~~ each lesson or chapter is analyzed into lesson form and the relations of the points in such lesson indicated by ~~sort of diagram~~ and outline that is thought by the author to be helpful for such a use of the book.

Section Added by Roberts to Draft 2, Chapter 31

[The following section, “A Modification of the Orthodox View,” was added by Roberts to the copy of Chapter 31 which he read to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on January 7, 1931. It was inserted just before the section entitled “~~Alleged~~ **Further** Evidence of Man’s Antiquity in the Earth” (see page 303 above). This insertion was published in volume 2 of the BYU Studies fascimile edition of Roberts’s manuscripts, pages 224–27.]

A Modification of the Orthbdox View. Here it will be suitable to present a modification of this supposed scripture account of the ~~creation of man:~~ **advent of Adam, as given in the sayings of Joseph Smith:**

As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. . . . ~~Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.~~ (John 5:26–29)

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it (up) again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay *it* down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received from my Father. (John 10:15–18)

Verily, Verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth. (John 5:19–20)

Having these scriptures in mind, of the Prophet of the New Dispensation, in commenting upon the substance of them said:

What did (John) [Jesus] say? . . . The scriptures inform us that Jesus said, “As the Father hath power in Himself, even so hath the Son power”—to do what? Why, what the Father did. The answer is obvious—in a manner to lay down his body and take it up again. Jesus what are you going to do? “To lay down my life as my Father did, and take it up again.” Do you believe it? If you do not believe it you do not believe the Bible. (*History of the Church* 6:305–6)

Moreover, if the Father of Jesus Christ had done that, **viz.**—laid down his life which Jesus was also about to do, following out what the Father **before him** had done, then it is not inconceivable that that Father’s Father had done the same thing: And such is the argument in

one of the Prophet's notable discourses, namely one which was delivered in Nauvoo on June 16, 1844. In the body of his discourse the Prophet repeated his text: "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Rev. 1:6). Here, before quoting the Prophet I may be permitted to exclaim,—God had a Father then! And now the Prophet's comment:

I learned a testimony concerning Abraham, and he reasoned concerning the God of heaven; . . . said he: "Suppose we have two facts: that supposes another fact may exist—two men on the earth, one wiser than the other, would logically show that ⟨a⟩ [another who is] wiser than the wisest ⟨i.e. of these two⟩ may exist. Intelligences exist one above another, so that there is no end to them." If Abraham reasoned thus—If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and ⟨God⟩ [John] discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father, you may suppose that He ⟨i.e. the Father of Jesus Christ⟩ had a Father also. Where was there ever a son without a father? And where was there [ever] a father without first being a son? . . . And everything comes in this way. Paul says, that which is earthly is in the likeness of that which is heavenly, Hence if Jesus had a Father, can we not believe that *He* ⟨i.e. **the Father of Jesus**⟩ had a Father also? . . . I want you to pay particular attention to what I am saying. Jesus said that the Father wrought precisely in the same way as His Father had done before Him. As the Father had done before Him. He laid down His life and took it up the same as His Father had done before. He ⟨Jesus⟩ did ⟨after⟩ [as] He was sent, to lay down His life and take it up again; and then was committed [un]to Him the keys. (*History of the Church* 6:476-77)

The thing to be noted here, however, is that this laying down of the lives of these Fathers was not upon this earth, ~~at least during and since the Adamic time~~, but must have taken place on other worlds, together with their resurrection also: so that **there was** life and death ~~were~~ before Adam's time, at least on other worlds.

The conclusion I ~~reach~~ **wish to present here** is, ~~this~~: that life and death were no new and original things to our planet, and only peculiar to Adam and since his time. They were from of old, and should not be considered as inconceivable ~~as affirmed~~ as happening not only on other worlds but in our earth **also** in pre-Adamite times.

In further confirmation of this line of thought the Prophet Joseph is represented as saying: "Everlasting covenant was made between three personages before the organization of this earth, and ~~relents~~ **relates** to their dispensation of things to ⟨man⟩ [men] on the earth: these personages, according to Abraham's record, are called God the first, the Creator; God the second, the Redeemer; and God the third,

the witness or Testator.” (See Richards, *Compendium*, ~~subtitle of~~ “Gems from the History of Joseph Smith,” 272.)

And again, from the same source, “the world and earth are not synonymous terms. The world is the human family.—This earth was organized or formed out of other planets which were broken up and remodeled ~~(?)~~ and made into *the* one on which we live. The elements are eternal. . . . In the translation ‘without form and void, it should read empty and desolate. The word created should be formed or organized” (Richards, *Compendium*, 271).

It must be admitted that Elder Franklin D. Richards, compiler of this *Compendium*, does not cite precisely the source whence these items were obtained, nor have I been able to trace them to other sources **than his this Compendium**; but then, it should be remembered, that Elder F. D. Richards one of the ~~12~~ **Twelve** apostles and **in his day** Historian of the Church, and ~~as~~ a contemporary with the Prophet himself, is an important authority in such matters.

It will be noted here that in the first of the above quotations the covenant of the Three Personages mentioned ~~and~~ relates to their dispensation of things to men on the earth. And in the second quotation the statement is made that this earth was organized ~~from the~~ or formed out of other planets which were broken up and ~~moulded~~ **remolded**, and, made into **the** one on which we live. ~~It will not be necessary to conceive the preexistent world out of which the one we occupy was made to conceive of it as broken up and the parts separated. The language could be regarded as recognizing some cataclysm of fervent heat and earthquake shocks having passed over it and out of the ruins of its surface the present world as Adam knew it and came to it, was fashioned. Much though perhaps in a development *different* way, as the world was ruined and rendered desolate by the flood cataclysm in of the days of Noah after which under commandment of God, he went~~ **Were those planets out of which ours was made inhabited by pre-Adamic races? Who shall say? But if so the commandment to Adam to multiply and replenish the Earth would not have been inappropriate any more than it was for Noah to be commanded to go forth to and multiply and replenish the earth (Gen. 9:1). much as Adam had been commanded to do in his time (Gen. 1:20).** And here ~~very likely~~ is a suitable place in which to say something ~~more~~ on the ~~question~~ **meaning** of the word “replenish,” as used in the Bible, and as used by the Prophet in the New Dispensation in the Book of Moses, and also in the creation story in the Book of Abraham (ch. 4).

Summary of Joseph Fielding Smith's Comments, January 1931

In a fifty-six page memo, dated January 14, 1931, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith objected to two main points that Elder B. H. Roberts had raised when Roberts spoke to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on January 7, 1931. Elder Smith asserted first “that there was no death upon this earth before the fall of Adam,” and second “that the theory of pre-Adamites is not a doctrine of the Church” (1). Presenting his paper orally at the meeting of the Quorum on January 21, 1931 (see page 705 above), Elder Smith countered these two propositions by discussing several scriptures, citing a few secular sources, and offering extensive excerpts from the writings of other General Authorities. Elder Smith made it clear that he prepared and presented his statement by invitation and that he claimed no originality for his views (1-2). He explained that he had spoken strongly on April 5, 1930, because he felt that leaders of the Church from the beginning had taught the same doctrines, which he had heard “all [his] life” (2). While confident of his position, Elder Smith affirmed, “I am perfectly willing to leave the matter in the hands of my brethren, when I am through with this paper, whether or not I have sufficient grounds for speaking as one who has authority rather than as one of the scribes” (2).

Acknowledging that theirs was “a most wonderful age of discovery and invention,” even one foreseen in this regard by ancient prophets, Elder Smith cautioned that “no knowledge or discovery, by which the world is benefitted, has come to light, except the Lord has willed it” (2). After affirming that he agreed with Elder Roberts on the point that “there are many truths made known that have not been proclaimed by direct revelation,” Elder Smith reserved the fact that “Latter-day Saints are not bound to receive the theories of men when they do not accord with the word of the Lord to them, no matter how great the weight of evidence may appear to be in favor of the theory, or how many men of world renown may accept it as established truth” (3).

Quoting scripture, Elder Smith reminded the Quorum “that the adversary of righteousness is also giving revelation and poisoning the minds of men” (3). Along the same lines, the Lord has said that he will “destroy the wisdom of the wise” (1 Cor. 1:19).

Notwithstanding the fact that there are worlds without number, the doctrine “that man has evolved from lower forms of life . . . is as false as their author who reigns in hell! Well, that’s dogmatic, and it’s true!” (3-4). At the same time, “many worlds . . . have passed away, that is to say, they have filled their mortal existence and have been crowned with eternal glory” (4).

Elder Smith then discussed the weakness of geological knowledge (4-11). After describing geology in general, Elder Smith pointed out that, as in science generally, geological theories “have been advanced, discarded, changed and modified” (4). He quoted George McCready Price, a professor of geology in Nebraska, as acknowledging that “the most absurd and fantastic speculations are still taught to the students with all the solemnity and pompous importance which might be allowable in speaking of the facts of chemistry or physics.” (4-5). Elder Smith then pointed out the weaknesses in Werner’s late eighteenth-century “onion-coat” theory of geology, of which Price was particularly critical (5-6).

Elder Smith then identified, as one of the fatal mistakes made by geologists, the fact that they approach their work “with the bias that the present day rate of change and condition has been the same which has prevailed always in the past” (6). Another fatal mistake, he maintained, is that geologists assume “that all animate things upon the earth have always lived in the midst of the struggle for existence, hatred and enmity of each other” (6). After looking briefly at the grouping of geological periods by “orthodox” geologists, whom he insisted must also be evolutionists, Elder Smith asked, “How are we going to accept part of their inductions, especially that relating to *time*, and discard the rest and maintain that all men, whether pre-Adamites or Adamites, are begotten sons and daughters unto God?” “Surely,” he argued, “no Latter-day Saint who accepts the revelations of the Lord can believe that the Lord placed man on the earth millions of years ago in a body unfit for exaltation, for he has declared that man . . . is his offspring” (7).

Next, Elder Smith turned his attention to fossils and the age of rocks, arguing that they do not tell the story of the age of life upon the earth (8). He placed great weight on the fact that older fossils are sometimes found on top of younger fossils, from which he concluded that the standard geological classification of these fossils is not a fact, but a theory (9). He again quoted from Professor Price, this time from a speech given before the Victoria Institute or Philosophical Society of Great Britain, a lecture which won the Langhorn Orchard prize in 1925. Price argued that, “no particular type of fossil life is older or younger than any other” (10), as is reported in the Journal of Transactions of the Victoria Institute, volume 57. Elder Smith added his own view that the Wasatch Mountains offered corroborating evidence, attributing their “broken and fragmentary condition” to the destructions reported in the Book of Mormon less than two thousand years ago (10).

In summation of this section of his presentation, Elder Smith reiterated some lines from his April 5, 1930 speech, that “any doctrine, whether it comes in the name of religion, science, philosophy, or whatever it may be, that is in conflict with the revelations of the Lord, will

fail” (11). He made no apology for speaking dogmatically, he said, because “truth is dogmatic. Revelation from God is dogmatic. Others, better qualified than I, have said it dogmatically.” (11). Substantiating the “definitive authority of divine revelation which must be the standard,” Elder Smith then quoted two paragraphs from an article written in 1911 by President Joseph F. Smith (*Improvement Era* 14:549-51).

Elder Smith next turned to the discussion of Adam and the fall of Adam to demonstrate that “pre-Adamite theory is not a doctrine of the Church” (12-25). He first dismissed the opinions of Elder Orson Hyde and President Brigham Young by pointing out that “Orson Hyde was speaking on the question of marriage” and only incidentally mentioned the word “replenish,” wrongly basing his deduction on a misunderstanding of the meaning of that word (13). Moreover, in approving Elder Hyde’s comments, President Young was only commenting on “the other part of the sermon” (13). President Young never mentioned the pre-Adamite doctrine on this or any other occasion.

Elder Smith then offered a strong analysis of the Hebrew word behind the King James translation of the word “replenish” (13-14). He pointed out firmly that the Hebrew verb *male* “does not mean replenish, or refill or to make full after once being made empty. Elsewhere in the scriptures it is translated *fill* according to the meaning of the word” (14). He remarked, “I very greatly regret that I am forced to impeach the testimony of Elder Orson Hyde, who was neither in harmony with the Hebrew meaning of this word or with his brethren, as subsequent testimony will show” (14).

Elder Smith then went on to discuss the sequence of events found in the four accounts of the creation as they appear in Genesis 1-2, Moses 2-3, Abraham 4-5, and the temple ceremony. These narratives “teach us that man was the last of the creations on the earth” (15). He argued that Moses 3:5 merely explained “that all things were created in the spirit before they were naturally in the earth” (15), and was “not intended to change the order of creation physically on the earth as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis” (15). He substantiated this point by quoting D&C 29:23-24. Elder Smith then opined that the idea that man was the first living thing on earth after it had become desolate “does violence to the entire account of creation as well as to reason” (16).

Elder Smith next examined scriptures that demonstrate that Adam was the first flesh, meaning the first man on earth. He began with Moses 3:7, and interpreted it in light of other scriptures which use the word “flesh” to mean man (Jeremiah 17:5; Romans 8:12; John 8:15; 1 Peter 4:2; 2 Nephi 2:21; D&C 38:11).

Elder Smith went on to point out the lack of scriptural support for the idea “that any race of people ever inhabited this earth before the advent of Adam” (17). He discussed revelations given to Moses, Abraham, Joseph Smith, and others, to ask, “Is it possible in the light of the revelations concerning man and his destiny to conceive of the thought that there could have been men who were not the children of God?” (19). “Why is it that they have been ignored in the restitution of all things?” (20).

In rejecting the idea that Adam was a translated being, Elder Smith pointed out that translated beings are taken from the earth to heaven and have full possession of all their faculties (20). He found it illogical that God would take from Adam his knowledge and introduce him into an innocent state “just to create a condition where the man would have to transgress so that knowledge could come back to him” (20–21). “The whole story of translation in the case of Adam is absurd. We are forced to the conclusion that Adam was not a translated being” (21).

Another difficulty with the translated being theory, said Elder Smith, was the frequent reference in the scriptures to the fact that Adam’s body was created out of the dust of the earth (Moses 3:7; 4:25–29; Abraham 5:7; Alma 42:2). Along the same line, he argued that Adam was surely not subject to death before the fall, again confirming that Adam could not have been a translated being, for “translated beings are subject to death; in them death is merely suspended” (22).

Moreover, 2 Nephi 2:22 was cited to show that, if it had not been for the fall of Adam, “*all things* would also have remained in like condition with him. The inevitable conclusion then is that because Adam transgressed, all things had to suffer the curse of that fall. The earth was cursed at that time and also ‘fell’ carrying with it into the mortal condition *all life upon its face*” (22, emphasis in original). The universal effect of the Fall upon all men is, moreover, asserted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. If Adam were only a translated being, he could not have been responsible for passing death to his posterity. Elder Smith then argued that the scriptures foretelling a “restoration of all things” show that Adam, who lived in the *first* dispensation, will “take his place at the head, under Jesus Christ.” This, he asserted, shows that there were no pre-Adamites; if they ever existed at all they would have been included in the restoration (23–24).

Finally, Elder Smith suggested that the tenth Article of Faith, that the earth will be renewed to its paradisiacal glory, confirms that the world into which Adam was introduced was a glorious world, not a barren and mundane world outside the realms of the fall of Adam and of the atonement of Jesus Christ (24–25). “Is it not plain that the earth

did not fall until after Adam did? What kind of beings then would pre-Adamites be? Necessarily immortal beings. Or did the earth pass through several falls, and was it renewed several times? That is out of the question” (25).

Elder Smith then quoted extensively from several leading Church authorities. He began with the Prophet Joseph Smith, whose description of Adam as the first man from the beginning and over all the human family is quoted from *History of the Church* 4:207-8; D&C 78:16; and then *History of the Church* 3:385-87 (26-27).

Brigham Young, who spoke of “the very commencement of the peopling of the earth” and of death entering the world and effecting “all things pertaining to this earth,” was next cited from *Journal of Discourses* 1:234-35 and 10:312.

President John Taylor, *The Government of God* (1852), pages 106-15, was quoted extensively which itself quoted at length from Parley P. Pratt, *The Voice of Warning*, published during the lifetime of Joseph Smith (28-33). These pages deal with the Fall and restoring all things to the state they were in “in the beginning.”

The testimony of Orson Pratt concerning the topics at hand were represented by several quotations. Teachings on the Fall were taken from the speech Pratt delivered at the funeral of Caroline G. Smith in Nauvoo, May 24, 1845, published in *Times and Seasons* 6:918-19. Elder Orson Pratt’s comments on August 29, 1852, also affirm that there was “no mortality” on earth when “the Lord himself solemnized the first marriage pertaining to this globe.” *Journal of Discourses* 1:58. Similarly, Elder Smith used Orson Pratt’s discourse of July 25, 1852, to confirm several points and was quoted at length from *Journal of Discourses* 1:280-84, regarding the goodness of “the original condition of our creation,” the introduction of man in the world, and the Fall (36-40). Another discourse by Professor Orson Pratt, from *Journal of Discourses* 1:328-44, on the earth, its full, redemption and final destiny is quoted extensively (40-51). A final discourse from Elder Pratt, August 1, 1880, supplied further corroboration for the idea that there was no mortality upon the earth at the time that Adam, Eve, and all living things were first placed upon the earth (51-52). See *Journal of Discourses* 21:323. Elder Smith praised Orson Pratt for his solid support among the brethren, and he concluded that “surely his words are worthy of grave consideration” (53).

Statements from Franklin D. Richards, *Compendium*, pages 8-9, were given to show that the atonement of Jesus Christ reaches everything pertaining to this earth (53), and words from Charles W. Penrose that “Adam stands at the head of the human race on this planet” were cited from *Improvement Era* 17:709.

Finally, Elder Smith quoted from a proclamation of the First Presidency, published in November 1909, entitled “The Origin of Man.” This statement affirms that God created Adam, “the first man,” in his own image and likeness, and that positions to the contrary “are the theories of men” (54). This statement was published in *Improvement Era* 13:75–81.

Elder Smith then concluded by stating that he certainly felt that he had both “the authority and the justification to speak with emphasis and dogmatically upon these subjects for which Elder Roberts has called me in question. If I am wrong, then the revelations are wrong—I have not placed private interpretation upon them—but the same interpretation that the leading elders of this Church have placed upon them including the Prophet Joseph Smith” (54–55). He hoped that it would not be thought that he was presuming to counsel “intellectuals” within the Church who think more highly of philosophy than revelation; he advised that “they ought to humble themselves, get the Spirit of the Lord and have more faith in his proclamation” (55). He also spoke as an advocate for the majority of Church members who had found Elder Roberts’s comments to have “caused indignation, some resentment, and a great deal of serious concern” (55). While defending himself and his competence in speaking, Elder Smith testified that if there were pre-Adamites upon this earth, then “the Lord for some good reason known to himself, has kept that knowledge a secret to himself” (55). If God has done this, then it is our duty to wait for further revelation before we proclaim it as a doctrine (55). In the meantime, “we all have the happy privilege of freely bathing and glorying in the effulgent splendor of divine truth *revealed*” (56, emphasis in original). He ended by saying: “When the Lord has new truth to make known, it will come through him, and not another” (56).

Appendix II

Cross-References to Roberts's Other Doctrinal Works

Roberts intended *TWL* as a distillation of the main topics covered in his many doctrinal works. His principal books, articles, and pamphlets on doctrinal subjects are listed below and then (pages 737–42) the main sections in these works that discuss topics also covered in *TWL* are identified according to the following date codes:

- 1888 *The Gospel: An Exposition of its First Principles*
 (multiple editions)
- 1889 “Man’s Relationship to Deity” (in *The Gospel*, 3d
 edition)
- 1895 *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History* (multiple editions)
- 1907a *The Seventy’s Course in Theology, First Year*
- 1907b *Recent Discussion of Mormon Affairs*
- 1908a *The Seventy’s Course in Theology, Second Year*
- 1908b *Joseph Smith the Prophet Teacher* (multiple editions)
- 1909 *New Witnesses for God*, vol. 3 (multiple editions)
- 1910 *The Seventy’s Course in Theology, Third Year*
- 1911a *The Seventy’s Course in Theology, Fourth Year*
- 1911b *New Witnesses for God*, vol. 1 (multiple editions)
- 1912a *The Seventy’s Course in Theology, Fifth Year*
- 1912b *Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, vol. 2
- 1914 “The Nearness of God” (included in the collection
 Discourses of Master Minds)
- c. 1916 *The Advantages Possessed by the Saints* (pamphlet)
- c. 1923a *Why “Mormonism”?* (pamphlet)
- c. 1923b *The Lord Hath Spoken* (pamphlet)
- 1928a “The Affair in Eden: The Fall of Man” (article in *Deseret*
 News, June 30)
- 1928b “*Mormonism*”—*Its Origin and History* (booklet)

- 1928c “A Master Stroke of Philosophy in the Book of Mormon”
(article in *Deseret News*, June 16)
- 1928d “Complete Marriage—Righteousness: Mutilated Marriage—
Sin” (article in *Improvement Era*, January)
- 1929 *The “Falling Away” or the World’s Loss of the Christian
Religion and Church* (series published 1950)
- 1932a “Protest against the Science-Thought of ‘A Dying
Universe’ and No Immortality for Man: The Mission
of the Church of the New Dispensation” (in *Dis-
courses of B. H. Roberts*, 1948)
- 1932b “Mormon View of the First and Great Commandment”
(in *Discourses of B. H. Roberts*, 1948)
- 1932c “The Doctrine of Consecration and Stewardship in the
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In discussing the following subjects in *TWL*, Roberts drew heavily upon ideas and materials found in his other doctrinal publications:

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