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## Evidence of Divine Inspiration in Joseph Smith Derived from the Prophet's Teaching in Regard to the Extent of the Universe, Man's Place in it, and His Doctrine Respecting the Gods—Continued

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### EVIDENCE OF DIVINE INSPIRATION IN JOSEPH SMITH DERIVED FROM THE PROPHET'S TEACHING IN REGARD TO THE EXTENT OF THE UNIVERSE, MAN'S PLACE IN IT, AND HIS DOCTRINE RE- SPECTING THE GODS—CONTINUED.

Before entering into an exposition of those doctrines taught by Joseph Smith in respect to the construction of the universe, man's place in it and the Gods, it is necessary to remind the reader that the prophet was reared and spent his life in the midst of environments which utterly separated him from all possible connection with the scientific thought of the age in which he lived. The western wilds of the state of New York in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century; the wilderness of Ohio, the frontiers of Missouri and Illinois were not the centres of thought on astronomy and other scientific subjects; nor was a man engaged in the great affairs of a new and struggling religious society, hunted by his enemies, often betrayed by men whom he trusted, and constantly on the move, in any condition to give his attention to scientific thought had he lived in the very centres of its agitation. Moreover, some of the things that the prophet announced as revelation concerning the universe, the movements of planetary systems and their habitability are not even yet commonly accepted by scientists. Only the most advanced of astronomers admit the possibility of these things, and that with great caution.<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> See a recent article in the American press by Sir Robert Ball on the "Possibility of Life on Other Worlds," in which Sir Robert views the present state of the question from a scientific standpoint, and only conservatively admits the possibility of life

I. Joseph Smith taught that space is infinite, and that there are no outside curtains to it—no limits—no place beyond its bounds. As it was at creation's dawn so it is now and ever will remain, incapable of extension or contraction—a limitless vastness to which nothing can be added by

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on other worlds. He concludes, however, thus: "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."

Later, however, Sir Robert Ball grew bolder and said: "It is most improbable, almost impossible that these great centers of light (the fixed stars) should have been created to light up nothing, and as they are far too distant to be of use to us, we may fairly accept the hypothesis that each one has a system of planets around it like our own. Taking an average of only 10 planets to each sun, that hypothesis indicates the existence, within the narrow range to which human observation is still confined, of at least 300,000,000 of separate worlds, many of them doubtless of gigantic size, and it is nearly inconceivable that those worlds can be wholly devoid of living and sentient beings upon them. Granting the, to us, impossible hypothesis that the final cause of the universe is accident, a fortitious concourse of self-existent atoms, still the accident which produced thinking beings upon this little and inferior world 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 cannot love gases. The probability at least, is that there are millions of worlds—for after all, what the sensitized paper sees must be but an infinitesimal fraction of the whole—occupied by sentient beings."

Still later (27th of August, 1910) the Associated Press announced that in a lecture before the "Popular Educational Society," known as the Materialistic Association," Prof. T. J. J. See declared the completion of his researches in Cosmic Evolution to which he had devoted ten years. The Associated Press dispatch continued: "Professor See stated his conviction that the planets revolving about the fixed stars are inhabited by some kind of intelligent beings. He cited an address delivered at Philadelphia in 1897 by Professor Newcomb in which similar views were held, and said that the proof is much more complete now than at that time. Life flourishing on the earth and believed to exist on Mars and Venus 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."

way of extension. It is without a centre, without a circumference. Let reason, aided by the imagination, do all it can, no other conceptions regarding space can be formed. Astronomers tell us that between our earth and the sun there are ninety-two millions of miles of space. What is beyond the sun in a straight line from us? Space. Ninety-two million miles of it? Aye, and if ninety-two millions of miles be multiplied by ninety-two millions, the space in a direct line from us beyond the sun would not begin to be measured!

But I am weary of measuring distances by such a paltry unit as a mile, let us pluck a ray of light from the sun to aid us in our measurements. Scientists tell us that in one beat of the pendulum a ray of light would pass eight times round the circumference of the earth, or 198,000 miles! Yet from *Alpha Centauri*, the brightest star in the constellation of the *Centaur* and of the fixed stars the nearest to the earth—it would take its light about three and a half years to reach us. “It has also been estimated that it would take light over sixteen years to reach us from *Sirius*, about eighteen years to reach us from *Vega*, about twenty-five years from *Arcturus*, and over forty years from the *Pole-Star*.<sup>b</sup>

These are stars whose distances from the earth have been carefully ascertained. But if these stars nearest to the earth are at such an immense distance from us that figures fail to convey to the mind any adequate idea of its immensity, what of those clusters of stars of which astronomers speak as only being visible through the most powerful telescopes, and that are at such immeasurable distances that it would require a million of years for a ray of light to reach us from

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<sup>b</sup> Gillet and Rolf's *Astronomy*, pp. 364-5. “In many instances it is believed that it would take the light of stars hundreds of years to make the journey to our earth, and in some instances even thousands of years.”—*Ibid.*

them!<sup>c</sup> So much space is between us and them—what is beyond those distant groups of stars in a direct line from us? Space; and as much of it on the other side of them as on this side; just as there is as much beyond our earth in a straight line from them as there is between our earth and those distant groups of stars. But why attempt to describe the infinite? It is a hopeless task; and as space is infinite, it is useless to attempt to describe it. Let imagination fancy it as vast as it can, but it is still vaster than that. There are heights in it to which even in thought the mind cannot ascend; there are depths in it which imagination even cannot fathom. What is here set down is not written with the hope of describing space, but only to aid minds not accustomed to think upon such themes to mentally grasp the self-evident truth that space is limitless. That to some minds may be a difficult thought, but it is more difficult to conceive bounds to space; and the effort to do so will result in bringing a consciousness of the truth that space is absolutely without limits.

II. In this limitless space Joseph Smith taught that there are inexhaustible quantities of matter; that matter is eternal; it always existed, it always will exist in some form or other—some of it as suns, earths and their satellites, and immeasurable quantities of it in unorganized masses, or thinly distributed throughout the immensity of space. As space cannot be extended or contracted, so the sum-total of matter cannot be increased by so much as an atom, nor can one atom of it be destroyed. It may be put through innumerable changes, organized into worlds and systems of worlds, and then resolved again into unorganized elements, but these changes neither increase the sum total of matter nor annihilate a single atom of it. He who asserts the eternity of mat-

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<sup>c</sup> Draper's "Intellectual Development," Vol. II, p. 292. Also Nemcomb's "Astronomy," pp. 455-6.

ter, at the same time asserts the impossibility of its creation from nothing, and also its indestructibility.

The discovery of the immense quantity of matter in space by astronomers goes far towards establishing the truth of its infinitude and eternity; just as their measurements of immense distances go far towards establishing in the mind the conception that space is limitless.

When the geocentric theory prevailed, men had only a very narrow conception of the amount of matter that really existed, just as they had but a meagre conception of the extent of space. But when through the successive speculation and discoveries of Cusa, Copernicus, Bruno and Galileo, the conception that the earth is the immovable centre of the universe to attend upon which the sun and all the stars were created, was displaced by the truth that the earth is but one of the smaller of a number of planets that revolve around the sun; that the sun with its retinue of planets is but one of the stars that make up the galaxy that spans the heavens—each of which is a sun and doubtless the centre of a planetary system;<sup>d</sup> when the telescope increased to man's vision the num-

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<sup>d</sup> "These distant suns are, many of them, much larger than our sun. Sirius, the beautiful Dog-star, 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."—Samuel Kinns, P.H.D., F.R.A.A.S., in "Harmony of the Bible with Science," second edition, p. 238.

"Man, when he looks upon the countless multitudes of stars—when he reflects that all he sees is only a small portion of those which exist, yet that each is 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."—"Intellectual Development of Europe," Vol. II., p. 279.

ber of such suns from five thousand visible to the naked eye, to thirty or fifty millions, he began to be aware of the vast amount of matter distributed in space which makes up the visible universe.

But beyond the faintest stars that can be discerned, the telescope reveals the existence of masses of soft, diffused light of greater or less extent, to which astronomers have given the name of *nebulæ*. Many *nebulæ* which once were set down as masses of unorganized matter, when more powerful telescopes were turned upon them, were resolved into star clusters, and for a time it was thought that all that was needed to discover that all *nebulæ* were star clusters was still more powerful telescopes. This opinion is now, however, abandoned, since another means of determining the character of these hazy patches of light exists, viz., the spectroscope. In 1846 it was discovered by Dr. John William Draper, that the spectrum of an ignited solid is continuous, and as it was already known through the careful experiments of Fraunhofer that the spectrum of ignited gases is discontinuous, a means was furnished by the discovery of Dr. Draper for "determining whether light emitted by a given *nebulæ* comes from an incandescent gas, or from a congeries of ignited solids, stars, or suns. If the spectrum be discontinuous, it is a true *nebulæ* or gas; if continuous a congeries of stars."<sup>e</sup>

Observations of *nebulæ* by means of the spectroscope since this discovery have resulted in some of them giving discontinuous or gaseous spectra, others continuous ones; and accordingly the *nebulæ* of the former class have been set down as true *nebulæ* or gas, and the latter as star clusters, too distant to be resolved by our most powerful telescopes into separate stars to the vision. The revelations of the

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<sup>e</sup> Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe," Vol. II, p. 283.

spectroscope in this particular are accepted by scientists as “demonstrating the existence of vast masses of matter in a gaseous condition, and at a temperature of incandescence;” and it is suggested by Dr. Draper that in some of those gleaming apparitions we see the genesis, and in others, the melting away of universes.<sup>f</sup> However that may be, the extended view of the amount and diversity of matter in space afforded us by means of the discoveries of scientists through the instrumentality of telescopes and spectroscopes, helps the mind to comprehend the infinitude and eternity of it; and prepares the way for the acceptance of the great truth announced in one of God’s revelations to Joseph Smith—“*There are many kingdoms; for there is no space where there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom.*”<sup>g</sup>

While on this subject of “matter” it may be as well to state that the prophet taught that “There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter,” said he, “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.”<sup>h</sup>

That there is no such thing as “immaterial matter” is a self-evident truth; and either we must affirm the materiality of spirit, or deny its existence; for what would an imma-

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<sup>f</sup> “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.” (Book of Moses—Pearl of Great Price, ch. I.)

“From everlasting to everlasting the material universe rolls on composing worlds and disintegrating them.”—Sir Oliver Lodge, “Science and Immortality,” p. 17.

<sup>g</sup> Doc. and Cov. Sec. lxxxviii: 37.

<sup>h</sup> Doc. and Cov. Sec. cxxxii. See also an article on the absurdities of immaterialism, by Elder Orson Pratt; and Doc. and Cov., Sec. xciii: 29, 33, 35.



terial spirit be? the same as immaterial fire or water or atmosphere. To say that any one of the substances named is immaterial is to deny its existence. If it shall be said that intelligence or love is immaterial, the answer would be that neither intelligence nor love is matter, but a property of matter—an attribute of spirit, just as motion and weight are properties of matter.

III. Running parallel with boundless space and limitless and eternal matter is eternal duration, according to the teaching of the prophet. Eternal duration of time is of that class of truths called "necessary truths," because it is impossible to conceive the contrary; that is, we cannot conceive of duration having a beginning. Starting with today for a unit, I ask, what preceded it? Yesterday, I am answered. And what will follow it? Tomorrow. What preceded this present year? Last year. And what will follow it? Next year. What preceded this present century? Last century. What preceded the present millennium? Last millennium. And what will follow it? Another millennium. So I might continue to go on questioning and answering, constantly enlarging the periods, yet getting no nearer to the beginning of the past, nor to the end of future time. As in starting from any given point in space, and going with the velocity of light or thought in opposite directions, would never take us to the point where space is not extended, so starting from any given point in duration, and going in opposite directions, though our mental strides be a million years each we should never arrive at the beginning nor the end of time. It has neither, it is eternal.

Of course there is relative duration, which has a beginning and an end, such as the period between that moment, when the chaotic mass of matter out of which a solar system was made began to break up into rings and condense into a sun and its planets and their satellites, and that

moment when the system may be resolved again into a chaotic mass. Such a period may have a beginning and an end. There is also relative space which may have a point where it begins and another where it ends, such as space between our earth and the sun. But I have been speaking of absolute space and duration, not of relative, and the one is as limitless as the other is eternal.

I shall be told that in all this there is nothing new; that the philosophers, at least of the materialistic school, believe and teach all this. Be it so, they thus far teach the truth, at which they have arrived by the slow and painful pathway of experiment and discovery. Wholly separated from them and independent of them, the youthful Prophet Joseph Smith learned the same truths by the inspiration of God, and taught them to his followers seventy and eighty years ago in the wilderness of New York and Ohio. But he went beyond the philosophers as I am now to prove.

Lambert and Madler, as we have seen, conjectured that the so-called fixed stars of our galaxy were each the centre of groups of planets and with their retinue revolved about some greater centre, somewhere in the universe. Lambert's conjectures provided opaque centres, while Madler selected *Alcyone* of the constellation Pleiades as the centre of the steller universe. Astronomers regard these conjectures as baseless speculation, but cannot deny the possibility of them. They say that such may be the plan on which the universe is constructed, but they have no proof of it. They admit that their discoveries prove a movement of the stars, but they are unable to determine its character. But what the speculative philosophers advanced as conjecture and the working astronomers of today admit only as possible, more than half a century ago Joseph Smith taught as revelation from God. That is, he taught that among the stars commonly called fixed stars there are certain great ones which govern the

smaller ones in their times and revolutions, or are the centres about which they revolve; that there is pre-eminently one great central body around which even these great ones with their attendant systems revolve, and that this governs all the planetary systems of the order to which our earth belongs.

To put the statement in another form, for the sake of clearness, as the eight planets with their attendant satellites which form our solar system revolve around the sun, so the sun with all his attendant planets is one of a number of such systems which revolve around a still greater centre; and that centre with its attendant systems is but one of a number of such systems which revolve around the pre-eminently great central body—to which reference has been made—that God has set to govern all those planetary systems that belong to the same order as our own.

IV. Joseph Smith taught that all these worlds and systems of worlds are under the dominion of law, by which they move in their times and their seasons; “that 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 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: all these are one year with God, but not with man.”<sup>i</sup> But while the prophet proclaimed the universal dominion of law he also proclaimed that “unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions;”<sup>j</sup> by which I understand that even law is governed by law.<sup>k</sup> That as

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<sup>i</sup> Doc. and Cov., Sec. lxxxviii: 36, 42-44.

<sup>j</sup> Ibid, verse 38.

<sup>k</sup> “About sixty years after the revelation (given in 1832, Henry Drummond said: “One of the striking generalizations of recent times is that even laws have their laws” (“Natural Law in the Spiritual World,” Introduction, p. 37—edition of 1893). And John Fiske declares: “In order to be sure that we are gen-

systems upon systems of universes rise one above another, so also do the laws by which they are governed, so that which to us often seems a violation of law, is but the application of higher laws of which we are wholly or in part ignorant.

V. The prophet taught that these worlds and systems of worlds, of which I have spoken, were inhabited.<sup>k</sup> The learned scientists of today in dealing with the question, "are the innumerable worlds in the universe revealed to you by your powerful telescopes inhabited?" can only give as an answer a doubtful "perhaps." One of the scientists, a leading astronomer, thus gives his conclusions after a long review of the question: "It seems, therefore, so far as we can reason from analogy, that the probabilities are in favor of only a very small fraction of the planets being peopled with intelligent beings. But when we reflect that the possible number of the planets is counted by hundreds of millions, this small fraction may be really a large number, and among this number many may be peopled by beings much higher than ourselves in the intellectual scale. Here we may give free rein to our imagination with the moral certainty that science will supply nothing tending either to prove or disprove any of its fancies."<sup>l</sup> This is the best that science can do. The habitability of other worlds to science is a proposition more or less doubtful; but the teachings of the Prophet Joseph are clear and positive upon the subject as far back as 1832.<sup>m</sup>

VI. The prophet taught that all these inhabitants had

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eralizing correctly, we must make the generalizing process itself a subject of generalization" ("Cosmic Philosophy," Vol. II, p. 79, Riverside Press edition). In other words we must make law itself subject to law—the thought of the revelation.

<sup>k</sup> Doc. and Cov. Sec. lxxxviii: 45-6.

<sup>l</sup> Newcomb's "Astronomy," p. 531.

<sup>m</sup> Doc. and Cov., Sec. lxxxviii: 45-61. The revelation was given December, 1832. See also Doc. and Cov., Sec. cxxx: 4, 8.

their own times and seasons, days and years, etc., according to the revolutions of the planets on which they reside." That the Creator of all these worlds and systems of worlds will visit them each in turn. The revelation which teaches this doctrine refers to those worlds or planets that constitute the universe as "kingdoms" which the Lord likens 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, beginning at the first and so on unto the last, and from the last unto the first, and from the first to the last—every man in his order, until his hour was finished even according as his Lord had commanded him, that his Lord might be glorified in him, and he [the servant] in him [the Lord], that they all might be glorified. Therefore unto this parable will I liken all these kingdoms [worlds] 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."<sup>o</sup>

VII. The prophet taught that the earth and the heavens

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<sup>u</sup> Doc. and Cov., Sec. cxxx: 4, 5.

<sup>o</sup> Doc. and Cov., Sec. lxxxviii: 51-61.

at least as they are now constituted, will pass away; that afterwards the earth will be re-created and made an immortal or celestial world; and the righteous inhabit it as an eternal abode. This is the language of the revelation which teaches the doctrine—

“Verily I say unto you, the earth abideth the law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation and transgresseth not the law. Wherefore it shall be sanctified; yea, notwithstanding it shall die, it shall be quickened again, \* \* \* and the righteous shall inherit it.”<sup>p</sup>

“And the earth shall pass away so as by fire. \* \* \* And every corruptible thing, both of man or the beasts of the field, or the fowls of the heavens, or the fish of the sea, that dwell upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed; and also the elements shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new, that my [the Lord’s] knowledge and glory may dwell upon all the earth.”<sup>q</sup>

In a revelation given to Joseph Smith, making known to him more fully the visions which the Lord gave to Moses in the mount, and from which Moses wrote his account of creation in the book of Genesis, the Lord is represented as saying:

“And worlds without number have I created. \* \* \* But only an account of this earth and the inhabitants thereof give I unto you. For behold there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. \* \* \* 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 work.”<sup>r</sup>

<sup>p</sup>Doc. & Cov., Sec. lxxxviii: 25, 26.

<sup>q</sup>Doc. and Cov., Sec. ci: 24, 25.

<sup>r</sup>Pearl of Great Price, pp. 6, 7; 1907 edition. John W. Draper states essentially the same truth in the following passage: “The multiplicity of worlds in infinite space leads to the concep-

VIII. The prophet taught that the "earth in its sanctified and immortal state will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom [world], or all kingdoms [worlds] of a lower order will be manifest to those who dwell upon it;" and that through the means of Urim and Thummim these inhabitants of the earth in its celestial state will learn of things pertaining to the higher order of kingdoms or universes.<sup>5</sup>

These doctrines concerning the earth and the universe will be found scattered through the revelations received by the prophet as quoted in the margin of the respective pages of this book, except the first, which, from the importance of the matter with which it deals, viz.: the movements of planetary systems around great centres, and these great centres with their attendant systems around some pre-eminently great centre—as well as from the peculiar manner by which he came into possession of the information, requires special consideration.

The constructions and movements of the planetary sys-

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tion of a succession of worlds in infinite time. This existing universe, with all its splendors, had a beginning, and will have an end; it had its predecessors, and will have its successors, but its march through all its transformations is under the control of laws as unchangeable as destiny. As a cloud which is composed of myriads of separate and isolated spherules of water so minute as to be invisible, on a summer's afternoon changes its aspect and form, disappearing from the sky, and being replaced in succeeding hours by other clouds of a different aspect and shape, so the universe, which is a cloud of suns and worlds, changes in the immensity of time its form and fashion, and that which is temporary with us is only an example of countless combinations of a like kind, which in ancient times have, one after another, vanished away. In periods yet to come the endless succession of metamorphoses will still go on, a series of universes to which there is no end."—"Intellectual Development of Europe," Vol. II. p. 336.

<sup>5</sup> Doc. and Cov., Sec. cxxx: 9, 10.

tems herein described as the teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith makes no pretension to being new doctrine. The prophet rather proclaims that the ancients were familiar with it. Such was the construction of the universe as taught to the Egyptians by Abraham; and Joseph Smith learned it from the "Book of Abraham," a record written by that patriarch, and which came into the hands of the prophet in the following manner:

The records were obtained from one of the catacombs in Egypt, near the place where once stood the renowned city of Thebes, by a French traveler named Antonio Sebolo, in the year 1831. He procured license from Mehemet Ali, the viceroy of Egypt, under the protection of Chevalier Drovetti, the French Consul, in the year 1828. He employed four hundred and thirty-three men; and after four months and two days' hard work, entered the catacomb June 7th, 1831, and obtained eleven mummies. There were several hundred mummies in the same catacomb; about one hundred embalmed after the first order, and placed in niches, and two or three hundred after the second and third orders, and laid upon the floor or bottom of the ground cavity. The last two orders of embalmed were so decayed, that they could not be handled, and only eleven of the first order found in niches were well enough preserved to be removed.

On his way from Alexandria to Paris, Sebolo put in at Trieste, and, after ten days' illness, died. This was in the year 1832. Previous to his decease, he made a will of his whole collection of mummies to Mr. Michael H. Chandler (then in Philadelphia, Pa.,) his nephew, whom he supposed to be in Ireland. Accordingly the mummies were sent to Dublin, and Mr. Chandler's friends ordered them to New York, where they were received at the custom house in the winter or spring of 1833. In April of the same year; Mr.



Chandler paid the duties, and took possession of his treasures.<sup>†</sup> Up to this time they had not been taken out of the coffins, nor the coffins opened. On opening the coffins, Mr. Chandler discovered that in connection with two of the bodies, was something rolled up with the same kind of linen, saturated with the same bitumen, which when examined proved to be two rolls of papyrus, filled with hieroglyphics and characters or letters somewhat like the present form of the Hebrew. All the hieroglyphics were beautifully written with black and a small part with red ink or paint. Two or three other small pieces of papyrus with astronomical calculations, epitaphs, etc., were found with the other mummies. Mr. Chandler traveled with his mummies exhibiting them and the rolls of papyrus in the principal cities of the eastern states, and in July, 1835, arrived at Kirtland, where the ability of Joseph Smith to translate ancient languages by a divine gift being known, Mr. Chandler submitted to him some of the characters, which the prophet translated.

A few days later some of the Saints in Kirtland purchased the mummies and rolls of papyrus of Mr. Chandler; and the Prophet Joseph with W. W. Phelps and Oliver Cowdery acting as scribes commenced the translation of the rolls, when to their joy they found that one of them contained the writings of Abraham, and the other of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt by his brethren.<sup>‡</sup>

As soon as it was announced that the prophet had come into possession of another ancient record in the manner above described, it was rumored about that he pretended to be in possession of the bodies of Abraham, Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, Joseph who was sold into Egypt, etc.

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<sup>†</sup> This account of how Mr. Chandler came into possession of the mummies is of course given by himself; and for its accuracy the Prophet Joseph is in no way responsible.

<sup>‡</sup> History of Joseph,, Millennial Star, Vol. xv, p. 296.

These false rumors the prophet corrected by saying of the mummies which had so strangely come into his possession—“Who these ancient inhabitants of Egypt were, I do not at present say. Abraham was buried on his own possession in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohah, the Hittite, which is before Mamre, which he purchased of the sons of Heth. Abimelech lived in the same country and for aught we know died there; and the children of Israel carried Joseph’s bones from Egypt, when they went out under Moses; consequently they could not have been found in Egypt in the nineteenth century.”<sup>v</sup> Then follows the account of the finding of the record as already recited in preceding paragraphs.

Some parts of the “Book of Abraham” the prophet translated and published, but if he translated the writings of Joseph they have not been published. From the fragments of the writings of Abraham thus brought to light the prophet learned the construction of the universe that I have set down in these pages. Abraham received his knowledge of the wonderful works of God as seen in the planetary and stellar worlds by revelation from God through the Urim and Thummim, an instrument by means of which God revealed knowledge to the ancient patriarchs and prophets.<sup>w</sup> One of the principal passages in the writings of Abraham which teaches the principles of astronomy is as follows:

“And I, Abraham, had the Urim and Thummim, which the Lord my God had given unto me, in Ur of the Chaldees; and 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 govern-*

<sup>v</sup> History of Joseph Smith, Millennial Star, Vol. xv, p. 550; also “Documentary History of the Church,” Vol. II, p. 348, et seq.

<sup>w</sup> See Exodus xxviii: 30; Lev. viii: 8; Num. xxvii: 21; Deut. xxxiii: 8; I Sam. xxviii: 6; Ezra ii: 63; Neh. vii: 65.,

*ing ones; and the name of the great one is Kolob, because it is near unto me. \* \* \* I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest. And the Lord said unto me, by Urim and Thummim, that Kolob was after the manner of the Lord, according to its times and seasons in the revolutions thereof; that one revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed unto that whereon thou standest. This is the reckoning of the Lord's time, according to the reckoning of Kolob.”\**

In this passage will be found the germ of that system of the construction and movement of planetary systems that make up the universe, set forth in the teachings of Joseph Smith. Here it may be seen that there are many great stars—the “governing ones,” near together, and from among them rises one pre-eminent in greatness—Kolob—which governs all the rest that are of the same order as that to which our solar system belongs.

From other fragments translated from the writings of Abraham on the roll of papyrus we learn that a star called by the Egyptians “Oliblish” stands next to Kolob—that it is the next grand, governing creation; that it is equal to Kolob in its revolutions and in the measurement of time; that it holds the keys of power as pertaining to other planets.<sup>y</sup>

Another governing star in this Abrahamic system is Enish-go-on-dosh, “said by the ancient Egyptians to be the sun, and to borrow [receive] its light from Kolob through the medium of Kae-e-vanrash. \* \* \* Kae-e-vanrash is the grand key or governing power which governs fifteen other fixed planets or stars, as also the moon (Floese), the earth and the sun in their annual revolutions. \* \* \* Kae-e-vanrash receives its power through Kli-

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\*Pearl of Great Price, pp. 60, 61; 1907 edition.

<sup>y</sup>Reynolds' “Book of Abraham, a Divine and Ancient Record,” p. 30.

flos-is-es or Hah-ko-kau-beam. Kli-flos-is-es and Hah-ko-kau-beam receive their light from the revolutions of Kolob.

From the foregoing it appears that our solar system, the governing planet of which—the sun—is known in this Abrahamic system as Enish-go-on-dosh, is governed by, or has for a centre around which it revolves a star known as Kae-e-vanrash. Kae-e-vanrash is governed by or has for a centre around which it revolves, together with its attendant systems of worlds, Kli-flos-is-es or Hah-ko-kau-beam; and these two stars with their attendant systems are governed by or revolve around Kolob, the great centre of that part of the universe to which our planetary system belongs.<sup>z</sup>

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<sup>z</sup> The late Elder George Reynolds commenting on the movement among the so-called “fixed stars,” mentioned in the book of Abraham, and the consequent grandeur of the universe made up of worlds and world-systems moving in order around grand centers rising one above another in constantly increasing attracting power and splendor, said: “When Joseph Smith enunciated the sublime truths above noticed no such thoughts were prevalent amongst the students of astronomy. The Herschels had some inkling of the facts, but their ideas were crude and undeveloped. It was not until the Book of Abraham had been published in America, and if we mistake not in England also, that Sir Wm. G. Hamilton, of the Dublin University, advanced the idea that our solar system had a centre around which the sun and all its attendant planets moved. Today the scholars in the most radical school of astronomy will only admit that our system has a centre, and that the probabilities are that that centre has a centre also around which it and all its satellites move. Further than this they cannot go. However, the little they do admit, confirms the mighty truths revealed to Abraham of old and Joseph of today. On the other hand, the followers of the more conservative schools will simply acknowledge that our solar system has a proper motion of its own, independent of its relative or apparent motions with regard to other stars. They admit that ‘relative to the general mass of stars, our sun is moving in the direction of the constellation of Hercules.’ They have come to this conclusion, because they find that the stars in that part of the heavens are continually growing brighter, (thus showing they are coming nearer), whilst those in exactly the opposite direction are as continually growing more dim. They have also discovered that ‘there are in the heavens several cases of widely extended groups of stars, having a common proper motion entirely different from

Of course these names of governing stars are of but little importance to us at present because of our inability to identify them with those "fixed" stars known to us under other names; but this Abrahamic system of the construction of the universe and movement of planetary systems, revealed to the world by Joseph Smith certainly presents the grandest ideas of the scale on which the universe is constructed, and the power and majesty of the laws by which it is governed. It is true that Kant, Lambert and Madler somewhat approached the Abrahamic system in their speculations, but what they advanced as conjecture, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught as divine truth, as revelation.

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that of the stars around and among them. Such groups they say, must form connected systems,' (Newcomb's Astronomy); or, in other words, are all controlled by one and the same governing planet. It is also admitted that 'the stars in all parts of the heavens move in all directions with all sorts of velocities;' but they claim that the distances of the stars from the earth are so immense, and so short a period of time has elapsed since they first began to notice these movements, that they cannot with certainty say whether they are moving in circles or straight lines, it is only by analogy that they reason that they are moving around a centre. So little are some of these observers willing to admit, that Professor Newcomb simply allows that, 'as our sun is merely one of the stars and rather a small one, too, it may have a proper motion as well as other stars.' The Smithsonian report for 1871, speaking of Herschel, says: 'The world can afford to wait. Astronomy advances. It may be, in the distant future, that the mysterious centre around which our sun and his worlds revolve may be detected, and afford a solution for other mysteries as well as these. The greatest astronomer is equipped for no more than a Sabbath-day's journey.' Another writer remarks: 'Madler attempted to show, from an examination of the proper motions of the stars, that the whole stellar universe was revolving around Alcyone, of the Pleiades (or seven stars,) as a centre—a theory, the grandeur of which led to its wide diffusion in popular writing.' Mr. Wm. Petrie, of London, writing with regard to this same star, says: 'Alcyone, a primeval name of the star, means the centre, and has quite recently been discovered to be really the centre around which even our whole solar system, amongst others, revolves.'" (The Book of Abraham, Its Authenticity Established as a Divine and Ancient Record.—Reynolds,—1879, pp. 30, 31.

It is now (1910) about seventy years since the Abrahamic system was first announced by the prophet; and it is interesting to note the fact that though the heavens have been constantly searched by powerful telescopes during that time, nothing has yet been discovered which at all conflicts with it. On the contrary much has been learned which tends to confirm it. What God has revealed on this most important and interesting branch of knowledge far outstrips what scientists have learned or speculative philosophers have conjectured; and with confidence those who accept that revelation may watch the slow but important discoveries of astronomers which will yet demonstrate the entire truth of that system which God has revealed.

It represents the universe as planned on a scale so magnificent that it is worthy of the intelligence of a God as its Creator. Such ideas of the construction of the universe are worthy of revelation, they carry with them by the very force of their grandeur the evidence of their truth; and when it is remembered that they were brought forth by a young man wholly separated from the centres of scientific thought, unacquainted with the speculations of philosophers, and without any previous knowledge of astronomy, it is not difficult to believe that he received his knowledge of them from the writings of one inspired or taught of God; and that he himself was gifted with divine power to translate those ancient writings, and hence himself a prophet and seer inspired of God.

Another matter of interest to note is, as already observed, that this Abrahamic system of astronomy is not held up as a new idea of the construction of the universe, but is simply bringing to light again the knowledge had among the ancients. In a preceding chapter I called attention to the fact that Copernicus in the perface of his work on the move-

ment of the heavenly bodies, complains against the imperfections of the geocentric theory and states that he *sought among ancient writers for a better way, and so had learned the heliocentric doctrine<sup>a</sup>*—that is, that the sun was the centre around which the earth moved.

As another evidence that the idea of Copernicus concerning the structure of the universe was known to the ancients and that he learned it from their writings, it is only necessary to say that when the "Holy Inquisition" on the 5th of March, 1616 A. D., issued its decrees against Galileo, it also condemned and denounced the whole Copernican system as "*that false Pythagorean doctrine, utterly contrary to the Holy Scriptures.*"<sup>b</sup>

Pythagoras was born about 540 B. C., most probably at Samosa, an island in the Aegean Sea. Despite the efforts of some eminent scholars to prove that the doctrines of Pythagoras were not of Egyptian origin, it is now quite generally conceded that they were. "If it were not explicitly stated by the ancients," says Draper, "that Pythagoras lived for twenty-two years in Egypt, there is sufficient internal evidence in his story to prove that he had been there a long time. As a connoisseur can detect the hand of a master by the style of a picture, so one who has devoted attention to the old system of thought sees, at a glance, the Egyptian in the philosophy of Pythagoras."<sup>c</sup>

The only thing, however, that now concerns me in Pythagorean doctrines is that part which relates to astronomy. However touched with fancy Pythagoras' theory may have been, he did teach that the sun was the centre of the planetary system, around which the earth with four other planets

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<sup>a</sup> Intellectual Development, Vol. II, p. 255.

<sup>b</sup> Intellectual Development, Vol. II, p. 263.

<sup>c</sup> Intellectual Development, Vol. I, p. 111.

revolved;<sup>d</sup> and in that one may see substantially the heliocentric theory subsequently taught by Copernicus. It is clear from his own statement that Copernicus learned the heliocentric doctrine from the ancients, among whom doubtless was Pythagoras, who learned it from the Egyptians, among whom he spent twenty-two years of his life. It only now remains to prove that the Egyptians received their knowledge of astronomy from Abraham, in order to prove that indirectly the heliocentric theory, which has led to our modern notions of the construction of the universe, as well as the Abrahamic system of astronomy, revealed to the world through Joseph Smith has one and the same source—the revelations which the Lord gave to the Patriarch Abraham.

That Abraham was in Egypt is clear both from the Bible<sup>e</sup> and the writings of Josephus. The latter after relating all that the Bible does, only in greater detail, adds to the account that the Egyptian king made Abraham a large present in money:

“And gave him leave to enter into conversation with the most learned among the Egyptians from which conversation, his virtue and his reputation became more conspicuous than they had been before. For whereas the Egyptians were formerly addicted to different customs, and despised one another’s sacred and accustomed rites, and were very angry one with another on that account, Abraham conferred with each of them, and confuted the reasonings they made use of, every one for their own practices, he demonstrated that such reasonings were vain, and void of truth; whereupon he was admired by them, in those conferences, as a very wise man, and one of great sagacity, when he discoursed on any subject he undertook and this was not only in understanding it, but in persuading other men also to assent to him. He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to

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<sup>d</sup> Intellectual Development, Vol. I, pp. 116-117.

<sup>e</sup> Genesis xii.



them the science of astronomy; for before Abraham came into Egypt, they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also."<sup>f</sup>

Josephus does not give his authority for this remarkable addition to the Bible account of Abraham's sojourn in Egypt, but there can be no doubt of the correctness of his statement or of his sufficiency as authority for the fact. For, as remarked by Mr. William Osburn, author of the "Monumental History of Egypt," "Not only were the temple records of Egypt in existence at the time [when Josephus wrote his Antiquities], but the work of Josephus was itself specially addressed to the Greek and Egyptian philosophers of Alexandria as an apology for his own nation. So that to have ventured upon a falsification of the history of Egypt, thus disparaging to its ancient fame, and thus to the credit of his own hero, to antagonists perfectly competent to expose it, and deeply interested in the exposure, would have been sheer insanity. It would hardly, therefore, be possible to produce a statement better authenticated. We assume it, then, for an historical fact, that Abraham arrived in Egypt at a time when the monarchy was convulsed by a fierce civil broil, arising out of religious differences, which was appeased during his sojourn there."<sup>g</sup> And on the same authority, supported by the same reasoning, I also accept it as an historical fact that the patriarch taught the Egyptians arithmetic and astronomy, from whence afterwards the Greeks learned some fragments of the patriarch's teaching on the latter subject.<sup>h</sup>

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<sup>f</sup> Antiquities of the Jews, Bk. I, ch. viii.

<sup>g</sup> Monumental History of Egypt, vol. I, p. 37.

<sup>h</sup> Josephus in another place repeats his assertion that the Greeks learned their knowledge of celestial things of the Egyptians by saying: "But then for those that first introduced philosophy, and the consideration of things celestial and divine among them [the Greeks] such as Pherecydes, the Syrian, and Pytha-

From the Book of Abraham we learn that the patriarch went into Egypt because he was commanded of God to go, and that for the express purpose of teaching the things he had learned concerning the heavens and the earth.<sup>†</sup>

The agreement of the statement of Joseph Smith, viz., that he learned what he knew of the construction of the universe from the writings of Abraham—found as already described, in Egypt—the agreement of this claim with the historical fact that Abraham did, for a time, live in Egypt and teach the Egyptians a system of astronomy, is very strong presumptive evidence of its truth. It will appear the more so when Joseph Smith's lack of historical information at the time he first announced these doctrines—as early as 1835—is taken into account. Still more will it appear when it is remembered that the facts of astronomy learned by Pythagoras in Egypt is the foundation of the Copernican system, the nucleus from which has been developed through the researches of our latter-day astronomers, our modern knowledge of the solar system and the plan of the construction of the universe; and still more will the presumptive evidence appear strong when it is also remembered that those fragments as well as the system developed from them are in accord with that fuller information that has come through the medium of revelation to Joseph Smith. All this—these undesigned coincidences—give direct evidence that in this man Joseph Smith there was an excellent spirit of understanding, so extraordinary in its character that it can be referred to no other origin than the revelations of God to him.

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goras and Thales, all with one consent agree, that they learned what they knew of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, and wrote but little." Josephus against Apion, Bk. I.

<sup>†</sup> Book of Abraham, Pearl of Great Price, p. 64.