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ARTICLES

SHORT STUDY

BRUCE C. HAFEN ON EDUCATION AT BYU

From the Editor

John W. Welch

The year 2017 promises to be a very exciting year for readers of *BYU Studies Quarterly.* With many challenges as well as positive developments happening around the world, we expect that our readers are on the constant lookout for solid information and commendable perspectives. The carefully written and rigorously peer-reviewed pages of this journal continue to offer new insights into old problems and to bring old wisdom to bear on new issues. With this in mind, my thoughts returned to the frequently cited section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

In December 1832, Joseph Smith and the Saints in the fledgling Church were faced with great perplexities shortly after Andrew Jackson had been elected to his second term as president of the United States. Among those perplexities were social and economic upheavals that would culminate in the Civil War, as Joseph prophesied on December 25, 1832 (see D&C 87). Not to be discouraged or dissuaded, Joseph revealed only two days later, on December 27, 1832, one of his most impressive and valuable revelations (see D&C 88). Offered to the Saints as an "olive leaf . . . plucked from the Tree of Paradise," this profound instruction was offered as "the Lord's message of peace to us" (introduction to D&C 88).

Section 88, which was deemed so important that it was printed, ahead of its chronological order, as Section VII in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, orients the faithful spiritually, educationally, ontologically, politically, eschatologically, ecclesiastically, organizationally, and covenantally. In a time such as ours, readers can confidently return to it to find refreshment. It is from this section that

the motto "by study and also by faith," often used at Brigham Young University, is to be found (88:118). It is here that we are exhorted to learn "of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms" (88:79). It is here that we are encouraged to teach one another diligently, and God's grace shall attend us, that we "may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, and all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for [us] to understand" (88:78).

I am excited to see in this issue of *BYU Studies Quarterly* articles, essays, reviews, and speeches that serve this same wide array of lofty purposes with probing depth and eloquence.

The two pieces here by Bruce C. Hafen go hand in hand with each other. His review essay of the biography of Truman G. Madsen and his foreword to the book *Learning in the Light: Selected Talks at BYU* by John S. Tanner are masterful reflections on the mission of Brigham Young University, building upon the precepts of D&C 88.

Margaret Barker's lecture on theosis, with three illustrious responses, brings together the principles and powers of holiness, wisdom, covenant, and loving-kindness that unite as one "things both in heaven and in the earth" (88:79).

Steven Olsen's careful and expansive reading of the key biblical account of the prophet Samuel in 1 Samuel 1–3 shows how God works with and through his prophets "to preserve his ancient covenant with Israel, even at inopportune times and through obscure persons."[1]

Frederick Williams evaluates nine accounts of a significant visitation of the Savior during the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in 1836, all of which he finds, with one late exception, to be remarkably consistent.

Book reviews—of the essential documentary history of the first fifty years of the Relief Society, of the importance of the presidential election of 1844, of an Oxford publication on Catholics and Mormons, of essays on Mormon theology and other topics—help to discern wisdom "out of the best books" (88:118).

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1. Steven L. Olsen, "Birth and Calling of the Prophet Samuel," herein, 43.

And Reid Neilson and Scott Marianno tell the heart-rending stories of several deaths among early LDS missionaries and their children in Samoa and their burial in a small LDS cemetery at Fagali'i. The missionaries' consecrated sacrifices have sanctified that ground out of which their lost loved ones may "come forth, for their graves shall be opened; and they also shall be caught up to meet him in the midst of the pillar of heaven—They are Christ's, the first fruits" (88:97–98).

May *Palm Sunday,* the painting on the cover of this issue of *BYU Studies Quarterly,* by the recently deceased BYU artist Robert Marshall, draw all these things together, on earth and in heaven, in remembrance of Christ's glory, death, redemption and resurrection, "through him that quickeneth all things" (88:14, 17).

Birth and Calling of the Prophet Samuel

A Literary Reading of the Biblical Text

Steven L. Olsen

Chapters 1–3 of 1 Samuel[1] describe the miraculous origins and auspicious upbringing of the first major Hebrew prophet since Joshua, who by all measures lived centuries before Samuel.[2] The biblical account of Samuel's beginnings forecasts the exceptional ministry of the man who served as Israel's last complete sovereign. By faithfully filling the crucial roles of prophet, priest, and judge, Samuel helped to transform the House of Israel from a collection of weak and often warring tribes to a relatively permanent and somewhat stable nation in the contentious ancient Middle East. Thus, Samuel is rightly considered to be one of the preeminent personalities of the Hebrew Bible, and his remarkable

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1. Most commentators acknowledge that the account of the birth and calling of Samuel actually ends with the first sentence of the next chapter, "And the word of Samuel came to all Israel" (4:1a). I accept the claim and will incorporate this additional sentence into this analysis, as appropriate. See Robert Alter, *Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2013), 257; Robert Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History, Part Two: 1 Samuel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 19–54; Uriel Simon, *Reading Prophetic Narratives,* trans. Lenn J. Schramm (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 51–72.

2. Several difficulties in reconstructing the era of the Judges, including its chronology, during what archaeologists call Iron Age I, are identified in Jo Ann Hackett, "'There Was No King in Israel:' The Era of the Judges," in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World,* ed. Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 132–64.

Steven L. Olsen

My fascination with the literary crafts-manship of sacred texts dates to the first day of my LDS mission to Paris, France, in the fall of 1970. In the ante-room of my mission president's office awaiting the first of many interviews, I began casually reading Mormon's abridgment of Alma's account of the Zoramite mission (Alma 31–35) and was struck by what seemed to be a high degree of rhetorical intentional-ity. Several years later the Association for Mormon Letters invited me to share my matured thoughts on the matter and then generously published my findings.

This budding curiosity was nurtured by BYU professors Arthur Henry King, Merlin Myers, Thomas Mackay, Karen Lynn, Nan Grass, and Mae Blanche. In graduate school, I encountered the relevant scholarship of anthropologists Claude Levi-Strauss and Edmund Leach and humanist James Redfield. Their work impelled me to examine the literary craftsmanship of the 1838 Joseph Smith story (JS–H) for my master's thesis at the University of Chicago. Quite by accident, I eventually became acquainted with the bibli-cal scholarship of Erich Auerbach, Meir Sternberg, and Robert Alter, which gave me analytical tools to plumb the depths of the scriptures as no previous interpretive approach.

Although I have published studies of other LDS scriptures from a literary perspective, this article is my first serious attempt to illu-minate the Hebrew Bible accordingly. The germ of its perspective came in an Old Testament religion class at BYU. Forty years later, Dr. Taylor Halvorsen of BYU facilitated the first public presenta-tion of these ideas at the 2014 conference of the Society for Biblical Literature. Being the most recent product of this intellectual and spiritual odyssey, it will not likely be the last.

ministry makes the brief narrative of his birth, childhood, and divine calling worthy of serious examination.[3]

The present study argues that the literary craftsmanship of the text is as expressive of its meaning as are its descriptive contents. Indeed, its author's[4] meaningful intentions may be revealed more in the account's rhetorical and poetic than in its documentary qualities. In short, this study adopts the perspective of the eminent historian Alan Heimert: "To discover the meaning of any utterance demands what is in substance a continuing act of literary interpretation, for the language with which an idea is presented, and the imaginative universe by which it is surrounded, often tell us more of an author's meaning and intention than his declarative propositions."[5] While it may not be possible to determine with complete certainty the author's specific purposes for crafting this account, there is great value in making an attempt.[6] To this end, the

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3. P. Kyle McCarter Jr., *I Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary,* Anchor Bible series, ed. William F. Albright and David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 63–66.

4. The prevailing view of biblical scholars is that the account of Samuel's life and ministry took final shape centuries after the events it depicts and was likely the work of more than one author/editor/redactor. See, for example, McCarter, *I Samuel*, 12–14; Richard R. Losch, *All the People in the Bible: An A–Z Guide to the Saints, Scoundrels, and Other Characters in Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008), 368–70. The present study acknowledges but does not address the numerous historiographical issues related to 1 Samuel 1–3. Hence, references in this article to an "author" (singular) of the text are for heuristic, not documentary or analytical purposes.

5. Alan Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 11.

6. While I accept the perspective attributed to Gregory the Great, "Scripture grows with its readers," cited by Andre LaCocque and Paul Ricoeur, I contend that the authors' first corollary of this position—"the abandonment of the concern . . . to recover the author's intentions and to set them up as governing all interpretation"—suffers from the logical fallacy of the excluded middle. Andre LaCocque and Paul Ricoeur, *Thinking Biblically: Exegetical and Hermeneutical Studies,* trans. David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), xi. Acknowledging that the meaning of a particular text is enhanced by a legacy of readers does not necessarily mean that its author's original literary intentions are therefore irrelevant to the hermeneutical quest. In his masterful study of *The Iliad,* the great classical scholar James M. Redfield offers an alternate perspective that is central to the present inquiry: "Homer does not speak to us when we assign our meanings to his words or when we allow ourselves to be guided by our immediate response to his scenes." James M. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in* The Iliad*: The Tragedy of Hector* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), x.

present literary analysis of 1 Samuel 1–3 is based on the following general premises.[7]

1. All authors, even documentary historians, exercise considerable latitude in crafting their literary creations.

2. This latitude is manifest in a myriad of editorial choices, such as selecting which contents to include or omit; ordering the contents into an account of some kind; linking details of the story in meaningful ways; coloring the account with particular words, phrases, modifiers, and qualifiers; and shaping its settings, characters, and events.

3. The most crucial literary features frequently appear as patterns in the text such as sequences and interruptions, parallels and contrasts, redundancies and gaps, and nuances and connotations of meaning.

4. Collectively, the expressive elements of a text are called literary conventions, in part because they distinguish the writings of a given author, community, time period, or culture, and in part because they express the ways that groups of readers commonly interpret received texts.

5. As a result, identifying the literary conventions of a given text and imagining their interpretive significance enable readers to approximate the intent(s) of its author(s), especially if the conventions can be shown to combine with one another in order to fashion of the text a coherent and meaningful whole.[8]

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7. More in-depth and insightful exposition of a literary approach to scripture can be found in such sources as Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature,* trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 3–23; Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 3–22; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 1–57; Jason P. Rosenblatt and Joseph C. Sitterson Jr., eds. *"Not in Heaven": Coherence and Complexity in Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); and Robert Alter*, The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), ix–xlviii, among many others. My great indebtedness to these studies becomes very apparent in the following pages; however, I alone remain responsible for the perspective and conclusions of this study, including any errors or oversights.

8. While widely appreciated by biblical scholars, a literary approach to the scriptures is not common among Latter-day Saints, who tend to prefer approaches that are more contextual than textual in nature. Contextual studies focus on the historical accuracy or the doctrinal relevance of the scriptures in

The present study focuses on several recurrent literary conventions that so thoroughly unite the biblical account of Samuel's birth and divine calling that its craftsmanship aptly serves as a vehicle of its meaning. This study claims that the significance of the story cannot be fully apprehended without an in-depth understanding of the expressive qualities of the text. Recurrent literary conventions that form the interpretive fabric of this account include parallelism,[9] characterization,[10] key words

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an attempt to address the questions, "Where did they come from?" and "What do they mean *to me*?" The present approach does not disparage a contextual approach to the scriptures. Rather it introduces readers to an approach that privileges the integrity of the received text. In essence, it addresses the question, "What meanings did the original author(s) intend to communicate in crafting the text in this manner?"

9. Parallelism is a general literary convention that links together different parts of the biblical text in a variety of customary and meaningful ways. James Limburg, "Psalms, Book of," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary,* ed. David Noel Freedman, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:528–29. While some linkages may be incidental, most scholars recognize that an author's intentional linkages create a phenomenon that Adele Berlin, following Paul Werth, calls "poetic effect," which she defines as "the result of an interaction between verbal form and meaning." Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 10. The Hebrew Bible exemplifies many different types of parallelism—too numerous and complex to summarize here. Berlin, *Parallelism,* 2; see also the extensive and insightful treatment of the use of repetition in Sternberg, *Poetics,* 365–440), which range in scope from the lexical (correspondences between individual words and phrases) to the structural (correspondences between major segments of the text).

10. Literary scholars generally recognize that biblical writers developed their characters in fundamentally different ways than most modern writers. Auerbach, *Mimesis,* 1–18; Alter, *Art,* 114–30; Sternberg, *Poetics,* 321–64. Humanistic conventions mandate that characters be developed largely as unique individuals, complete with their own distinctive personalities, backgrounds, interests, appearances, and motivations. By contrast, characters in the Hebrew Bible are crafted primarily to serve the text's central ideological purposes. This contrast does not mean that biblical characters are shallow. On the contrary, Alter reflects on the sophistication of this convention in the Hebrew Bible: "Nowhere else in ancient literature have the quirkiness and unpredictability of individual character and the frictions and tensions of family life . . . been registered with such subtlety and insight." Alter, *Moses,* xii. Reflecting on this complex and somewhat foreign (to modern readers) convention, Sternberg recognizes the challenge: "Reading a character becomes a process of discovery, attended by all the biblical hallmarks: progressive reconstruction, tentative closure of discontinuities, frequent and sometimes painful reshaping in the face of the unexpected, and intractable pockets of darkness to the very end." Sternberg,

God Appears in a Night Vision to the Boy Prophet Samuel, by Grant Romney Clawson, reversed. © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Poetics, 323–24. Alter observes that biblical narrators develop in-depth characterization through the use of a complex array of literary tools: "Through the report of actions; through appearance, gestures, posture, costume; through one character's comments on another; through direct speech by the character; through inward speech, either summarized or quoted as interior monologue; or through statements by the narrator about the attitudes and intentions of the personages, which may come as flat assertions or motivated explanations." Alter, *Art,* 116–17.

This perspective does acknowledge, however, that biblical portraits are focused, even in their depth and complexity, and include few extraneous details. A literary pattern that assists readers in this "process of discovery" involves a character's first speech and first action. Often, though not always, these "firsts" reveal essential character traits and roles. See Alter, *Moses,* 77 n. 2; 131 nn. 30, 31; 158 n. 1; 207 n. 6. However, Sternberg, *Poetics,* 325–28, eloquently qualifies Alter's perspective. Moreover, Polzin acknowledges the complementarity of all direct speeches in a particular story, regardless of the identity of the speaker. Polzin, *Samuel,* 19. The present study emphasizes how the narrator crafts individual characters primarily in terms of their social roles in the story, in particular how they complement and contrast with other, related characters.

(*Leitwörter*),[11] type scenes,[12] patterns of customary behavior,[13] and

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11. Certain words appear in the text in complementary or contrastive parallel throughout the Hebrew Bible in order to comment on the broader interpretive significance of the narrative. These are known by the technical German term *Leitwort.* See Alter, *Art,* 88–113, for an insightful discussion of *Leitwörter.* Throughout this study, unless otherwise noted, I have relied on the following standard sources for the meaning of individual Hebrew words and phrases: James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1890, 1973 printing); and Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996).

12. Scholars recognize that many scenes in the narrative portions of the Hebrew Bible were likely crafted in part to help readers infer connections with other exemplary biblical characters, settings, or events in order to enhance the significance of the related stories, called type scenes. Thus, Alter observes, "There is a series of recurrent narrative episodes attached to the careers of biblical heroes that . . . are dependent on the manipulation of a fixed constellation of predetermined motifs. Since biblical narrative characteristically catches its protagonists only at the critical and revealing points in their lives, the biblical type-scene occurs not in the rituals of daily existence, but at the crucial junctures in the lives of the heroes, from conception and birth to betrothal to deathbed." Alter, *Art,* 51; see also Alter, *Moses,* 64 n. 10; 118–19 n. 11; 315 n. 16.

While we cannot be sure that the author crafted the Samuel story with such comparisons consciously in mind, the repeated inferred connections with other exemplary vignettes increase the probability of their intentionality. If the author of 1 Samuel 1–3 drew conscious connections with the stories of holy men and women of the Hebrew and Christian Bibles, then he must have had prior knowledge of and access to them. A precise chronology of the writing and redacting of the Hebrew Bible is uncertain, and the account of Samuel's birth and calling certainly took shape before the writing of the Christian Gospels. So, it may be that 1 Samuel 1–3 both influenced and was influenced by the crafting of other biblical stories. The key points relevant to the present study are that (1) type scenes are a common literary convention of the Hebrew and Christian Bibles, (2) 1 Samuel 1–3 shows abundant evidence of the likely intentional use of this convention, and (3) type scenes enhance considerably the spiritual significance of the Samuel account.

13. As with the development of individual characters, so too are human actions carefully crafted in the biblical narrative for ideological purposes. That the narrator of 1 Samuel 1–3 instructively employs this convention is evident from the paired customary behaviors of eating/drinking and fasting, on the one hand, and hearing and seeing, on the other. Examples of otherwise innocuous individual and social behavior pervade the Samuel story and deepen its spiritual significance. For example, Alter (*Art,* 84) and Simon (*Prophetic Narratives,* 15) offer astute comments on eating and drinking in 1 Samuel 1.

structuring devices like Sternberg's "play of perspective."[14] The dynamic and complementary interplay of these conventions throughout the text increases the drama, engagement, meaning, and pleasure of the reading experience.

The central thesis of this study is that the literary craftsmanship of this account focuses the reader's attention on JHWH's abiding covenant with biblical Israel. The concept of covenant not only unifies this brief but auspicious narrative but also positions it centrally within the larger epic of God's ancient covenant people in the holy land.

Analysis

Introduction

> Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite: And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there. And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the Lord had shut up her womb. And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the Lord had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and

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14. Sternberg recognizes that biblical narratives are distinguished by the dynamic interplay of competing and complementary perspectives: "Insofar as the Bible has a poetics as well as a genesis of composition, it establishes a set of norms by which we not only interpret the action but also evaluate the actors by reference to the narrator's perspective as artist." Sternberg, *Poetics,* 155. Risking an overly simplistic introduction of this convention, the present study recognizes two general perspectives in the Hebrew Bible, contrasted by scope. Broad perspectives, which Alter collectively calls "narration," provide the author's commentary and exposition—introduce spatial, social, and temporal contexts and detail the relationship of the particular story to the larger narrative of biblical Israel. On the other hand, focused perspectives, which Alter collectively calls "dialogue," reveal individual character, illustrate social roles and relationships, and detail specific events and their meaningful consequences. See Alter, *Art,* 63–87.

why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am I not better to thee than ten sons? (1:1–8)

Structuring Devices: Exposition. The first seven verses of the introduction consist of what Alter calls "narrative"—descriptive details that locate the story within the broader temporal, spatial, social, and spiritual context of biblical Israel. However, nearly every specific detail of introduction is marginal to the larger history of Israel in the Holy Land. Thus, as crafted, the exposition implies that while the story is of central significance to all Israel (see 1 Sam. 3:21), it begins in virtual obscurity, making its outcome all the more miraculous.

Genealogy.[15] Consistent with the convention of genealogies throughout the Hebrew Bible, the brief genealogy that launches the story of Samuel's birth identifies Samuel's ancestors as Ephraimites,[16] distinguishes the account from the long but unremarkable reign of the judges, and introduces the auspicious but problematic reign of the kings in ancient Israel. Contributing to the disjunctive role of genealogies in the biblical narrative, McCarter observes that the opening phrase, translated from the Hebrew as *Now there was a certain man,* signals "the inauguration of an entirely new narrative."[17]

In addition, while modern readers may interpret the opening phrase as focusing the story on the man Elkanah, the narrative unfolds in such a way that Hannah's husband plays at best a supportive and largely contrasting role in the Samuel story. The patriarchal focus of the introduction is really a Hebrew convention that gives the larger account of Samuel a measure of cultural legitimacy.[18]

Together, these structural and rhetorical conventions of exposition provide evidence of the "independence of the prophetic history of the rise of kingship that begins with the story of Samuel."[19] They also signal

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15. Scholars recognize that genealogies perform at least three complementary roles in the Hebrew Bible: (1) introducing and declaring the identity of a distinctive group or individual, (2) demarcating one significant narrative from others in the larger text, and (3) "schematizing complex historical evolution." Alter, *Moses,* 34n; 53 nn. 28–29; 54n; 60 nn. 10–26; 112 nn. 20–24; 127 n. 1; 199–200nn; 342 n. 14.

16. 1 Chronicles 6:27 identifies Jeroham, Samuel's paternal grandfather, as a Levite. Thus, Samuel's dual descent may have qualified him, in terms of his lineage, to serve as priest as well as prophet and judge during his ministry.

17. McCarter, *I Samuel,* 51 n. 1.

18. Alter, *Art,* 82.

19. McCarter, *I Samuel,* 51 n. 1.

that the remarkable outcome of the story could have been orchestrated by no one but JHWH.

Type Scene: Barren Wife. Once additional characters enter the story, readers become aware of its first type scene: the barren wife. While Hannah is identified as the preferred of Elkanah's two wives, the account repeats three times that she has no children, a major source of shame for women in biblical Israel.[20] This characterization also identifies the account's first dramatic tension: that between Elkanah's preferred but barren wife and her co-wife Peninnah, who had given Elkanah multiple sons and daughters. Because of the cultural significance of their contrast in maternal status, Peninnah had become Hannah's "adversary" and persistently "provoked her sore." These details—the preferred but barren wife and her jealous sister wife—evoke positive comparisons between Hannah and Israel's grand matriarchs Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel.[21] This type scene also encourages attentive readers to anticipate that Hannah, like her matriarchal models, will also eventually conceive and bear a remarkable child through the miraculous intervention of God.

Characterization: Father and Sons. The exposition also identifies the ritual officials at the temple of the Lord at Shiloh but in a casual, even offhand manner: "And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there." While this simple declarative sentence names the personnel with the greatest spiritual status at Shiloh, its specific language implies two concerns. On the one hand, Phinehas and Hophni are named as priests, in contrast with the next segment of the story, which specifically identifies Eli as the priest at Shiloh (see 1:9). While more than one priest could easily officiate at the temple, the fact that the story initially identifies Eli's sons as "priests of the Lord" creates dramatic tensions that become central to the unfolding of the Samuel story. For example, is Eli, the father, the chief priest in the hereditary office? If so, why is he not introduced as such at the outset and why does

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20. Repetitions of this kind, especially in the unusually truncated narrative of the Hebrew Bible, focus readers' attention on details of great significance to the overall story.

21. Genesis 16:5; 18:9–15; 21:1–5; 25:21; 29:31. Alter, *Ancient Prophets,* 241 n. 2; Alter, *Art,* 82–83. Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 36–37, 43, systematically compares the miraculous birth narratives of the Hebrew Bible and summarizes this biblical scene type. Regarding Sarah, the paragon in this set of related character types, Alter, *Moses,* 101 n. 18, explicates the exquisite craftsmanship of the relevant passage in Genesis that immediately precedes Isaac's birth.

he play such a passive role in the services at Shiloh? On the other hand, the language of the sons' introduction bestows no honor or dignity to their priestly office. The phrase "were there" identifies only that they are present at the temple, not that they are functioning worthily. Thus, the ambivalent and matter-of-fact introduction of the priests at Shiloh implies that while central to the story of Samuel's beginnings, Eli and his sons will play roles that are marginal to or destructive of their high ritual status.

Customary Behavior: Eating/Drinking and Fasting. The first specific action in the Samuel story has Elkanah sharing with Hannah a "worthy portion" of the offering. This ostensibly generous offer from a loving husband introduces other dramatic tensions of the story. On the one hand, Hannah can neither eat the "worthy portion" herself (because she is fasting "in bitterness of soul," see 1:10) nor share it with her children (of which she has none, which is precisely the cause of her grief and the central spiritual crisis of the story). Therefore, while intended as an expression of generosity, the offering reveals Elkanah's insensitivity, at the very least, to the story's central crisis and may actually be insulting to Hannah. The narrative does not indicate, however, that she takes offense at her husband's gesture. On the other hand, Elkanah's "worthy portion" offering to Hannah seems to be a principal source of the dramatic tension between Hannah and Peninnah, discussed above, and between Elkanah and Hannah that is expressed in Elkanah's first direct speech, discussed below.

Characterization: Husband and Wife. According to the account, Elkanah loves Hannah, favors her with a "worthy portion" of the ceremonial offering, and is her partner in the conception of Samuel; nevertheless, he leads out in and is concerned with no other family roles than performing the annual ceremonial requirements of the Mosaic law and providing for the family's material support. Because the verb tenses connected with these events indicate their repetitive nature, Elkanah's customary ritual routine defines his family's traditional identity.

The narrative, as crafted, implies that Elkanah is either unaware or dismissive of Hannah's emotional needs and performs little or no nurturing role vis-à-vis their firstborn or any of their other children. The text never has him interact directly with any of Hannah's children, and he speaks with Hannah only when her devotional actions disrupt his traditional ritual routine. Elkanah has only two direct speeches in the entire story. The first consists of a set of rapid-fire rhetorical questions ostensibly intended to comfort his then-barren and bereft wife, "Why weepest thou? and why

eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am I not better to thee than ten sons?" Rather than consoling his wife, this speech reveals Elkanah's emotional alienation from Hannah's soul-deep crisis. As portrayed in the text, Elkanah believes that Hannah should be more consoled by his "worthy portion" than had she born him "ten sons."

Insensitive as it may be, Elkanah's first direct speech shifts the discourse of the story from "narrative" to "dialogue," in keeping with the biblical convention. As will be seen, the rest of the Samuel story is retold largely in dialogue because "spoken language is the substratum of everything human and divine that transpires in the Bible, and the Hebrew tendency to transpose what is preverbal or nonverbal into speech is finally a technique for getting at the essence of things, for obtruding their substratum."[22] Elkanah's first direct speech also motivates the story's central action: Hannah's sacred vow and the Lord's favorable response.

Hannah *Vows* and the Lord *Remembers*

So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the Lord God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thy handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad. And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the

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22. Alter, *Art,* 70.

Lord, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the Lord remembered her. (1:9–19)

Structuring Devices: "Play of Perspectives." The next eleven verses define the story's dramatic focus: Hannah pleads in desperation for a son, and the Lord blesses her accordingly. In contrast with the introduction, which consists almost entirely of expository narrative, the second segment is filled almost entirely with "dialogue."[23]

Characterization: Husband and Wife. Despite his emotional distance from Hannah, Elkanah regularly and routinely worships at Shiloh in a manner that is consistent with the prescriptions of the Mosaic law. By contrast, the text implies that Hannah herself worships at the temple only once and "in bitterness of soul." The story implies that both types of devotion are effective. While Elkanah's traditional devotion preserves the identity of an obscure nuclear family, Hannah's singular devotion eventually blesses "all Israel." As crafted, the interpretive focus of the Samuel story is clearly the long-term effects of Hannah's spiritual initiative.

Type Scene: Female Spiritual Initiative. Despite Hannah's concern for personal legitimacy, her family's status before the Lord is assured by Elkanah's annual devotionals at Shiloh and the resulting devotional lifestyle that is implied by his faithfulness to this ritual obligation. Nevertheless, Hannah is not satisfied: she wants a son for herself, but not for selfish reasons. As crafted, the story focuses on Hannah's compelling spiritual need, which drives her to the temple, fasting "in bitterness of soul." In her private devotion, Hannah neither undercuts her husband's patriarchal authority nor repudiates his ritual status in the family. While unusual, even extraordinary, Hannah's initiative at the temple to plead directly with JHWH for a "man child" is neither unprecedented nor countercultural. In fact, it places her within a small but crucial cadre of women—most notably Rebekah, Tamar, and Ruth—whose own unprecedented spiritual initiatives eventually and distinctively transform biblical Israel.[24] Traditional readers of the Samuel story would

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23. "The biblical scene . . . is conceived almost entirely as verbal intercourse, with the assumption that what is significant about a character, at least for a particular narrative juncture, can be manifested almost entirely in the character's speech." Alter, *Art,* 88.

24. Genesis 24–28, 38; Ruth 1–4. Insightful analyses of the lives of these three exemplary women are found in Sternberg, *Poetics,* 131–52 (Rebekah); and Alter, *Art,* 5–12 (Tamar) and 58–60 (Ruth).

have recognized the intended craftsmanship of the text for this exceptional interpretive purpose.

Characterization: Priest and Suppliant. Eli possesses great spiritual status, being the ritual official of the temple at Shiloh, a hereditary position that his family had held for generations (see 2:27–28). Nevertheless, his casual observance of the priestly office is made apparent by his first appearance in the narrative: "Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord."[25] Adding to his position of spiritual ambivalence is Eli's first specific action—a gross miscalculation of Hannah's spiritual motivations—and his first direct speech, a wildly false assessment of her character. Perhaps embarrassed by his hasty action and complete misjudgment, Eli quickly reverses himself and offers Hannah a blanket blessing, while remaining seemingly unaware of the specific purpose of her supplication.[26]

By stark contrast, Hannah has neither formal status nor ritual position in the worship of JHWH. She is merely the barren co-wife of an obscure Ephraimite. Nevertheless, everything that she says and does—indeed, everything that she is in the story—manifests supreme devotion to her sacred roles of wife and mother and to her covenant relationship with the Lord. She fasts, she prays, she bears and nurtures, she sacrifices and gives thanks, she serves, and she remains faithful to her divine calling without any desire for personal position, recognition, or recompense.[27] As a result, the narrative portrays Hannah as worthy of becoming the mother of one of Israel's greatest prophets and of serving as a paragon of holiness in the Hebrew Bible.

Characterization: Husband and Wife. While Elkanah focuses on outward and formal family concerns and is emotionally distant from

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25. Alternatively, McCarter, *I Samuel,* 60 n. 9, suggests that the details of Eli's first appearance may imply his watchful care over all temple matters. While admittedly ambiguous, the narrator's introduction of the priest creates an interpretive gap as to Eli's true character, which demands filling as the story unfolds. Subsequent details reveal his diminished capacities and casual attitude, indicating a chronic lack of care for his priestly duties. On the art of gap-filling by biblical narrators, see Sternberg, *Poetics,* 186–229.

26. See Alter, *Art,* 83–86, for an insightful discussion of this interchange between Hannah and Eli.

27. "When Hannah presents herself to Eli as a barren woman who has finally given birth because the Lord answered her prayer, she not only thanks the Lord for His favor to her, she also bears public witness to His mighty deeds, of which she has personal experience." Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 28.

everyone in the narrative, including his wife and children, Hannah is consistently preoccupied with personal devotions to God and is emotionally connected with everyone around her, regardless of their attitude toward her. Her first direct speech, for example, expresses her private but poignant vow to God, which defines her life's purpose and sacred identity: "O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look upon the afflictions of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head."[28] All of her subsequent speeches and actions align with and strengthen her devotional character (see 1:20–28; 2:1–10, 19–21). In relation to other characters in the story, Hannah demonstrates her connectedness by:

- enduring patiently the persistent provocations of her sister wife and the insensitive entreaties of her husband (1:6–8, 21–23);
- consistently referring to herself in relation to others by the subordinate term *'amah,* translated *handmaid* (1:11, 16, 18);[29]
- responding directly but respectfully to Eli's false accusations and later reminding him of who she is when she comes to make good on her vow (1:12–16, 26–28); and
- continuing to nurture her firstborn throughout his youth, even though she sees him but once a year (2:18–19).

Leitwörter: remembered **and** *visited.* The catalytic event of this narrative—Hannah's vow and the Lord's favorable response—begins and ends with the verb *zakhor,* translated *remember. Zakhor* carries strong connotations of spiritual identity and covenant commitment, not simply cognitive awareness.[30] Thus, when Hannah pleads to the Lord, "remember

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28. Alter, *Ancient Israel,* 242 n. 8.

29. Alter, *Ancient Israel,* 246 n. 26; Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 18.

30. "The fundamental bond of mutual remembrance that united God and man leads further to the observation that the covenant idea is obviously also important in this context:" G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament,* trans. David E. Green, 15 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980), 4:70, hereafter *TDOT.* See also Allen Verhey, "Remember, Remembrance," in Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary,* 5:667–69; McCarter, *I Samuel,* 62 n. 19; Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 5–26; and Alter, *Moses,* 385 n. 3.

me," and the narrator acknowledges that the Lord indeed "remembered her," the resulting blessing of a "man child" becomes not only the sign of a divine covenant with an individual Hebrew woman but also a source of spiritual development and deliverance for "all Israel."[31]

Leitwörter: give **and** *lend.* As part of her poignant vow, Hannah promises that if the Lord will "give" her a "man child," then she will "give him unto the Lord all the days of his life." In both instances, the verb *give* is translated from the Hebrew *nathan*. While this verb has several different connotations in biblical Hebrew, the most general is, "'extend the hand' in order to place an object at a specific place or to give it over to another person, with or without compensation, as a possession. The result of the action is usually considered enduring and definitive."[32] In short, the text projects that her vow to the Lord will be unequivocal and permanent.

Type Scene: Chosen Judge. Hannah's promise to God that "there shall no razor come upon [her son's] head" draws an explicit parallel with Samson, Israel's most noteworthy judge (Judg. 13–16, especially 13:5; 16:16–20). Samson's and Samuel's Nazerite consecrations effectively bring their respective ministries into sharp contrast: Samson turns from his sacred vow, resulting in much destruction among the covenant people; however, through his own faithful ministry, Samuel strengthens and unifies "all Israel."[33]

Customary Behavior: Seeing and Hearing, Eating and Drinking, and Fasting. Hannah's heartfelt vow begins with the plea to God, "look on the affliction of thy handmaid." Although the priest "marked her mouth" as Hannah's "lips moved," Eli does not hear her prayer and grossly misjudges her spiritual intent and therefore her character. He accuses her of wanton drunkenness, a false assertion that she directly but respectfully corrects. Attempting to cover his error of judgment, Eli offers a hastily constructed blessing for her to receive her petition, to which she simply responds, "Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight." The text then observes that Hannah "went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad."

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31. "Divine remembrance of the despondent barren woman by virtue of her prayer and vow is a classic example, not only of the Lord's power over nature, society, and history, but also of His justice." Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 33.
32. *TDOT,* 10:90–91.
33. Polzin, *Samuel,* 24.

Structuring Devices: Conjunctions. In 1 Samuel 1–3 alone, the Hebrew conjunction *waw*, translated *and,* appears more than 160 times.[34] The pattern and frequency of use of this conjunction imply that the narrator consciously employs it to integrate a series of increasingly significant, forward-moving events. Of particular interest is the sequence of events that culminates in God's initial fulfillment of Hannah's vow: "And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the Lord remembered her."[35] In these thirty-three English words, *and* appears six times. Few individual verses in the entire Hebrew Bible use *waw* more frequently.[36] Based on its construction, this verse properly reads as a compounding sequence of increasingly significant events, culminating in God's *remembering* Hannah, in the covenant sense described above.

Leitwörter: know **and** *lie with.* The Hebrew verb describing the union that results in Hannah's miraculous conception is *yada,* translated *knew.* This verb connotes not just physical intimacy but also sexual relations between legitimate partners.[37] In the Hebrew Bible, *yada* frequently connotes a special kind of covenant relationship, not just a familiar one, especially where the knowledge of God is concerned.[38] Thus, the union that produces Samuel is doubly blessed: by the enduring bond between worthy and faithful partners and by the sacred vow between a devoted Hebrew woman and the Lord.

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34. Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance,* 1228. In stark contrast with modern English usage, which limits conjunctions to a bare minimum, biblical narrators seem to use them incessantly, especially *waw.* While the abundant use of this tiny word in the Hebrew Bible may cause some readers to infer a lack of literary sophistication, Alter observes that biblical narrators used *waw* to great rhetorical effect: "[Biblical] narratives were composed to be *heard,* not merely to be decoded by a reader's eye. The reiterated 'and,' then, plays an important role in creating the rhythm of the story, in phonetically punctuating the forward driving movement of the prose. . . . The parallel syntax and barrage of 'and's,' far from being the reflex of a 'primitive' language, are as artfully effective in furthering the ends of the narrative as any device one could find in a sophisticated modern novelist." Alter, *Moses,* xxvii–xxviii, emphasis in original.

35. 1 Samuel 1:19. See Genesis 30:22–24 for a similarly structured sequence of events regarding childbirth.

36. Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance,* 1225–33.

37. Alter, *Moses,* 29 n. 1.

38. *TDOT,* 5:468–72.

Samuel Is Born and Lent to the Lord

Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord. And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child is weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever. And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou hast weaned him; only the Lord establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him. And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young. And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. And she said, O my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there. (1:20–28)

Structuring Devices: "Play of Perspectives." The dynamic interplay in the biblical text between narrow and broad perspectives ("narrative" and "dialogue" in Alter's terms) comes into focus in the third segment of the Samuel story. The segment opens with a brief narrative of Samuel's birth and the continuation of the annual devotional at Ramah, punctuated by Hannah's reflection on the child's naming, which is expressed as direct speech.[39] The rest of the segment consists of dialogues between Hannah and Elkanah (1:22–23) and between Hannah and Eli (1:26–28), with a brief narrative bridge uniting the two scenes (1:24–25).

Customary Behavior: Eating, Drinking, and Fasting. Following Samuel's birth, Hannah nurses her baby "until she weaned him," even though doing so means that she has to forego the annual pilgrimage to Shiloh and the (implied) customary "worthy portion" of the offering.[40] When Hannah resumes the annual pilgrimage and prepares to lend her firstborn to the Lord, she takes "three bullocks, and one ephah of flour,

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39. "The biblical preference for direct discourse is so pronounced that thought is almost invariably rendered as actual speech." Alter, *Art,* 67.

40. Alter, *Ancient Israel,* 244 n. 21: "Everything is different now that Hannah has borne a son, and she herself introduces a change in the repeated pattern."

and a bottle of wine" as her own alimentary offering, a portion of which would be customarily consumed by the priest and his family.[41]

Characterization: Husband and Wife. Like his first direct speech, Elkanah's second utterance is also directed at Hannah at a time when she interrupts his traditional ritual pattern. Also like the first, Elkanah's second speech at once reinforces his traditional familial roles and acknowledges his emotional distance from his wife. After Samuel is born but before he is weaned, Elkanah invites Hannah to accompany him to Shiloh for the annual observance. Hannah declines, preferring instead to attend to her son's continuing needs. Elkanah's response, "Do what seemeth thee good," dismissively concedes her commitment to care for her firstborn. Rather than accepting her husband's invitation that she privilege her spousal role and enjoy its intended personal benefits (the "worthy portion"), Hannah chooses instead to focus on her maternal role: nurturing Samuel at home while he remains dependent on her for life and sustenance. In short, while Elkanah's invitation is intended to strengthen his preferred wife's status within his family, her own priority is to guarantee the survival of her firstborn, which eventually benefits "all Israel."

Leitwörter: give **and** *lend.* Prior to Samuel's birth, Hannah promises to *give* him to the Lord (1:11). Following his birth, when time comes to make good on her vow, the account consistently shifts the verb from *nathan* (*give)* to *shaʾel,* translated *lend* (1:20, 27–28; 2:20). In biblical Hebrew, *shaʾel* has a double meaning: to request and to lend. In the present context, the term defines the enduring relationship that Hannah now has with her "man child" and signals the special nature of their mother-child bond vis-à-vis the Lord.[42]

The lexical shift from *give* to *lend* does not indicate a change of heart on Hannah's part. She neither retreats from nor attempts to renegotiate the terms of her sacred vow. Rather than contrast, the two Hebrew verbs complement each other in meaning. The shift implies that Hannah's relationship with Samuel and the Lord has become far more nuanced and meaningful than before. Her initial vow is made when motherhood is a worthy but still unrealized aspiration. Once Hannah becomes a mother in fact, her role vis-à-vis Samuel is considerably more profound. Regardless of her initial vow, following his birth she cannot *not* be his

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41. Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 26.
42. *TDOT,* 14:261–62.

mother; that is, she cannot *give* him up in the usual senses of the verb.[43] Attempting to do so would be a repudiation of her sacred maternal role. The text expresses this commitment in two complementary ways. For one, "A full gift of her son means not conveying him to the House of the Lord while he still requires his mother, lest he be a burden there; and perfect fulfillment [of her vow] implies not bringing him to the sanctuary so long as it is impossible to leave him there forever, lest she appear to be violating her vow."[44] Therefore, the narrator's insertion of the seemingly innocuous exchange between Samuel's parents in verses 22–23. Following Samuel's birth, Hannah nurtures him as only a mother can and thereafter entrusts him to JHWH's priest. The second way that Hannah continues to nurture her firstborn is mentioned below in the discussion of 1 Samuel 2:19.

Hannah Rejoices in the Initial Fulfillment of Her Vow

My heart rejoiceth in the Lord,
mine horn is exalted in the Lord:

my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;
because I rejoice in thy salvation.

There is none holy as the Lord:
for there is none beside thee:
neither is there any rock like our God.

Talk no more so exceeding proudly;
let not arrogancy come out of your mouth:

for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.

The bows of the mighty men are broken,
and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

They that were full have hired out themselves for bread;
and they that were hungry ceased:

so that the barren hath born seven;
and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:
he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

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43. *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), s.v. "Give," 183–90.
44. Simon, *Prophetic Narratives*, 24.

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:
he bringeth low, and lifteth up.

He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,

to set them among the princes,
and to make them inherit the throne of glory:

for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
and he hath set the world upon them.

He will keep the feet of his saints,
and the wicked shall be silent in darkness;
for by strength shall no man prevail.

The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces;
out of heaven shall he thunder upon them:

the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;
and he shall give strength unto his king,
and exalt the horn of his anointed. (2:1–10)

Parallelism. While fascinating in their own right, the historiography and aesthetics of Hannah's song do not concern the present study; rather, my interest is in the song's extensive use of poetic couplets[45] and its interpretive role in the structure of the larger narrative. Throughout her victory song, no phrase is independent of another: all combine into either couplets or triads, creating a complex and meaningful unity of the whole and distinguishing the song from the surrounding prose narrative.[46]

Structuring Devices: Narrative Bridge. From a structural perspective, the song is not only an appropriate expression of personal gratitude for Hannah's heavenly blessing but also a crucial narrative bridge between the initial fulfillment of her vow and the Lord's repeated faithful

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45. Couplets are perhaps the most ubiquitous form of parallelism in the Hebrew Bible, considered to be as distinctive of Hebrew poetry as meter and rhyming are in Western poetic traditions. Berlin, *Parallelism,* 7, speaks for many in observing that "biblical poetry is characterized by a high incidence of terse, balanced parallelism." While 1 Samuel 1–3 is structured mostly as a prose narrative, Hannah's song (2:1–10) is organized as a series of couplets, with a few triads added for aesthetic interest and interpretive emphasis. One of many studies of this genre in the Hebrew Bible is Steven Weitzman, *Song and Story in Biblical Narrative: The History of a Literary Convention in Ancient Israel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); see also Alter, *Moses,* 397 n. 1. Regarding the poetic qualities of Hannah's song, see McCarter, *I Samuel,* 67–76.

46. McCarter, *I Samuel,* 60–61 n. 11, points out the poetic qualities of Hannah's prayer.

response. To this end, the following phrases from the song comment on key personalities, events, and circumstances of the larger story of which it is a part.[47]

- *Mine horn is exalted in the Lord* (2:1). "Horn" is used metaphorically in Hebrew poetry as a distinctive feature of humans and other animals, especially one that is "enlarged" because the Lord has blessed it. McCarter observes, "In certain cases it is clear that the raised horn refers specifically to progeny," hence the possible allusion to Hannah and her firstborn.[48]

- *They that were full have hired out themselves for bread* (2:5) anticipates God's curse of Eli's house, discussed below, in part because Eli's sons and perhaps Eli himself had abused the sacrificial offering to satisfy their gluttony. As a result, Eli's extended family are cursed to beg for their sustenance in the future (2:12–17, 36).

- *The barren hath born seven and she that hath many children is waxed feeble* (2:5) alludes to the contrast between Hannah, who miraculously bore Samuel and several other children, and her perpetual *provocateur* Peninnah, who "had children" but whose lineage is worthy of no further mention in the Hebrew Bible.[49]

- *The Lord . . . bringeth low, and lifteth up* (2:7) reinforces the contrast between the house of Eli, which is rejected by the Lord despite its long-standing and prominent ritual status in Israel, and the previously obscure house of Elkanah, which is blessed by God to effect a substantial, enduring, beneficial transformation among "all Israel" (2:27–36; 3:11–14, 19–21).

Type Scene: Victory Song. Hannah's song of exultation on an auspicious occasion elicits positive comparison with Moses, Miriam, and David in the Hebrew Bible (Exodus 15, Deuteronomy 31–32, 2 Samuel 22) and Zacharias, Mary, and Simeon in the Christian Bible (Luke 1–2).[50]

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47. Possible extrinsic reasons for the placement of Hannah's song within the narrative are found in Weitzman, *Song,* 114–15.

48. McCarter, *I Samuel,* 71 n. 1.

49. Given the expressive nature of Hannah's song, the number *seven* in this line likely implies *many,* as it does elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, thereby enhancing the parallelism with the following line and the implied application to Hannah's situation. See McCarter, *I Samuel,* 72 n. 5; see also Alter, *Moses,* 269 n. 27; 307 n. 5.

50. Weitzman, *Song,* 66–67, and Polzin, *Samuel,* 33–34, respectively, compare the similarities of Hannah's song with Mary's *Magnificat* and David's final

Old and New Priest

And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest. Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord. And the priests' custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a flesh-hook of three teeth in his hand; And he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither. Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw. And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force. Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord. But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The Lord give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord. And they went unto their own home. And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord. Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them. And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men. (2:11–26)

Structuring Devices: "Play of Perspectives." Prior sections of the Samuel story are devoted to contents that are primarily narrative or primarily dialogue. Verses 11–26 in 1 Samuel provide a more dynamic interplay of these two literary conventions as the text presents three vignettes that condemn the gluttony of Eli's sons (2:12–17), illustrate Hannah's

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hymn. Alter, *Ancient Israel*, 247 n. 0 suggests that Hannah's song and David's victory psalm "echo each other and act as formal 'bookends' to the extended narrative sequence that includes the stories of Samuel, Saul, and David."

continued devotion to her firstborn and Eli's blessing to Samuel's parents (2:19–21a), and condemn the promiscuity of Eli's sons (2:22–25). To keep readers focused on the story's central purpose, the narrator adds a bit of narrative commentary on Samuel's faithful service before and after each vignette (2:11b, 18, 21b, 26).

Characterization: Priest and Suppliant. The intentionality of the narrator's contrast between Eli and Hannah, introduced earlier, is further developed in the pejorative allusions to *Belial*[51] and the editorial comment employing the verb *yada* (*knew*). In their first encounter, Eli accuses Hannah of wanton drunkenness, which she respectfully denies with the plea, "Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial" (1:16). Following Hannah's song, the narrator begins his detailed condemnation of Eli's sons with the epithet: "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial," implying a scathing equivalence of Eli and Belial.[52] Further, the narrator observes with biting irony that Eli's sons "knew not the Lord," even though they are introduced as "priests of the Lord" (1:3). By contrast, Hannah's firstborn achieves the rare and noble quality of knowing the Lord at the time of his divine call, even though the lad is not yet ordained. The story of Samuel's birth and calling concludes with a general reference to his continuing growth in the knowledge of God (see 3:7, 21).

Characterization: Parents and Children. Eli and sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are mentioned in the initial exposition of the story (1:3), signaling that they will play a key but as yet undefined role in the account of Samuel's succession.[53] As the drama unfolds, the serious abuses of their priestly position—gluttony of the ritual offering and sexual immorality—become the efficient cause of the Lord's rejection of Eli's house.

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51. Theodore J. Lewis, "Belial," in Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary,* 1:654–56; Bible Dictionary, LDS edition of the Bible (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979), s.v. "Belial."

52. Polzin, *Samuel*, 39, contrasts the rather neutral narrative language of the beginning of the Samuel story with the highly judgmental language on this middle portion, preparing readers for the curse of the house of Eli and corresponding rise of Samuel.

53. McCarter, *I Samuel,* 59 n. 3, mentions that both sons' names are Egyptian in origin and that Eli's lineage traced its right to the priesthood back to Moses. These details may explain why the "man of God" specifically refers to "Pharaoh's house" in his condemnation of the house of Eli (2:27). On the use of exposition as a literary convention, see Meir Sternberg, *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

In stark contrast with Eli's general neglect of his sons, in spite of their physical and functional proximity, the narrator specifically mentions Hannah's continued watch care over her first born, in spite of their physical and functional distance.[54] Punctuating the vignettes that contrast the faithfulness of Eli and Hannah, the narrator comments on Samuel's progressively auspicious service at the temple, reinforcing the intended contrast between old and new priest.[55] While not a prerequisite for Samuel's ascension, Eli's fall serves as a foil for it.[56]

Leitwörter: give and *lend.* On the occasion of their final interaction, Eli blesses Samuel's parents—"the Lord give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord"—using the same verbs, *nathan* (give) and *sha'el* (lend), which define Hannah's initial offering of Samuel to the Lord. As a result of the priest's blessing, Hannah bears additional children—"three sons and two daughters."

Customary Behavior: Hearing and Seeing. The narrator's repeated mention of Eli's diminished physical capacities symbolizes his advanced spiritual deficiencies. In this segment, the narrator reinforces Eli's neglect of his parental responsibilities with the repeated use of the verb *hear(d).* This pattern indicates that Eli had become so disconnected from his sons' lives that he learns about their promiscuity only second-hand and then deals with it ineffectively: "Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel. . . . And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress."[57]

Leitwörter: know and *lie with.* Within the context of the Samuel narrative, these verbs repeatedly indict Eli's sons. Following mention of Hophni and Phinehas's high ritual status in the story's initial exposition

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54. McCarter, *I Samuel,* 29.

55. Contrast 1 Samuel 2:11, 18, 21, 26 with 2:12–17, 22–25. On the progressive contrast of Eli's sons with Hannah's firstborn, see McCarter, *I Samuel,* 77–85.

56. Commenting on Eli's deficiencies, McCarter, *I Samuel,* 100, observes, "It is time for the apprentice to replace the master. Ancient Eli is almost a tragicomic figure. . . . There is no wickedness in this pitiable old man, but neither is there the strength to combat wickedness, and Yahweh has found himself a strong man to lead Israel aright."

57. On the complementarity of individuals' physical traits and spiritual qualities in the Hebrew Bible, see Alter, *Moses,* xix–xxiii. The traditional Hebrew proverb, "hearing is not the same as seeing," weighs heavily on the account of Eli's sensory deficiencies, cited in Alter, *Moses,* 497 n. 19.

(1:3), the narrator condemns them in his only detailed description of their character with the awful epithet: "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." More specifically, the verb that describes the promiscuous encounters between Eli's sons and the "women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" is not *yada* (*knew*), as in the virtuous union that produced Samuel, but *shakab*, translated *lie with*. *Shakab* contrasts dramatically with *yada* and connotes physical, temporary, and profane sexual liaisons, undertaken without spiritual purpose, covenant bond, or sacred devotion.[58]

Leitwörter: remembered **and** *visited.* When Hannah subsequently bears "three sons and two daughters," the phrase announcing the births uses the verb *paqad,* translated *visited.* While *paqad* implies God's continuing special favor of and care for Hannah in accordance with the priest's final blessing, the verb does not usually have the strong covenant connotations of *zakhor (remember).*[59]

Divine Messengers

> And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in my

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58. Alter, *Moses,* 96 n. 32, suggests the verb *shakab* approximates the meaning of "rape" when used in the context of sexual relations. Similar instances of this verb in the Hebrew Bible include Genesis 19:33–35; 34:2; 35:22; 39:12. However, in the Hebrew Bible, *lay/lie with* does not always connote illicit sexual relations, for example, Genesis 30:16, and *know* does not always imply legitimate and covenantal sexual relations, for example, Judges 19:25.

59. *TDOT,* 12:50–60. Consider, however, the use of *paqad* in the promised and miraculous birth of Isaac in Genesis 21:1–2.

habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever. And the man of thine, whom I shall cut not off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread. . . .

And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever. And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision. Then Eli called Samuel, and said Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. And he said, What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee. And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good. (2:27–36; 3:11–18)

Structuring Devices: "Play of Perspectives." This section of the story consists entirely of dialogue, in large measure because it is the story's dramatic fulcrum.[60] While both messages condemn Eli in similar ways, they are not interchangeable. That Samuel's divine calling and first prophecy follow the blanket condemnation of Eli by the "man of God" (2:27–36) and the narrator's strong indictment of God's covenant people "in those days" (3:1) renders Samuel's ascendance all the more essential, dramatic, and spiritually significant to the larger story of covenant Israel.

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60. "Direct speech is made the chief instrument for revealing the varied and at times nuanced relations of the personages to the actions in which they are implicated." Alter, *Art,* 66.

Characterization: Messengers of God. The text expresses the respective dramatic contributions of these two messengers along four dimensions: message, role, impact, and visibility.

- *Message.* As crafted, Samuel's initial prophecy confirms the scathing condemnation of Eli by the "man of God" and inaugurates Samuel's own prophetic ministry. Samuel's prophecy reinforces much of what the "man of God" earlier says to Eli but does not repeat any of his specific words and phrases or hint at Samuel's awareness of his existence or message. Had Samuel's prophecy simply imitated the prior condemnation, he could be seen as more of a copycat than an authentic prophet.[61]

- *Role.* Despite the similarity of their messages, the text structures the two encounters inversely.

  The man of God begins his condemnation with the terse authoritative declaration, "Thus saith the Lord." He then repeats verbatim every word of the divine message, including the repeated use of first person singular pronouns, as though he speaks precisely in the place of the Lord. While this curse represents the single most extended direct speech in 1 Samuel 1–3, the precise interaction between the "man of God" and his Master is completely omitted from the story. We learn of what God says to him only by what he, in turn, says to Eli. We are present only for his encounter with the priest.

  By contrast, the story includes an extended verbatim recitation of the entire message that the Lord personally entrusts to Samuel, beginning with the authoritative declaration, "Behold I will do a thing in Israel" (3:11–14).[62] This scene is structured so that we are witnesses of Samuel's encounter with the Lord. Besides Samuel's name, which the Lord utters four times during his calling (3:4, 6, 10), this message, which simultaneously calls Samuel and condemns Eli, constitutes the only words that God actually

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61. Sternberg, *Poetics,* 129–52; and Alter, *Art,* 88–113, provide insightful and detailed analyses of the strategies of repetition in the Hebrew Bible.

62. "It is noteworthy that God's first message to Samuel is a prophecy of doom. Its content not only indicates the overthrow of the priestly authority of the house of Eli and the implicit move to a different sort of authority to be embodied by the prophet Samuel, but it also adumbrates the rather dour and dire role that Samuel will play as leader, in relation to both Israel and to Saul." Alter, *Ancient Israel,* 256 nn. 11–13.

speaks in the Samuel story, despite the fact that he is its principal protagonist.[63]

Continuing the contrast with the ministry of the "man of God," the text only alludes to Samuel's subsequent communication with Eli—"And Samuel told him every whit." It does not repeat one word of what the lad actually says to his mentor. In short, the narrative features the *delivery* of the word of God by the "man of God" to Eli but the *reception* by Samuel of the divine message directly from God. Recognizing this difference, Alter offers a crucial perspective on the complementary roles of the man of God and Samuel. "The 'word of God' is often a technical term referring to oracular message. Inquiring of the oracle would have been a priestly function, and so there is an intimation here of some sort of breakdown in the professional performance of the house of Eli. But the same phrase also is used to announce prophecy, and 'vision' is a prophetic term: the whole episode concerns the transition from priestly to prophetic authority."[64] In short, Alter implies that the "man of God" acts as an oracle in relation to the priest, since the priest himself has lost the traditional gift of oracle through abuse and neglect. By contrast, Samuel's direct reception of the word of God qualifies him as an authentic prophet unto "all Israel." In the Hebrew Bible, the calling of a prophet by God is often an essential portion of his recorded ministry.[65]

- *Impact*. While the biblical account is silent regarding Eli's reaction to the man of God, it is structured explicitly so that the priest *must* accept Samuel's dire prophecy. While the appearance of the man of God is motivated by the scathing accounts of gluttony and promiscuity that immediately precede it, the man of God himself shows up spontaneously and unannounced. Thus, while his sudden arrival is entirely motivated by events in the narrative, the narrative is silent regarding the messenger's relationship with and impact upon Eli.

  By contrast, on the night of Samuel's divine call, Eli specifically and emphatically directs the lad on how to respond to the voice of the Lord, thus setting the expectation of a follow-up report to the

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63. "Nothing is clearer in the final form of the text than Yahweh's utter mastery of the situation, whatever it may be." Polzin, *Samuel,* 4.

64. Alter, *Ancient Israel,* 254 n. 1.

65. For example, Exodus 3–4; Isaiah 6; Jeremiah 1; Ezekiel 1–2.

priest. On cue the next morning, Eli repeatedly demands that his protégé share the details of his encounter with God. After receiving Samuel's prophecy, Eli has no recourse but to acknowledge, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good" (3:18).

- *Visibility.* While both messengers faithfully deliver their respective messages from the Lord, the "man of God" accomplishes his mission in total anonymity. The account gives no hint as to his identity and background, nor to his other qualities, roles, or missions. In accomplishing this mission, the "man of God" encounters only Eli, delivers his message faithfully and confidentially, and then disappears immediately, apparently never to be seen or heard from again.

By contrast, Samuel executes his mission completely in the public eye. During the indictment of Eli and his sons, the narrator sprinkles several asides on the lad's prodigious service at the temple (2:11, 18, 21, 26; 3:1a) and concludes this narrative with the categorical declaration of Samuel's remarkable long-term public ministry (3:19–4:1a).

Samuel Is Called and Established

And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; That the Lord called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord revealed unto him. And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he rose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth. . . .

And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba

knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. (3:1–10, 19–21; 4:1a)

Structuring Devices: "Play of Perspectives." Reflecting the intimacy of Samuel's first encounter with God and its profound effect, this segment of the story is recounted primarily as dialogue. Given the customary role for dialogue in biblical Hebrew, it is entirely appropriate that the second half of the Samuel story (2:27–4:1a) is recounted almost exclusively in dialogue. Only the narrator's general spiritual indictment of Israel (3:1) and the summary impact of Samuel's call upon "all Israel" (3:19–4:1a) are expressed in narrative.

Customary Behavior: Hearing and Seeing. While Eli properly identifies the source of Samuel's call, he does not hear the voice himself; only the lad does. The narrator's specific comment that the priest's "eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see" follows immediately the narrator's general spiritual indictment of Israel: "And the word of the Lord was precious [that is, rare] in those days; there was no open vision."[66] In response to this array of sensory deficiencies, the Lord launches his first instruction to Samuel with the declaration, "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle" (3:11)

Following the reception of Samuel's first prophecy, hearing and seeing figure prominently in the interchange between the priest and his protégé: "Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision. Then Eli called Samuel, and said, . . . What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee, hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things he said unto thee. And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him" (3:15–17).

The account of Samuel's divine calling concludes using hearing and seeing as metaphors of increased spiritual capacity: "And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. . . . And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord."

Type Scene: Obedience to God's Call. Samuel repeatedly responds to God's initial calling with "Here am I," which are the first and only words, with slight variation, spoken directly by Samuel in the biblical

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66. McCarter, *I Samuel*, 97 n. 1.

account before his calling as a prophet (3:4–16). This response is identical to Abraham's willing acceptance of the Lord's calling at the patriarch's great test of faith.[67]

Leitwörter: know and lie with. In contrast to the use of *shakab* (*lie with*) in the account of the promiscuity of Eli's sons, discussed above, in the account of Samuel's divine call, Eli instructs the lad repeatedly to *shakab (lie down).* This usage introduces another meaningful connotation of the verb, *shakab,* in relation to *yada* (*know*). In the context of Samuel's calling, neither *yada* nor *shakab* have sexual connotations. *Shakab* implies that Samuel is simply lying prone in bed when the Lord first calls and eventually appears to him. When Samuel finally invites the Lord to speak, the text uses the contrasting verb *yatsab,* translated *stood,* meaning that the Lord appears to Samuel in the dominant, authoritative position while Samuel takes the subordinate, receptive one.

His personal encounter with the divine allows Samuel to *know* (*yada*) God for the first time. Prior to his call, "Samuel did not yet know the Lord; neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him."[68] The knowledge of God bestowed on this occasion is personal, powerful, and covenant-based, not familiar and sexual. The same verb also concludes the narrative, signaling the enduring covenant between Samuel and the Lord, on the one hand, and between Samuel and God's covenant people, on the other: "And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel."

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67. 1 Samuel 3:4–16; Genesis 22:1. For comparable instances of this identical response elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, see Genesis 22:7; 27:1, 18; 31:11; 37:11; 46:2; Exodus 3:4. Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 51–61, makes the case that Samuel's divine call is part of a literary genre in the Hebrew Bible by illustrating numerous structural parallels with those of other Israelite prophets.

68. The contrast in meaning between the spiritual condition of the sons of Eli and that of Samuel in relation to this verb is revealed in the respective tenses. "Knew not" implies a defining and permanent condition for the sons of Eli; for Samuel, however, "did not yet know" implies a temporary and transitional condition that would soon be remedied. Subsequent events in the narrative bear out this contrast: the sons of Eli abuse the ritual offering and are categorically rejected by the Lord, but the Lord appears to Samuel and gives him his first and subsequent prophecies.

Leitwörter: establish **and** *cut off.* In the Samuel story, the narrator uses the verb ʿamen, translated *establish,* in order to prefigure Samuel's auspicious priestly career in the voice of his faithful father—"only the Lord establish his word" (1:23)—and to launch Samuel's public ministry at the story's climax: "And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." The Hebrew verb has strong ritual, symbolic, and covenantal connotations, suggesting that:

- Samuel's rise to prominence was anticipated and guided by the Lord,
- Samuel would be sustained by God in his challenging but crucial ministry, and
- "all Israel" would be divinely blessed for its faithful allegiance to Samuel's prophetic direction.[69]

Establish in these contexts provides a categorical contrast with verbs repeated by the "man of God" in his condemnation of the house of Eli. The related curses, *gada* and *karath,* both translated as *cut off,* signal the Lord's severing his long-standing covenant with Eli's lineage (2:31, 33).[70]

Characterization: Prophet of God. As crafted, the account of Samuel's calling corrects Israel's general spiritual malaise (see 3:1), makes explicit Samuel's newfound, firsthand knowledge of God (see 3:7), and

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69. The same Hebrew root is translated "faithful" in the prophecy associated with God's curse upon Eli's house: "I will raise up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind" (2:35), suggesting that the author considers Samuel to be the promised priest, who "shall walk before mine anointed forever." See also *TDOT,* 1:296.

70. Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, *gada* is used in reference to felling trees, particularly groves devoted to the worship of pagan gods, or more generally to destroying anything of value as a consequence of wickedness and as a sign of God's displeasure (for example, Deuteronomy 7:5; Judges 21:6; 2 Chronicles 14:3; 31:1; Psalms 75:10; 107:16; Isaiah 9:10; 14:12; 15:2; 22:25; 45:2; Jeremiah 48:25; 50:23; Ezekiel 6:6). *Karath* also connotes destruction but is more widely used in the Hebrew Bible with stronger and more explicit reference to breaking a covenant (for example, Genesis 9:11; Exodus 4:25; 12:15, 19; Leviticus 17:4–14; 20:3–18; Numbers 15:30–31). "In the majority of offenses, 'cutting off' means a 'cutting out' which leads to 'banishment' or 'excommunication' from the cultic community and the covenant people." *TDOT,* 7:348.

establishes Samuel's role as "prophet of the Lord" among "all Israel" (3:20, 4:1a).

Synthesis

In order to deliver on its analytical promise, this study must now demonstrate how the contents and literary conventions used to craft this brief narrative can be understood in terms of a unified interpretive whole. From the present perspective, 1 Samuel 1–3 is an account of more than the birth of a remarkable prophet and the beginning of a radical transformation of Israel's polity. It also serves the broader narrative as the renewal of an ancient and sacred covenant with God, with Samuel serving as its object and agent.[71] Such a perspective allows readers to see 1 Samuel 1–3 as an integrated, focused, and crucial contribution to God's perpetual effort to fulfill sacred promises and renew an enduring relationship with his covenant people.

Structure of the Narrative

From the simplest and most direct perspective, the story of Samuel's birth and calling can be best understood in covenant terms. Hannah makes a solemn vow to God, and God and Hannah repeatedly and mutually fulfill the terms of their covenant. Hannah bears and nurtures Samuel, after which she "lends" him to God and continues to bless him, without any expectation of divine recompense. God, in turn, "gives" Hannah a "man child" according to her supplication, who then becomes a prophet unto "all Israel." Thus, God manifests his goodness by fulfilling Hannah's vow in ways that she could not possibly have imagined beforehand or accomplished herself.

God is the main character in the narrative, even though he personally appears briefly only once—to call Samuel and give him his first prophecy. All other crucial actions in the story—the emergence of Elkanah and Hannah into the epic Hebrew narrative from a position of complete obscurity, the miracles of Hannah's conception and Samuel's birth, the rise of Samuel and the fall of the house of Eli, and the establishment

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71. McCarter, *I Samuel,* 86–93, identifies several literary features of the text which indicate that, as a result of Samuel's ministry, Israel's future as recounted in the Hebrew Bible will be considerably different than its past.

of Samuel as prophet to "all Israel"—are all orchestrated by God from "off stage."

From a human perspective, the text features two complementary protagonists who come into focus in the principal vignettes of the story—Hannah and Samuel.[72] Hannah's key role in this social drama[73] is to make a solemn vow to God and fulfill its initial terms through the bearing and nurturing of her first born (1:1–2:10). Samuel's principal role is to realize his divine destiny for "all Israel" (3:1–4:1a). Between these two vignettes a narrative transition (2:11–36) details the divine curse which comes upon Eli's house, making way for Samuel's auspicious ascendancy. While the transition details the woes of Eli's house, it also contains five separate references to Samuel's progressively faithful service to the Lord—at the beginning and end of the transition and periodically throughout (2:11, 18, 21, 26; 3:1a). This subtle literary convention repeatedly brings attentive readers back to the central focus of the larger narrative.

Poetics and Rhetoric

All other textual details and literary conventions of the account systematically support a covenant perspective in the following central ways.

- *Diction.* Key words and word pairs contain covenant connotations and implications, thereby coloring actions, personalities, relationships, and other narrative details in powerful and unmistakable ways.

- *Characterization.* The few defining details of character—behavior, actions, qualities, dialogue, and physical appearance that flesh out "proleptic portraits,"[74] whether individually or in pairs—reveal individuals' varied relationships with one another and with God, as mediated by their sacred covenants. For example, Elkanah and Hannah keep their covenants, albeit in contrasting ways, and are

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72. "Although [Hannah] is undoubtedly the heroine of our [birth] narrative, and even though Samuel's role in it is secondary and passive, the story ultimately focuses not on her but on him." Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 33.

73. The application of the anthropological concept of "social drama" to interpret literature, ritual, and other key cultural expressions is summarized in Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), 23–59.

74. Sternberg, *Poetics,* 321–24.

thereby divinely blessed. By contrast, Eli and his sons turn from their covenant obligations in multiple ways and are consequently eternally cursed. Samuel is ever faithful to his consecrated responsibilities at Shiloh and eventually becomes one of Israel's greatest spiritual leaders.

- *Type scenes.* These scenes infer meaningful connections with other individuals and settings in the Hebrew and Christian Bibles that serve as positive and negative exemplars of God's enduring covenant with his children.

Metanarrative

The story of Samuel's birth and calling sheds significant light on the larger biblical narrative of covenant Israel. Although Polzin makes a strong case that the Samuel story is a parable on kingship in Israel, the present perspective suggests that particular social forms are not as central to the biblical narrative as what might be called the "order of God." From Genesis through Kings, JHWH seems willing and ready to accept and work with a wide variety of religious and political leaders—patriarchs, priests, prophets, judges, and kings—provided they remain faithful to his direction, counsel, and covenants. If they do so, they are strengthened, enlarged, blessed, and sustained. If not, they encounter a host of temporal and spiritual difficulties, including imprisonment, overthrow, civil unrest, dynastic collapse, divine rejection, and physical debility. Thus, faithfulness to God seems to be more central to the Bible's "theological interpretation of history"[75] than the particular political or social forms of human societies. While this general biblical pattern exhibits innumerable complexities, variations, nuances, and ambiguities, its consistency spans centuries of the recorded dealings of JHWH with covenant Israel.[76] A covenant focus thus seems to be

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75. Polzin, *Samuel,* 7.

76. In general, I agree with Alter: "The story of Samuel, then, far from being a simple promotion of prophetic ideology, enormously complicates the notion of prophecy by concretely imagining what may become of the imperfect stuff of humanity when the mantle of prophecy is cast over it." *Ancient Prophets,* 230. Our differences are complementary, not contrastive in nature. While Alter focuses on human diversities within a general perspective of divine consistency, I emphasize the text's ideological consistency within the context of seemingly limitless social and political diversity. In his extended analysis of

essential to the "pious tradition"[77] that occupied biblical writers and commanded their literary craftsmanship. The story of Samuel's birth and calling is one of many contributions to this core ideological focus of the Hebrew Bible.

While it is possible to read the narrative of Samuel's birth in other ways, a covenant perspective allows readers to interpret many, perhaps most, of its details from a single, unified point of view, thus revealing great interpretive depth to the text. We may never know for sure whether a covenant perspective actually motivated those who crafted the inherited text over the centuries of its development. The possibility of a covenant perspective, however, cannot be denied and may be profoundly appreciated as we seek to plumb the depths of this remarkable text.

Conclusion

The present study illustrates the extent to which the authors, editors, and redactors of 1 Samuel 1–3 employed in a systematic and complementary manner a variety of literary conventions for a central ideological end—showing God's commitment to preserve his ancient covenant with Israel, even at inopportune times and through obscure persons. Crafting this key story in an artful way enriches the reading experience and rewards attentive readers with nuances and levels of insight.

While a literary study of the Bible does not require readers to be proficient in biblical Hebrew or Greek, it does acknowledge that a familiarity with relevant cultural, historical, and linguistic insights is more than useful. Making sense of the rhetorical, poetic, and structural features of a scriptural text necessitates in-depth and attentive reading, the benefits of which can be enhanced by these additional interpretive skills. In a

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the annunciation type scene in the Hebrew Bible, Simon, *Prophetic Narratives,* 49, acknowledges the persistent tension between pattern and variation: "The pattern that is common to all the stories that belong to a particular genre is sufficiently flexible and varied to allow both full development of the unique nature of every one-time human event as well as variegated rich development of the alternate possibilities latent in the common basic situation. The paradigm serves as a frame of reference that allows us to examine each component in the context of the expectations aroused by its parallels in the other stories. . . . These analogies and contrasts enrich and deepen the rhetorical possibilities and sharpen and intensify the meaning that can be extracted from each individual account and from all of them taken together."

77. Auerbach, *Mimesis,* 14.

literary approach to scripture, sacred texts are seen as a complex, intentional creation by whose patterns and intricacies readers gain insights into the "imaginative universe"[78] of the prophets, scribes, and other holy people who crafted them.

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78. Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind,* 11.

"The Little Head Stones Became Monuments"

Death in the Early Samoan Mission and the Creation of the Fagali'i Cemetery

Reid L. Neilson and Scott D. Marianno

When the call first went forth, Samoa was as far from people's minds as the islands themselves are from the rest of the civilized world," a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints wrote from Apia in 1899. "Women were among the Gospel pioneers on these islands; what they endured, their trials and their hardships, even to parting with life itself, it is a story that today dims the eye with tears. Samoa has never been a happy home for our sisters."[1]

Hardships, illness, and death were the unfortunate companions of many who pioneered missionary work in the far-off reaches of the world in the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Writing of stalwart South Pacific missionaries, historian Ruth R. Yeaman

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1. Hezekiah [Edwin Hezekiah Smart], Apia, Samoa, to the Editor of the *Young Woman's Journal*, September 1899, published as "Our Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 11 (March 1900): 125. To better appreciate the female missionary experience in late-nineteenth-century Samoa and Tonga (the early Samoan Mission), see Ruth R. Yeaman, "Women from Zion in the Samoan Mission: 1888–1900," in *Proceedings, Eleventh Annual Conference, Mormon Pacific Historical Society, June 10–16, 1990* (n.p.: Mormon Pacific Historical Society, 1990), 54–80; and Carol C. Madsen, "Mormon Missionary Wives in Nineteenth Century Polynesia," *Journal of Mormon History* 13 (1986–87): 61–85.

For the best histories of the Church in Samoa, see R. Lanier Britsch, *Unto the Islands of the Sea: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Pacific* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), chapters 21–24 (pp. 349–428); and R. Carl Harris, *Building the Kingdom in Samoa, 1888–2005: History, Personal Narratives, and Images Portraying Latter-day Saints' Experiences in the Samoan Islands* (Heber City, Utah: By the author, 2006).

described the sacrifices they made: "All of them faced the difficulties of an environment and culture entirely foreign to them. Among the members of the group some faced the horror and hazards of civil war, some faced the fury of the hurricane seasons and other elements of the weather, some faced the death of children, one faced the death of a husband, and several sacrificed their own lives."[2] During the first two decades of the Samoan Mission, at least twelve Latter-day Saints passed away in the mission, which forced the mission leaders and other missionaries to determine how best to bury and honor their dead. This article first reviews the history of LDS cemeteries as sacred spaces and then looks specifically at memorials created for deceased missionaries and their children in Samoa. These stones acted as memorials for survivors and left a lasting artifact of the lived religion of these early missionaries. As Tona Hangen notes, "Lived religion is the vibrant culture always thrumming below a church's official radar, where improvisation, resistance, blending, and creativity are found in abundance."[3] How LDS Church members created and reverenced sacred space abroad provides a rich field of study for scholars seeking to understand how religion is practiced at the periphery rather than the core of Mormon settlement. In Samoa particularly, as missionaries confronted the harsh realities of service abroad, they often adapted traditional Mormon expressions toward the dead to form a combination of American burial tradition, Mormon custom and belief, and local expediencies. The creation of sacred burial space at Fagali'i is one example of how Church members actually applied their religion in an international setting; missionaries interpreted Latter-day Saint cosmology and responded with improvised memorials to mourn and honor their dead.

Latter-day Saint Cemeteries and the Construction of Memory

Geographer Richard H. Jackson notes of the historical value of burial grounds: "Each cemetery is an ever changing volume that records the history, values, and dream of a people and place, and each stone records the life of a real person—a person who lived and loved . . . and left behind memories that reverberate through succeeding generations."[4]

2. Yeaman, "Women from Zion in the Samoan Mission," 73–74.
3. Tona J. Hangen, "Lived Religion among Mormons," in *Oxford Handbook of Mormonism,* ed. Terryl L. Givens and Philip L. Barlow (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 209.
4. Richard H. Jackson, "Mormon Cemeteries: History in Stone," in *Nearly Everything Imaginable: The Everyday Life of Utah's Mormon Pioneers,* ed.

Indeed, created from stone is a cultural inscription that locates in time and place the beliefs, values, and culture of a people and even a nation. The very act of erecting a memorial involves the construction of a historical narrative; cemeteries, in short, reveal how a people remember and what or whom they remember.

The erection and preservation of memorials arguably approach formalized ritual in Latter-day Saint culture. From the Church's earliest days, its prophet instructed Church members on how to treat the dead. Joseph Smith advocated "the importance of being buried with the saints & their relatives in as much as we shall want to see our relatives first & shall rejoice to strike hands with our parents, children &c when rising from the tomb."[5] Proximity to family members during burial was one piece of Smith's maturing teachings on death and resurrection that by Nauvoo took on a more practical form. In addition, Smith was beginning to lay out a theology of adoption in conjunction with new temple ritual that expanded conventional notions of kinship. Inasmuch as converted Latter-day Saints were separated from biological family lines to gather in Mormon communities, they were welcomed into the family of God to experience salvation communally.[6] Latter-day Saints living on the banks of the Mississippi created their own cemetery ordered around a familial sense of community as a body of believers.[7] In doing so, the Saints at least partially moved away from their European ancestral roots and elected to bury their dead closer to the congregation of Saints rather than in their former communities or homelands. As Samuel Brown suggests, "The society Smith created, encompassing life and afterlife, provided his followers with the reassurance that despite their risky migrations into the frontier and the desertion of their extended families, they would not be buried alone."[8]

Yet, the Saints learned soon after the martyrdom of their prophet in 1844 that their stay in Nauvoo would only be temporary. The forced

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Ronald W. Walker and Doris R. Dant (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), 405.

5. Quoted in Samuel Morris Brown, *In Heaven as It Is on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Early Mormon Conquest of Death* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 91.

6. Samuel M. Brown, "Early Mormon Adoption Theology and the Mechanics of Salvation," *Journal of Mormon History* 37 (Summer 2011): 3–52.

7. A public cemetery was located on Parley Street in Nauvoo beginning in 1842. See Lyndon W. Cook, *Nauvoo Deaths and Marriages, 1839–1845* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book, 1994), viii.

8. Brown, *In Heaven as It Is on Earth,* 94.

exodus out of the city in 1846 left the collective Church without a formal home and displaced many members into the Iowa wilderness. One of the more permanent camps of Saints was established in southern Iowa at what the settlers titled Mount Pisgah in 1846. A sacred reverence for the settlement was maintained almost from its creation, since it was aptly named after the mount from which Moses surveyed the promised land (see Deut. 34:1–4). Until 1852, when Mt. Pisgah was disbanded, many Saints seeking a safe haven in the West passed through en route to the Great Basin. This staging area became a place where passing Saints mourned the hundreds of fellow believers who did not live to see the Salt Lake Valley. With limited resources, the settlers established a make-shift pioneer cemetery to honor the dead. The six-year settlement might easily have been forgotten if not for the Mormon dead interred there. In 1886, the Church purchased the land on which the cemetery sat and later erected a memorial, which read in part, "This Monument Erected A.D. 1888, in memory of those members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who died in 1846, 1847, and 1848, during their exodus to seek a home beyond the Rocky Mountains."[9] Indeed, to Latter-day Saints four decades later, Mount Pisgah was deemed worth memorial-izing not just because of those who temporarily passed through, but because of those permanently interred there. The cemetery was sacred space, a monument to the "determination, stout hearts, endurance and religious fervor these Mormon people possessed."[10]

The poor quality of materials used to erect grave markers contrib-uted to the disappearance of the original Mt. Pisgah cemetery and the repetition of similar burial processes across the pioneer trail. Death was commonplace for pioneers making the trek across the plains to the Salt Lake Valley, especially in the early years of Mormon emigration, before advances in technology rendered the journey less formidable.[11] At best, those mourning their dead on the trail created roughly inscribed grave

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9. Richard L. Evans, "Mt. Pisgah Mormon Cemetery," *Improvement Era* 40 (January 1937): 20–22.

10. Evans, "Mt. Pisgah Mormon Cemetery," 20–22.

11. Melvin Bashore and H. Dennis Tolley estimate that 1,910 people died along the trail to the Salt Lake Valley from 1847 to 1868. Death was evenly distributed between males and females. These figures do not include the many who died at the multiple designated staging areas from which pioneer compa-nies departed or deaths that occurred en route to the staging areas. Melvin L. Bashore and H. Dennis Tolley, "Mortality on the Mormon Trail, 1847–1868,"

markers of stone or wood. Others were forced to pile rocks on the resting place of their loved ones or to inter them in shallow, unmarked graves. The improvisational nature of pioneer memorials meant that the physical resting place of many of the Saints who perished seeking Zion quickly merged with the natural landscape, eroding the physical traces of human suffering. Without a precise geographical location to memorialize the individual dead on the trek west, the pioneer trail itself took on an added ritual dimension in the decades following large-scale Mormon emigration to the Great Basin. In the collective memory of Latter-day Saints, the trek experience and physical trail function as a sacred monument to the faith of the Saints who suffered. With the Mormon dead dispersed along the pioneer trail, the landscape retains sacred characteristics for later generations of Church members, many of whom treasure their pioneer heritage. As is the case for other religions, sacred space—or place—for Latter-day Saints sometimes developed from sites of communal suffering. Commemorations were held and monuments were erected to mark "disjunctures, time-places where history—in the mind of the rememberer—*should* have been different."[12] For Mormons, the pioneer trail was a cultural inscription to tragic loss—to the unjustified loss of land and a prophet lost too soon in Nauvoo and to Saints prematurely lost while in search of a permanent refuge from persecution.

Mormon pioneers brought their communal values with them to the Rocky Mountains and almost immediately began to search for a place to inter their dead. An informal cemetery was established at Salt Lake City's block 49, on 100 West between 300 South and 400 South, following the first burial in the Salt Lake Valley.[13] This pioneer cemetery housed many of the early deceased pioneers before it was determined that a more formal public burial ground should be established. In 1849, Church leaders set aside twenty acres for a public burial ground on the northeast bench overlooking the city, and, in early 1856, the Salt Lake City Council passed an ordinance requiring all citizens within city limits to inter their dead at the Public Burying Ground, or what became

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BYU Studies 53 (2014): 109–23. On the advancing railroad, see Stanley B. Kimball, "Sail and Rail Pioneers before 1869," *BYU Studies* 35, no. 2 (1995).

12. Oren Baruch Stier and J. Shawn Landres, *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 4.

13. Shane A. Baker, *At Rest in Zion: The Archaeology of Salt Lake City's First Pioneer Cemetery* (Provo, Utah: Museum of Peoples and Cultures, Brigham Young University, 2011), 13–15.

the Salt Lake City Cemetery.[14] Utah Territory's first formal cemetery abandoned the rugged nature of pioneer memorials and was instead patterned after the unique gridlike organization of Latter-day Saint settlements, displaying a sense of permanence and planning.[15] The development of the Salt Lake City Cemetery also paralleled national trends in urban planning, which around mid-century, began to locate "rural" cemeteries, engineered like forested countrysides, on city peripheries.[16] Landscaped according to romanticized notions of English gardening techniques, the picturesque rural cemetery stood in contrast to the bustling, disorderly American urban center. According to one historian, the "rural cemetery movement reflected an anxious search for a sanctuary from the 'go a-head' spirit of the age."[17]

With formal cemeteries established, Latter-day Saints began in the latter half of the nineteenth century to develop a gravestone industry in the Salt Lake Valley that included the creation of more durable, ornate monuments. In the years following initial settlement, settlers in the Great Basin abandoned the makeshift wood and stone monuments characteristic of the pioneer trail and began to extract sandstone from local quarries for headstones. Stone carvers, some of whom worked on the Nauvoo Temple before emigrating to the West, contributed to the proliferation of custom gravestones, many of a European style, in the cemeteries of Salt Lake and surrounding settlements.[18] When they established the cemetery at Fagali'i, missionaries in Samoa relied on Latter-day Saint tradition and American burial culture, but also engaged in improvised and personal forms of religious expression to memorialize their dead.

14. Baker, *At Rest in Zion,* 14–15.

15. Annette Stott, *Pioneer Cemeteries: Sculpture Gardens of the Old West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 56–57.

16. See Thomas Bender, "The 'Rural' Cemetery Movement: Urban Travail and the Appeal of Nature," *New England Quarterly* 47 (June 1974): 196–211; Blanche M. G. Linden, *Silent City on a Hill: Picturesque Landscapes of Memory and Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 141.

17. Bender, "'Rural' Cemetery Movement," 202.

18. Carol Edison, "Custom-made Gravestones in Early Salt Lake City: The Work of Four English Stonecarvers," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 56 (Fall 1988): 310–30.

The Creation of the Cemetery in Fagali'i

The first Mormon missionary couples to Samoa were able to avoid much of the loss that other missionaries would incur after their departure. In October 1877, thirty-one-year-old Joseph Henry Dean[19] and his twenty-year-old wife, Florence Ridges Dean,[20] were called to the Hawaiian Mission and later officially opened the Samoan Mission in 1888, with Elder Dean serving as its president until 1890. Shortly after their arrival in Samoa, the Deans optimistically sent a letter to Church headquarters requesting another mission couple to assist them with the work. William Orme Lee[21] (age 25) and his wife, Louisa Calder Lee[22] (age 23), arrived in Samoa on October 10, 1888, with their infant daughter, Louisa. Nine months later, on July 24, 1890, Sister Lee gave birth to their son Henry Calder Lee. The Deans finished their mission to the South Pacific on August 16, 1890, with both of their mission-born children, Jasper (who was born in Hawaii in 1888) and Wilford (born in Samoa in June 1890) still living.

Elder Lee succeeded President Dean as leader of the fledgling Samoan Mission on August 16, 1890, and was delighted to learn that the First Presidency had called another young couple to serve with them in 1890. Joseph Harris Merrill[23] (age 22) and his wife, Katie Eliza Hale Merrill[24] (age 19) (fig. 1), were set apart as the third missionary couple assigned to the Samoan Mission, just months after their November 6, 1890, marriage in the Logan Temple. Initially, the First Presidency called

19. "Joseph Henry Dean," on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Early Mormon Missionaries*, https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/joseph-henry-dean-1855 (accessed June 27, 2016).

20. "Florence Ridges Dean," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/florence-ridges-dean-1866 (accessed June 27, 2016).

21. "William Orme Lee," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/william-orme-lee-1862 (accessed June 24, 2016).

22. "Louisa Calder Lee," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/louisa-calder-lee-1864 (accessed June 24, 2016).

23. "Joseph Harris Merrill," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/joseph-harriss-merrill-1868 (accessed June 24, 2016).

24. "Katie Eliza Hale Merrill," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/katie-eliza-hale-merrill-1871 (accessed June 24, 2016); Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia: A Compilation of Biographical Sketches of Prominent Men and Women in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History, 1901–36), 3:683.

KATIE ELIZA HALE MERRILL.

FIGURE 1. Katie Eliza Hale Merrill, pictured in the *Young Woman's Journal* (December 1892), along with an article about her life and service. Courtesy Church History Department.

only Joseph to Samoa, but quickly reconsidered and invited Joseph's young bride to travel with him. According to a friend of Katie Merrill, "This was a joyful piece of news for the young couple. Katie was now elated. Although repeatedly warned of the many and severe hardships to which she would unavoidably be subjected, she never lost courage but persistently clung to the assurance that the Lord never requires anything of His children that He does not give them power to accomplish."[25]

Despite the stated risks, the Samoan Mission had already successfully welcomed a new child. When the Merrills arrived in Samoa on March 23, 1891, the young and now pregnant couple may have confidently expected their experience to be no different. Sister Merrill, however, became seriously ill shortly after reaching Samoa and her own life and the life of her unborn baby were at risk.[26] Complications from her illness forced Katie Merrill into early childbirth on June 28, only three months after her arrival to Samoa, and she delivered a premature baby boy. "It was very small, but as perfect and pretty a baby as I ever saw," fellow missionary wife Sister Lee described. Shocked her new baby had survived childbirth, "Katie exclaimed, 'Thank the Lord! it is alive, and a boy; oh I am so glad! Do let me see it and kiss it?'"[27] The Merrills named their three-pound baby Joseph Aroet.

The Merrills' local doctor immediately spotted severe complications and knew the child would not survive but hesitated to inform Sister Merrill in her weakened state. The following afternoon, on June 29, 1891, little Joseph died. Sister Lee described the scene that followed:

> I went to [Katie's] bed-side. She had told me repeatedly she had no pain but was so weak. Now when I went to her she asked for her husband, and said, "Oh Sister Lee, I am dying!" I called my husband to administer to her, rubbed her hands and feet, and sent for her husband who had gone out to try to control his feelings, after seeing his baby breathe its last. "Oh Katie," I said, "you are mistaken, surely you would not leave your poor husband!" She answered, "They have come for me, and I must go; I can't stop." After being administered to she revived, and

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25. L. L. Greene Richards, "Katie Eliza Hale Merrill," *Young Woman's Journal* 4 (December 1892): 100.

26. See Joseph H. Merrill, Journal, May 24, 27, 30, June 19, 1891, MS 4446, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. See also Joseph H. Merrill, Papers, 1890–1957, MS 9074, Church History Library.

27. Richards, "Katie Eliza Hale Merrill," 101.

said, "Administer again," which was done. Just then Joseph came in; she spoke to him, kissed him and said, "Good-by." She was dead, without a struggle. Death could not have been more peaceful.[28]

For the widower husband, the excitement surrounding his Samoan adventure and the gratitude that originated from his call to preach on behalf of the Church were now overwhelmed by solitude and sorrow. "At 1 o'clock I witnessed the death of our baby and at 3 o'clock God saw fit to take my dear wife. It is all I can bear," Elder Merrill journaled that day. "We left home so happy being called of God to the work of the Ministry, and now I am left alone, forsaken of God, bereft of all my earthly joys. I care not to live, but for others. Thus are my afflictions heaped upon me almost more than I am able to bear. I care not for Samoa. I care not for earthly pleasures. I care not to live."[29]

Sister Katie Merrill was the first missionary to die in the Samoan Mission, as well as the first female representative to pass away while serving a foreign mission for the Church. Even without the resources that would be available to him domestically in Utah, Elder Merrill still proceeded through a formal burial procedure for his departed loved ones. Shortly after Sister Merrill's death, Sister Lee washed and dressed baby Joseph for burial.[30] Sister Merrill was similarly prepared for burial and dressed in temple clothing according to Latter-day Saint custom.[31] With the consent of the owner of the neighboring German plantation, Joseph Merrill and his fellow missionaries created a small graveyard near the mission home overlooking the Pacific Ocean.[32] The proximity of the cemetery to the mission home was likely informed by longstanding European precedent of locating cemeteries on church grounds. The short distance from the mission home allowed missionaries to look after

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28. Richards, "Katie Eliza Hale Merrill," 101.

29. Merrill, Journal, June 29, 1891.

30. Richards, "Katie Eliza Hale Merrill," 101.

31. Merrill, Journal, June 29, 1891.

32. A German firm operated significant commercial plantations in Samoa, concentrated generally on the island of Upolu, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Eventually, Germany took a formal colonial stake in western Samoa beginning in 1900 after another Civil War in Samoa and a resolution concerning American and British colonial interests in the Western Pacific granted control over the territory to the Germans. Doug Munro and Stewart Firth, "German Labour Policy and the Partition of the Western Pacific: The View from Samoa," *The Journal of Pacific History* 25 (June 1990): 85–102.

and care for the headstones and, in the absence of significant Church land holdings in Samoa, provided a practical alternative to a public burial ground.

The missionaries buried Sister Merrill with her newborn cradled in her arms in a pine coffin purchased by Elder Merrill in Apia.[33] The burial site was located "on the brow of the hill (overlooking the sea) among the cocoanut trees, their heads turned toward home."[34] According to a letter from President Lee to the First Presidency, the grieving Elder Merrill chose the location because it was a "dry, elevated place" that would allow him to exhume and transport the remains of his loved ones home after his mission.[35] Despite these intentions, Joseph Merrill and his missionary companions went to work for the next month beautifying the site where Katie and Joseph were laid to rest. Elder Merrill procured pickets from Apia and dug post holes for the erection of a fence. He also created a wooden head and foot board and assigned a fellow missionary the task of painting the inscription. On August 8, with "all the work done" on the cemetery, Elder Merrill felt ready to resume his mission and "leave Fagalii for the first time."[36] Even with the unexpected nature of his wife's death and the temporary nature of his stay in Samoa, Elder Merrill gravitated toward formal American burial custom. His memorial to his wife and son included careful preparation of the burial place and the creation of a border that differentiated the site from the surrounding tropical landscape, marking its sacredness (fig. 2). This temporary beginning for the Fagali'i cemetery would eventually provide a more permanent resting place for several Latter-day Saint missionaries and their deceased infants in Samoa.

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33. Merrill, Journal, June 29, 1891.

34. Merrill, Journal, June 29, 1891.

35. "Died While on a Mission," *Millennial Star* 53 (August 31, 1891): 555. Joseph Merrill continued to proselyte in Polynesia, in both the Samoan and Tongan islands, until April 25, 1894. Before he departed for the United States, he followed through with his intentions to exhume the bodies of his family, and he eventually reburied them in the Smithfield City Cemetery, in Cache County, Utah. Elder Merrill returned as president of the Samoan Mission in 1901 and served about fifteen months until health issues forced his return to America in 1903. "Joseph Harris Merrill," *Early Mormon Missionaries*; Joseph H. Merrill in *Seventy-Third Annual Conference Report of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1903), 14–17.

36. Merrill, Journal, August 8, 1891.
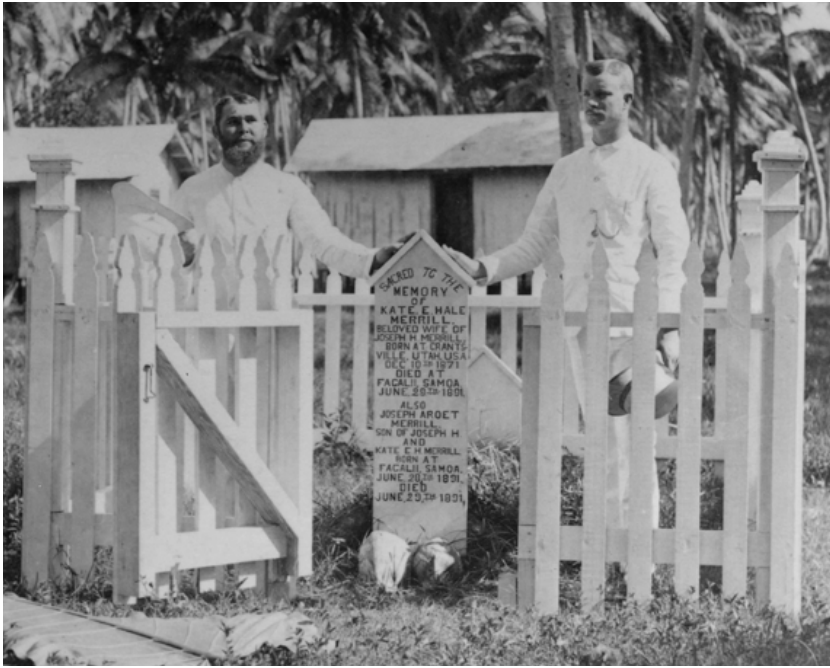
FIGURE 2. The gravesite of Katie Merrill and her son, Joseph Aroet Merrill, at Fagali'i cemetery, circa August 1891. *Left to right:* William Low and Joseph H. Merrill. Courtesy Church History Department, © Intellectual Reserve Inc.

In 1891, the First Presidency called Thomas and Sarah Hilton[37] as the fourth married couple to labor in the Samoan Mission. While the young couple lived in Salt Lake City, Sarah gave birth to their first child, Jeanette McMurrin, on September 10, 1891. Despite the couple's strained

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37. "Sarah McMurrin Hilton," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history .lds.org/missionary/individual/sarah-mcm-hilton-1871 (accessed June 24, 2016). See Sarah M. Hilton, Journals, 1892–1893, MS 13794, Church History Library; Sarah M. Hilton, Autobiography, MS 26801, Church History Library; "Thomas Heddock Hilton," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/mis sionary/individual/thomas-heddock-hilton-1870 (accessed June 24, 2016). Sarah was born on April 8, 1871, in Salt Lake City, the daughter of Joseph McMurrin Jr. and Jeanette Irvine. Her future husband, Thomas, was born on December 6, 1870, in Salt Lake City, the son of David Hilton Jr. and Mary Ann Affleck. After a short courtship, the two eighteen-year-old sweethearts were married in the Logan Temple on December 4, 1889. Hilton, Autobiography, 1–2; Lalovi McMurrin Hilton, "A History of My Father—Thomas Heddock Hilton," 1, MS 28387, Church History Library.

financial circumstances and recent arrival, that November the Hiltons accepted the call to serve as a young missionary family in the South Pacific. In their formal acceptance letter to President Wilford Woodruff, Thomas wrote: "In reply to your notice of a call from almighty God for me to go to Samoa to proclaim the word of the Lord to the people, I say this; that myself and all pertaining to me feel willing to devote our lives or even sacrifice them if necessary doing the will of God."[38] Four months later, Thomas (age 21) and Sarah (age 20) were set apart as missionaries in Salt Lake City by Apostles John H. Smith and Abraham H. Cannon, respectively.

Sister Hilton wrote of their Pacific voyage: "The Samoan Islands . . . are as far from Hawaii as Hawaii is from San Francisco, California. That was the first time we'd been on the sea, and we were certainly seasick. We spent a whole day in Hawaii trying to find our land legs."[39] Their traveling companions to Samoa were Ransom Marion Stevens[40] (age 27) and Annie Dorthea Christensen Stevens[41] (age 28) from Fairview, Utah, the Samoan Mission's fifth married couple. The missionary families from Utah arrived in Apia, Samoa, on April 17, 1892, eager to preach the gospel. "We met with the natives, partook of their food, and then arranged for a room on one end of the big porch that ran around the house. Everything was so strange," Sarah Hilton reminisced of their new surroundings.[42]

But the tranquility and curiosity that marked the beginning of the couple's sojourn in Polynesia would soon be shattered. On June 4, 1892, about six weeks after the Hiltons arrived in the islands, their seven-month-old Jeanette died of a gastrointestinal disease.[43] The Hiltons

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38. Thomas H. Hilton to Wilford Woodruff, November 6, 1891, First Presidency Missionary Calls and Recommendations, 1877–1918, CR 1 168, Church History Library.

39. Hilton, Autobiography, 2–3.

40. "Ransom Marion Stevens," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/ransom-marion-stevens-1864 (accessed June 27, 2016).

41. "Annie Dorthea Christensen Stevens," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/annie-dorthea-christensen-stevens-1864 (accessed June 27, 2016). See also "Annie D. Christensen Stevens Palmer: Her Life and Her Samoan Mission," MS 9327, Church History Library.

42. Hilton, Autobiography, 3.

43. The cause of death according to reports was *cholera infantum,* a common term for a dangerous gastrointestinal disease that caused severe cramping, diarrhea, and vomiting among infants. "Utah News," *Millennial Star* 54

followed a similar burial process as Elder Merrill before them. Rather than choosing a separate burial site, the grieving parents elected to bury their child next to Sister Katie Merrill's grave on the hill behind the mission home.[44] The two headstones in the Fagali'i cemetery looked nearly identical with the painted inscription "Sacred to the Memory" serving as the header and the vital information of the deceased below.[45]

That fall, on September 21, the still-grieving Hiltons welcomed a new baby, Thomas Harold. With little medical resources available to them, Elder Hilton took on the role of midwife.[46] "He feared that he might lose both mother and baby, so he sent home for a doctor book and studied it. He became a fairly good doctor as well as a midwife," their son Lalovi recounted. "I heard my father tell how he had pleaded with the Lord to help him deliver the baby safely. He went to a sacred spot dedicated for secret prayer within a large banyan tree behind the mission home."[47] But again, death seemingly stalked the Hilton household: after a successful birth, their seventeen-month-old son died on March 17, 1894. Elder and Sister Hilton buried young Thomas next to his infant sister in the Fagali'i cemetery.

Falling into a tragic pattern, the Hiltons welcomed a third child that fall in Samoa. George Emmett, named after their current mission president George Emmett Browning, was born on October 12, 1894.[48] But like his sister and brother before him, little George too would die shortly after birth. He passed away on October 19 from lockjaw,

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(August 8, 1892): 511; Jacqueline H. Wolf, *Don't Kill Your Baby: Public Health and the Decline of Breastfeeding in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001), 48–50.

44. Hilton, Autobiography, 3.

45. A circa-1892 photo of the graves of Katie Eliza Hale Merrill and Jeanette McMurrin Hilton is available at FamilySearch.org under the names of those individuals.

46. While females traditionally dominated the field of midwifery in America, males grew increasingly more common throughout the nineteenth century. At the same time, midwives were generally being replaced by physicians who would supervise childbirth. Jane B. Donegan, *Women and Men Midwives: Medicine, Mortality, and Misogyny in Early America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 110–96; Judy Barrett Litoff, *American Midwives: 1860 to the Present* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 9–14.

47. Hilton, "History of My Father—Thomas Heddock Hilton," 1.

48. "George Emmett Browning," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/george-e-browning-1866 (accessed June 27, 2016).

"a climate disease that the natives say God Himself cannot cure," Sister Hilton remembered.[49] The Hiltons buried him beside his two siblings. By October 1894, the Fagali'i cemetery had expanded by three and now housed the majority of the Hilton family. The Hiltons still completed their original three-year mission assignment and served an additional four months. They departed from the Samoan Mission on March 27, 1895, never again to see their children's graves. "Although we had three lovely children, we had to leave them all buried in a beautiful spot overlooking the sea," Sarah Hilton reminisced. "We would have had to scrape the bones, and put them in a box to fit the largest bone, bringing them home in pieces if we had insisted on bringing them with us. There was no embalming them. So, we bid them 'Tofa' and left them in the hands of the Lord until the resurrection."[50]

The Hiltons not only lost three children while serving in the Samoan Mission, but also witnessed the death of their mission president, Ransom Stevens, on April 28, 1894. The Stevenses had arrived in Samoa with the Hiltons on April 17, 1892, and he had been the mission leader since November 5, 1893. President Stevens succumbed to typhoid fever and heart problems, leaving his wife, Annie, a widow in Polynesia. The grieving missionaries in Samoa buried their late president in the Fagali'i

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49. Hilton, Autobiography, 3.

50. Hilton, Autobiography, 3.

After returning from the Samoan Mission in 1895, Thomas and Sarah Hilton had seven more children—Lalovi McMurrin (1896–1980), Dora (1898–1900), Tannie (1899–1933), Josephine (1901–4), Joseph McMurrin (1907–55), Sarah (1909–88), and David Owen (1911–14), in addition to Jeanette, Thomas, and George whom they buried in the Fagali'i cemetery. Sadly, only four of their ten children lived to adulthood. The Hiltons lived for a time in Salt Lake City but then moved to the Mormon colonies in Chihuahua, Mexico, where they lived for nine years in the town of Colonia Dublan. But like other Latter-day Saints, they were driven from their home in 1912 during the violence of the Mexican Revolution. They eventually settled in Bountiful, Utah, and then moved to Ogden a few years later. As if Sarah had not suffered enough already in Samoa, her husband Thomas passed away in El Paso, Texas, on October 27, 1915, leaving her and her youngest sister, Josephine (whom Thomas had married as a post-Manifesto plural wife on March 4, 1902, in Mexico), as widows. Hilton, Autobiography, 3–5. Sarah would not pass away until November 7, 1947, in Salt Lake City at the age of seventy-six, due to congestive heart failure. "Utah, Salt Lake County Death Records, 1849–1949," on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *FamilySearch,* https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1459704 (accessed June 23, 2016).

cemetery in the empty grave recently vacated by the exhumed bodies of Sister Katie Merrill and her newborn, Joseph.[51] Sister Stevens, who was then near the end of her own pregnancy, left for home on the next steamer on May 23, 1894. She arrived in Utah on June 11 and within hours gave birth to a boy, who died a few weeks later.[52] Elder Thomas Hilton succeeded Ransom Stevens as the Samoan Mission leader in the months that followed.

That fall, William Alfred Moody (age 24)[53] and his wife, Ella Adelia (age 20),[54] from Thatcher, Arizona, arrived in Samoa on November 2, 1894, only five months after they were married. "On the journey [to Samoa, Ella] was quite sick, in fact her health had not been good for a number of years, and she did not improve after arriving in the mission. She gave birth to a daughter May 3, 1895, and for two or three days she appeared to be progressing favorably, but then fever set in, which prevented her from obtaining sleep," Assistant Church Historian Andrew Jenson wrote of Sister Moody's health. "As a consequence she became delirious, her vitality began to ebb, and on the evening of May 24, 1895, she passed peacefully away at the mission house."[55] Widower Elder Moody was brokenhearted as he buried his wife, and he described the Fagali'i cemetery in a way familiar to those who had mourned there before: "Upon a little rise in land facing the northern shore of Upolu, near Fagalii, in the midst of a cocoanut grove whose feathery fronds are ever swaying in the breezes, her body rests. The anguish of my heart, and the hopes buried beneath that coffin lid had better remain further untold."[56] Still, he persevered as a missionary for another three years, his motherless daughter Hazel being watched over by friends in Samoa and

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51. Andrew Jenson, *Tales from the World Tour: The 1895–1897 Travel Writings of Mormon Historian Andrew Jenson*, ed. Reid L. Neilson and Riley M. Moffat (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 142.

52. "God Bless Them Both," *Deseret Weekly,* June 16, 1894, 814.

53. "William Alfred Moody," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history .lds.org/missionary/individual/william-alfred-moody-1870 (accessed June 23, 2016). Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia,* 2:195.

54. "Ella Adelia Moody," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds .org/missionary/individual/ella-adelia-moody-1874 (accessed June 23, 2016). Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia,* 3:684.

55. Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia,* 3:684.

56. William A. Moody, *Years in the Sheaf* (Salt Lake City: Granite Publishing, 1959), 61.

then relatives in Utah. One of the last things Elder Moody did before leaving Samoa on May 18, 1898, to be reunited with his daughter back home, was to spend two hours weeding and cleaning the graves of his wife and fellow Latter-day Saints in the Fagali'i cemetery.[57]

The first missionary burial in the Fagali'i cemetery in the twentieth century occurred in the spring of 1900. Edgar Thomas Roberts[58] (age 21) and Ida Luetta Child[59] (age 20) of Afton, Wyoming, arrived as newlyweds in Polynesia on December 23, 1897. The following summer, on August 18, 1898, they welcomed a son, Loi Edgar, into their family. A year later, on October 16, 1899, they added a daughter, Harriet Viola. "We as missionaries don't always have clear sailing, but we have many sacrifices to make and hard trials to pass through," Sister Roberts reminded herself and friends back home a few years into her service in Samoa. "But we know we are not without our reward."[60] Her realistic depiction of missionary service in Samoa became a predictor of hardships to come. According to the Samoan Mission record for March 3, 1900, "Little Loi died at the sanatorium at Apia in the morning, making another sad day in the history of the mission."[61] Elder and Sister Roberts buried Loi in the Fagali'i cemetery alongside the Hiltons' three children.[62] Just two years later, on May 18, 1902, a single missionary, Judson Bliss Tomlinson[63] (age 21) passed away from Bright's disease, a

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57. Moody, *Years in the Sheaf,* 99.

58. "Edgar Thomas Roberts," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/edgar-thomas-roberts-1876 (accessed June 27, 2016).

59. "Ida Luetta Child Roberts," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/ida-luetta-child-roberts-1877 (accessed June 27, 2016).

60. Ida Luetta Roberts, Star Valley, Wyoming, to the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association, May 19, 1899, published as "Our Girls," *Young Woman's Journal* 11 (March 1900): 127.

61. Samoan Mission Manuscript History and Historical Reports, March 3, 1900, LR 7852 2, Church History Library.

62. After finishing their mission, the couple departed for Wyoming, on June 15, 1900, with their remaining daughter. Tragically, the following winter Harriet also passed away on January 6, 1901. See Yeaman, "Women from Zion in the Samoan Mission," 61–64.

63. "Judson Bliss Tomlinson," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/judson-bliss-tomlinson-1878 (accessed June 27, 2016); Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia,* 3:728.

kidney problem. He was also buried in the mission cemetery at Fagali'i. Occasionally, missionaries were buried outside of the Fagali'i cemetery in the first two decades of the mission's existence.[64]

The frequency of death in foreign missions and especially the South Pacific was striking to many observers. On November 13, 1892, Apostle and Church Historian Franklin D. Richards prepared a ledger of all missionary fatalities since the 1830 founding of the Church. His missionary "roll of honor" was printed in the *Deseret News* and reprinted, with editorial comment, in the *Millennial Star*.[65] By his count, at least sixty-seven adult missionaries lost their lives while in the service of the Church in the nineteenth century. Of the deaths for which particulars were known, over two-thirds occurred in foreign missions or while in transit to foreign missions.

Three years after Richards's prepared list, Andrew Jenson, an employee of the Church Historian's Office, toured the Samoan Mission. He arrived on Upolu on September 10, 1895, and was greeted at the Apia harbor by nearly a dozen Mormon missionaries, including Elder Moody.[66] Jenson spent the next several days at the mission home in Fagali'i, "culling historical data from the mission records" with the help of mission secretary, William G. Sears,[67] the Hiltons' future brother-in-law.[68] On his visit to

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64. George Edwin Morris arrived in Samoa on July 5, 1908, where he labored for four months on Upolu and then was assigned to proselyte on the island of Savaii. But Elder Morris suffered severe heat stroke while sailing to his new missionary outpost and was rushed back to the mission home on Upolu. He died five weeks later on December 12, 1908, and was buried in the government cemetery in Apia. "George Edwin Morris," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/george-edwin-morris-1887 (accessed June 27, 2016); Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia,* 3:684.

65. "A Roll of Honor," *Deseret Weekly,* November 19, 1892, 692–93; "A Roll of Honor," *Millennial Star* 54 (December 5, 1892): 779–82; see also "List of Missionaries Who Have Died in the Field," CR 100 378, Church History Library.

66. Jenson, *Tales from the World Tour,* 139.

67. "William Gailey Sears," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/william-gailey-sears-1873 (accessed June 27, 2016).

68. Jenson, *Tales from the World Tour,* 142. Following his first mission to Samoa (1893–96), Sears married Agnes McMurrin, Sarah Hilton's sister. "Agnes M. Sears," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/agnes-m-sears-1873 (accessed June 27, 2016). He later served as president of the Samoan Mission (1899–1902 and 1934–36), with his wife. For Sister Sears's Samoan Mission years, see Agnes McMurrin, "History of the Life of Agnes M. Sears," 3–6, MS 28387, Church History Library.

the Fagali'i cemetery, the historian remarked, "I continued my labors of yesterday and also visited the private graveyard, located on a hill about three hundred yards southeast of the mission house, where the earthly remains of Elder Ransom M. Stevens, Sister Ella A. Moody, and three children of Elder Thomas H. Hilton and wife are deposited." Jenson then made a sobering observation on the cost of missionary work in the South Pacific: "Compared to time and number, the Samoan Mission history records more deaths among our missionaries than any other mission we have so far established as a church—one elder, two missionary sisters, and three children in seven years out of eighty missionaries who, since 1888, have been sent from Zion to labor in Samoa and Tonga."[69]

Death became an expected risk of missionary service in Samoa, but its commonness failed to alleviate the mourning process made worse by the vast distance between Utah and the Fagali'i cemetery. As cultural geographers have noted, "Mourning is an inherently spatial as well as temporal phenomenon, experienced in and expressed in/through corporeal and psychological spaces, virtual communities and physical sites of memorialisation."[70] The prospect of departing from the site of the final encounter with deceased loved ones disrupted the traditional mourning process for missionaries who, upon leaving the South Pacific, were unable to make repeated visits back to gravesites. Prior to Elder Moody's first departure from Samoa in May 1898, he returned to the Fagali'i cemetery to tend to the cemetery's grounds and bid farewell to his wife's grave for what he thought would be the final time. The re-separation from his wife's final earthly resting place stirred Moody to write a poetic remembrance that highlights the tension between earthly homeland and the sacred memorial space created abroad:

> Cold in the earth while green trees grow above thee,
> Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave;
> Have I forgot, my love, to love thee?
> Severed at last by time's all severing wave.

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69. Jenson, *Tales from the World Tour,* 142.

70. A. Maddrell, "Memory, Mourning and Landscape in the Scottish Mountains: Discourses of Wilderness, Gender and Entitlement in Online and Media Debates on Mountainside Memorials," in *Memory, Mourning, and Landscape,* ed. E. Anderson and others (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 123, quoted in Avril Maddrell and James D. Sidaway, *Deathscapes: Spaces for Death, Dying, Mourning, and Remembrance* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 1.

Cold in the earth, darling, I must leave thee,
From those green hills I wend my way alone,
Return to my native land without thee,
Where we had planned and thought to build a home.[71]

As quickly as missionaries found personal meaning and significance in the memorials erected at Fagali'i, they were forced to leave them behind.

At this juncture, grieving missionaries found ritual alternatives for mending their disrupted realities. In early 1908, Church leaders called William Moody (now 37) to return to and preside over the Samoan Mission.[72] He was set apart as mission president by Apostle Francis M. Lyman on February 21, 1908, and served faithfully in Samoa until August 25, 1910. On Moody's return steamer across the Pacific Ocean from Samoa, he wrote a thoughtful letter to the editors of the *Improvement Era,* which they reprinted for their readers in December 1910:

> As one enters upon the highway of life, with the eye of faith he looks into the future. He sees his goal as a distant light might be seen through night's darkness, but what lies between him and his goal he sees not, and strive as he may he cannot clearly depict what the future holds for him. . . . He observes that the members of his community are gradually being harvested by that
>
>   Grim reaper called Death,
> Who, with his sickle keen,
> Mows down the ripened grain,
> And the flowers that grow between. Yet it seldom occurs to him that he might be harvested next, and so it transpires that whether his life be composed of trial, hardship and struggle, or whether he has easy access to that which his ambition leads him to achieve, there is wisdom in his not knowing what the future holds for him, thus causing him to live and work and develop by faith.[73]

Grieving missionaries cultivated an informal theology surrounding the death experience that mixed Latter-day Saint belief with personal expressions of faith. Moody's description highlighted the

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71. Moody, *Years in the Sheaf,* 99.

72. Following his earlier return to Arizona as a widower, Elder Moody eventually remarried, this time to Sarah E. Blake on May 17, 1899. His subsequent occupations included banker, merchant, probate judge, and county school superintendent. Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia,* 2:195.

73. William A. Moody, "At Rest on the Hill Overlooking the Sea," *Improvement Era* 14 (December 1910): 113–14.

often-calamitous circumstances surrounding life in Samoa, where death was both unpredictable and extremely common. Yet, for Moody and many others who served in Samoa, the indiscriminate way in which death was handed out demanded simple faith and an unconditional devotion to duty as the only meaningful avenue for service abroad. Indeed, the lessons culled from the early decades of the Samoan Mission included a somber reality—hardships and death were central to the missionary experience, not just a byproduct of it. By Elder Moody's account, only as death stalked the immediate horizon could missionaries overcome their "physical self as to make it subject . . . pure and undefiled . . . to the will of God."[74] Joseph Merrill's carefully erected memorial to his wife functioned as a reminder to him to be "faithfull" despite "the toils of this life." "If I am only pure and faithfull untill the end of my days," Elder Merrill resolved, "[will I then live with her] through all eternity just as happy" as they were when they reached the shores of Samoa.[75]

Many deferred to God as the orchestrator of events in their lives and surrendered to his will. "We can not judge the workings of the Lord for he moves in a mysterious way," Elder Merrill concluded. While one served a divinely sanctioned mission to preach the gospel, it made more sense to transfer complete control of life and death over to God. According to Elder Merrill, "God took" his wife "because she was perfect."[76] In the face of a disordered and unpredictable reality, missionaries like the Merrills and the Hiltons elected to place their circumstances "in the hands of the Lord until the resurrection."[77] God in his perfect wisdom was able to sort out the eternal destiny of families fractured by tragedies while serving abroad.

Missionaries generally embraced rather than turned away from teachings on the plan of salvation when confronted with tragedy. In 1898, Clare W. Reid and Ethel Lowry Reid were expecting a child in the first year of their mission service in Samoa. The birth of their boy, Stuart,[78] took much of Ethel's strength, and Elder Reid, in a last effort to save her life, sent her home to Utah. Ethel, however, passed away upon reaching Provo, and the news of this tragedy did not reach Elder Reid until the next month. "There was only one thing to do" upon hearing of

74. Moody, "At Rest on the Hill Overlooking the Sea," 115.
75. Merrill, Journal, June 29, 1891.
76. Merrill, Journal, June 29, 1891.
77. Hilton, Autobiography, 3.
78. Stuart (Stewart) Reid survived to return to Utah, where he died in 1916.

his wife's death, Elder Reid reported to his family and friends, and "that was to seek assurance from above that 'all was well.'" The grieving missionary, unable to bid a final farewell to his wife at her graveside, erected a makeshift memorial of pictures that would remind him of his "last farewell" to her. The photographs of Ethel's grave hung over his table where he could see them daily and served as a reminder that his wife was "in Paradise as plainly as" his family was "in Utah."[79] Even with the great distance between Samoa and his wife's grave in Utah, Elder Reid mourned her loss in ways similar to fellow missionaries who buried a family member within the confines of the Fagali'i cemetery.

Still, despite healing the grieving process with ritual, doctrine, and faith, the largely youthful missionaries struggled to process the earthly severance of still-developing relationships. Elder Moody admittedly "knew little about the justice and balance of God's eternal laws" at the time of his wife's death. The tutorial came quickly, and "with hopes shattered, plans frustrated," his "outlook appeared to be dark." Moving forward with his mission seemed like "a disloyalty to my wife," and for at least a year he "nursed a grievance against God for His dealings with me."[80] Not until he had a "vision" that "made all things pertaining to my wife's death clear to me" did Elder Moody feel right with God and able to continue faithfully serving out the remainder of his mission.[81] God had appointed his wife to die at that particular time, and when God was ready to "call [her] home . . . from the islands," there was nothing he could do about it.[82]

Elder Moody's return to Samoa in 1908 included a trip back to the Samoan cemetery where his wife's mortal remains were put to rest. "Just back of the little village of Fagalii, on the brow of the hill overlooking the sea, about seventy-five yards inland from the beach, just where the cocoanut-covered slope suddenly forms a declivity to the low, narrow strip of land which borders the sea, is the mission cemetery." Yet, upon reaching the familiar hill behind the mission home, he found the once carefully curated grounds in disrepair. The missionaries in Samoa responded with a revitalization effort that would make the cemetery a more permanent fixture on the landscape in Fagali'i. Elder Moody recorded, "The original picket fence, being decayed, has recently been

79. Quoted in Yeaman, "Women from Zion in the Samoan Mission," 70–71.
80. Moody, *Years in the Sheaf,* 61.
81. Moody, *Years in the Sheaf,* 87.
82. Moody, *Years in the Sheaf,* 87.

replaced by a concrete wall; and modest, white marble plates, set in suitable cement blocks, mark the resting place of the mortal remains" of the missionaries and their children who died in the service of their Savior. "In making these improvements on the cemetery," Elder Moody explained further, "it became necessary to cut down most of the beautiful trees and shrubbery which heretofore surrounded the graves, and were ever in bloom; but new shrubbery has been planted, and a new growth of beautiful foliage will soon spring up to adorn and again beautify that holy sanctuary."[83]

The beautification efforts of missionaries in Samoa, to be sure, paralleled trends domestically to clean, care for, and preserve the atmosphere of municipal cemeteries so as to enable visitors to escape into nature to remember the departed. Elder Moody's efforts to make the cemetery "as perfect as possible," however, were overlaid with religious performance. The transformation of the Fagali'i cemetery monuments from wooden plaques to headstones carved in marble ensured that the monuments to loss and heartbreak in Samoa would survive the century and provide a "holy sanctuary" for visitors long after Elder Moody departed the islands. For Elder Moody and others in Fagali'i, visiting the cemetery was a ritual act, a "simple pilgrimage" to a "sacred spot."[84] Thus, since its inception the Fagali'i cemetery moved from personal burial site for Katie Merrill and her child to mission cemetery, with the deaths of the Hilton children, to holy site. Inscribed in these built memorials for a later generation of visitors was the lived religion of those who preached, served, and sacrificed their lives in Samoa.

A Tribute from Elder David O. McKay

In May 1921, Elder David O. McKay,[85] Hugh J. Cannon,[86] and Samoan Mission President John Quincy Adams[87] and his wife, Sister Thurza

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83. Moody, "At Rest on the Hill Overlooking the Sea," 116–17, which contains photos of the renovated cemetery in 1910.

84. Moody, *Years in the Sheaf,* 171.

85. David O. McKay (1873–1970) was called to the apostleship in 1906 and subsequently oversaw the Church's entire educational enterprise. McKay was serving as Church commissioner of education in 1920.

86. Hugh Jenne Cannon (1870–1931) presided over the Liberty Stake, the largest stake in the Salt Lake Valley. Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia,* 4:233, 507.

87. "John Quincy Adams," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds .org/missionary/individual/john-quincy-adams-1882 (accessed April 3, 2016).

Adams,[88] sat as passengers in an automobile destined for the Fagali'i cemetery outside of Apia, Samoa. McKay and Cannon were on official First Presidency business in the South Pacific, an unprecedented trip that included stops at Church outposts scattered across the Pacific basin frontier.[89] Prior to 1920, Apostles had visited only the Hawaiian and Japanese missions, despite a Mormon presence throughout the Pacific region since the 1840s.[90] The First Presidency had charged McKay to visit the Church's non–North American missions and congregations "to study their spiritual and, as far as possible, temporal needs, and to ascertain the effect of 'Mormonism' upon their lives."[91]

McKay's official business carried him to the islands of Japan, Hawaii, French Polynesia, New Zealand, and Fiji before he arrived with Cannon at the Apia, Samoa, harbor on May 10, 1921 (fig. 3).[92] Having an Apostle on Pacific island soil was a rarity, and meeting with members left McKay little time for sightseeing or personal business.[93] Yet on the evening of March 18, McKay took time to retrace the path of the grieving Hiltons, who had laid to rest their three children in the Fagali'i cemetery. By 1920, when McKay was preparing to embark on his tour of the Pacific, the now-widowed Sarah Hilton was living with her surviving children in the Fourth Ward in Ogden, Utah, and was concerned about the condition of her children's gravesites in Samoa. When she learned that McKay would be passing through the South Pacific in the months to come, she

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88. "Thurza A Tingey Adams," on *Early Mormon Missionaries,* https://history.lds.org/missionary/individual/thurza-a-tingey-adams-1888 (accessed April 3, 2016).

89. For a narrative account of their visit to Samoa, see Hugh J. Cannon, *To the Peripheries of Mormondom: The Apostolic Around-the-World Journey of David O. McKay, 1920–1921,* ed. Reid L. Neilson (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011), chapters 14–16.

90. For a historical and bibliographical survey of early Mormonism in the Pacific basin frontier, see Reid L. Neilson and Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp, "Nineteenth-Century Mormonism and the Pacific Basin Frontier: An Introduction," in *Proclamation to the People: Nineteenth-Century Mormonism and the Pacific Basin Frontier,* ed. Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp and Reid L. Neilson (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2008), 3–20.

91. Hugh J. Cannon, "Around-the-World Travels of David O. McKay and Hugh J. Cannon," 1, ca. 1925, MS 7351, Church History Library.

92. Hugh J. Cannon, Journal, May 10, 1921, Hugh J. Cannon Papers, MS 28333, Church History Library.

93. Cannon, Journal, May 18, 1921.

FIGURE 3. *Left to right:* Mission President John Q. Adams, David O. McKay, and Hugh J. Cannon in traditional Samoan costumes, May 1921. Courtesy Church History Department, © Intellectual Reserve Inc.

begged him to personally check up on her children's final resting places. The Apostle promised he would do so.

McKay wrote a heartfelt letter to Sarah two weeks after his visit to the cemetery, which Sister Hilton received in Ogden on June 23 (fig. 4). He wrote:

> June 3, 1921
> Mrs. Sarah M. Hilton,
> Ogden, Utah.
>
> Dear Sister Hilton:
> Just as the descending rays of the late afternoon sun touched the tops of the tall coconut tress [*sic*], Wednesday, May 18th, 1921, a party of five stood with bowed heads in front of the little Fagalii cemetery, in the midst of the old "German" plantation, a few miles out from Apia. Mr. O. F. Nelson, who remembers you and your husband with esteem, had driven us to the place in his spacious automobile.[94] The others in the party were Pres. Hugh J. Cannon, Pres. J. Q. Adams, Sister Thurza Adams, and I. We were there, as you will remember, in response to a promise I made you before I left home.
> The graves and head stones are in a good state of preservation. That you may <feel> assured that the lettering is unimpaired, I reproduce herewith a copy I made as I stood two feet or more outside the stone wall surrounding the spot:

> "Janette Hilton   "George Emmett Hilton   "Thomas Harold Hilton
>   S. L. C., Utah.   Born Oct. 12, 1894   Born Sept. 21, 1892
> Born Sept. 10, 1891.   Died Oct. 19, 1894   Died Mar. 17, 1894
> Died June 4, 1892. 'Peaceful Be Thy Slumbers'" 'Rest on the Hillside Rest.'"
>   Rest
>   Darling Jennie"

> As I looked at those three little graves, I tried to imagine the scenes through which you passed during your young motherhood here in old Samoa. As I did so, the little head stones became monuments not only to the little babes sleeping beneath them, but also to a mother's faith and devotion to the eternal principles of Truth and Life! Your three

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94. For more on Olaf Frederick Nelson (1883–1944), see Hugh Laracy, "Nelson, Olaf Frederick," from *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography,* available online at *Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand,* http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4n5/nelson-olaf-frederick (accessed April 3, 2016). Nelson transported the party in a "Hupmobile," a model produced by the Hupp Motor Car Company—an early competitor of auto giants Ford and Chevrolet—which was headquartered in Detroit, Michigan. Cannon, Journal, May 18, 1921.

SAMOAN MISSION

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF
LATTER-DAY SAINTS

BOX 29

APIA, SAMOA   June 3, 1921.

Mrs. Sarah M. Hilton,
Ogden, Utah.

Dear Sister Hilton:

Just as the descending rays of the late afternoon Sun touched the tops of the tall coco nut tress, Wednesday May 18th, 1921, a party of five stood with bowed heads in front of the little Fagalii Cemetery, in the midst of the old "German" plantation, a few miles out from Apia. Mr. O. F. Nelson, who remembers you and your husband with esteem had driven us to the place in his spacious automobile. The others in the party were Pres. Hugh J. Cannon, Pres. J. Q. Adams, Sister Thurza Adams, and I. We were there, as you will remember, in response to a promise I made you before I left home.

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S. L. C., Utah.   Born Oct. 12, 1894.   Born Sept. 21, 1892
Born Sept. 10, 1891.   Died Oct. 19, 1894.   Died Mar. 17, 1894
Died June 4, 1892.   "Peaceful Be Thy Slumbers"   "Rest on the Hillside Rest,"
Rest
Darling Jennie"

As I looked at those three little graves, I tried to imagine the scenes through which you passed during your young motherhood here in old Samoa. As I did so, the little head stones became monuments not only to the little babes sleeping beneath them, but also to a mother's faith and devotion to the eternal principles of Truth and Life! Your three little ones, Sister Hilton, in silence most eloquent and effective, have continued to carry on your noble missionary work begun nearly thirty years ago, and they will do continue as long as their are gentle hands to care for their last earthly resting place. "By loving hands their dying eyes were closed
By loving hands their little limbs composed,
By foreign hands their humble graves adorned,
By strangers honor'd, and by strangers mourned."

Samoa has blessed herself as well as honored us in the most wonderful reception, she has given two of the Lord's servants. Officials, chiefs, non members and members have all joined in the memorable welcome.

Tofa Soi fua!

Kindest personal regards,
Sincerely yours,
David O. McKay

Little Ones, Sister Hilton, in silence most eloquent and effective, have continued to carry on your noble missionary work ~~of~~ begun nearly thirty years ago, and they will so continue as long as their [*sic*] are gentle hands to care for their last earthly resting place.

"By loving hands their dying eyes were closéd,
By loving hands their little limbs composéd,
By foreign hands their humble graves adorned,
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Tofa soi fua!
Kindest personal regards,
Sincerely yours, David O. McKay[95]

In that visit, McKay acted on the First Presidency's charge to study the imprint of Mormonism on the island of Samoa.[96] The visiting Apostle was tutored not just by his interactions with missionaries and the Samoan Saints, but by the weatherworn monuments that seemingly grew out of and alongside the vast tropical foliage—rock monuments of the sacrifice of the Hiltons and others like them who buried loved ones while serving the Church abroad.

Conclusion:
The Fagali'i Cemetery as "Monuments . . . to a Mother's Faith"

The process of shaping Latter-day Saint collective memory of the early Samoan Mission experience occurred throughout the twentieth century, especially as Latter-day Saints made pilgrimages to the Fagali'i cemetery. One pilgrim, David O. McKay, recognized the tragic events that preceded the burial of Sarah and Thomas's three children in the cemetery. The entire scene moved McKay to imagine a young Sarah in her early twenties serving faithfully in a foreign land while bearing fully the challenges of child-rearing and childbirth. The monuments memorialized for McKay and the other visitors how early missionaries in Samoa internalized and lived out their religion. As if the memorials could preach a

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95. David O. McKay to Sarah M. Hilton, June 3, 1921, MS 13098, Church History Library. McKay's original letter was gifted to the Church by Lucile LeBeau and Marney Zambrano of South Jordan, Utah, in 1991.

96. McKay to Hilton, June 3, 1921.

sermon in "silence most eloquent and effective," the Fagali'i cemetery carried moral lessons to modern visitors who walked the sacred site.

Subsequent journeys to the mission burial ground at Fagali'i transmitted and shaped the collective memories of the Samoan Mission experience for the next generation of missionaries and Saints.[97] The hardships, death, and mourning endured by early missionaries in Samoa were thoughtfully and now permanently inscribed in the landscape at Fagali'i. Beyond creating a holy place, the inscriptions bore witness of religion in practice far from the comforts of the Salt Lake Valley.

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97. Elder Loren C. Dunn reflected on the significance of the Fagali'i cemetery in general conference in 1975: "A price has been paid for the establishment of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the land of Samoa. It is interesting to note that much of that price was paid by little children. I suspect that there are many obscure cemeteries in many of the nations of the world similar to that little plot in Samoa. They are a mute witness to the trials and suffering that went into the beginnings of missionary work in this dispensation." Loren C. Dunn, "Faithful Laborers," *Ensign* 5 (May 1975): 26.

Goddess looking up, sowing mercy

Goddess looking up, sowing mercy
in the shadow she broadcasts like seed,
left hand sifting the infinite satchel she wears
at her hip, fingers praying each grain
as she yields them to soil. On the valley's
blank page, they punctuate
the language of wind, shape its words
into clauses the trees can understand.

As she sows, first light parts the mist, whispers
her name. Right hand to cheek, she translates
the matins' caress into the psaltery
of her skin. Her body sings azure the tone
of a mourning dove's elegy across the cosmos
she upholds with her dreams.

(After J. Kirk Richards)

—Tyler Chadwick

The Lord Is One

Margaret Barker

This is a lightly edited transcript of a lecture delivered by Old Testament scholar Margaret Barker at Brigham Young University on November 9, 2016. Following the lecture, responses were given by Andrew C. Skinner, David J. Larsen, and Daniel C. Peterson. Edited transcripts of the responses follow in this issue of BYU Studies Quarterly.

"I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one" (John 17:23).[1]

Thus Jesus prayed after the Last Supper. John set these words as the culmination of Jesus's teaching, and they are about participation in the divine. The chapter is often called "the high priestly prayer," and Hebrews shows that Jesus was proclaimed as a great high priest (Heb. 4:14). There are several elements in the prayer that suggest a temple setting for Jesus's imagery here, for example: "Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made" (John 17:5).

The divine presence was located in the holy of holies. This was the innermost part of the tabernacle (Ex. 40:18–21) or of the temple, which was modelled on the tabernacle (1 Kgs. 6:20–21). In the temple, the holy of holies was a golden cube which housed the chariot-throne of the Lord and its flanking cherubim (1 Chr. 28:18), but in the smaller

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1. All Bible quotations from the UK Revised Standard Version, second edition, 1971, unless otherwise noted.

tabernacle, the throne was represented by the mercy seat with its cherubim. This is where Isaiah saw the Lord and heard his voice (Isa. 6:1–5), and this is where the Lord spoke to Moses and appeared to Aaron (Ex. 25:17–22; Lev. 16:2). The holy of holies was hidden behind the great curtain, the veil of the temple that separated the holy place from the most holy place (Ex. 26:31–34). The veil, woven from four colours that represented the four elements, represented matter (see, for example, Josephus *Jewish War* 5.212–213; Philo *Questions on Exodus* 2.85). In other words, the divine presence was hidden beyond matter. In Hebrew, "hidden" is written in the same way as "eternal."[2]

The distinction between the holy place and the most holy place (also translated "holy of holies": both translate the same Hebrew words) is central to understanding the biblical view of participation in the divine. "Holy" meant that a person, place, or object had received holiness but could not pass it on; whereas "most holy" meant that a person, place, or object was actively holy and could impart holiness. The most holy place therefore imparted holiness to any person or object that had been beyond the veil (Ex. 30:29). The rituals of the holy of holies affirmed or imparted holiness, and the Most Holy One imparted holiness to others who became holy ones, or, in the more familiar Christian term, saints. The temple priests were angel messengers[3] of the Lord of hosts, entrusted with knowledge from the holy of holies (Mal. 2:7). They remained part of the undivided holiness of the divine presence whether they were within the most holy place or without. The Most Holy One was no longer in the temple in the second century BCE; Gabriel told Daniel that the Most Holy One would return at the appointed time (Dan. 9:24). We assume the Most Holy One was absent in that time.

Objects as well as people could be most holy and so impart holiness. The shewbread, literally "the bread of the presence," was most holy. The prescriptions for making and eating this bread are no longer clear, but it was set out before the Lord each Sabbath. When the fresh bread was set in place, the bread that had been before the Lord for seven days was eaten in the temple by the high priests; it was most holy. In other words, the bread imparted holiness to the high priests (Lev. 24:5–9). Malachi, complaining that the angel priests of his time had betrayed their sacred role, said they had given false teaching and offered impure

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2. Pronounced ʿālûm, it means hidden; pronounced ʿôlām, it means eternal.
3. The Hebrew word for *angel* also means *messenger*.

bread (Mal. 1:6–7; 2:7–9).[4] He prophesied a time when the pure offering would be restored, and the Christians claimed that this was fulfilled in the bread of the Eucharist, which had the same role as the ancient shewbread. Those who ate the most holy bread participated in the divine (Mal. 1:11; *Didache* 14; Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 41; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses* 22:5).

The perfumed temple oil imparted "most holiness." It was the sacrament of *theosis,* which means becoming divine, and so an anointed one, a Messiah, imparted holiness.

> You shall make of these [spices] a sacred anointing oil blended by a perfumer; a holy anointing oil it shall be. And you shall anoint with it the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense and the altar of burnt offering with its utensils, and the laver and its base you shall consecrate them that they may be most holy; whatever touches them will become holy. And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. (Ex. 30:25–30)

The holy anointing oil was used only in the temple. Any imitation for personal use was forbidden (Ex. 30:31–33). The meaning of the oil was found only within the teachings of the temple, and any secular use would make no sense. This was because the oil imparted knowledge. The temple understanding of holiness included illumination of the mind. Isaiah said that when the king was anointed, he received the spirit of the Lord, that is, the spirit that transformed him into the Lord. He received the spirit (that is, the angel) of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of might, of knowledge, and of the reverence due to the Lord ("the fear of the Lord"). His perfume (not "delight") would be the reverence due to the Lord (Isa. 11:2–3). In other words, the anointed one retained the perfume of the oil, and this identified him as the Lord. Paul said that Christians were spreading the perfume of the knowledge of the Anointed One, which did not mean knowing about Jesus; it meant having the knowledge that Jesus had because he was the Anointed One (2 Cor. 2:14).

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Since the whole temple represented the creation, the divine presence beyond the veil represented the state beyond time and matter from

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4. Malachi 1:7, often translated "polluted food," is literally "polluted bread."

which the visible world was formed. In temple discourse, this was Day One.[5] The golden holy of holies represented the precreated light of the glory, in which there was no time, no division, and no change. It was the state before the material world was created and separated into distinct kinds, as described in Genesis 1. The Hebrew storytellers did not speculate about the One and the Many; instead they told the story of Day One[6] using a cardinal number without any implied sequence, and then they spoke of the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth days, ordinal numbers, which implied sequence and thus time. The key words in Genesis 1 are "separated" (Gen. 1:4, 6, 7, 14, 18) and "according to its kind" (Gen. 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25).

During the early years of Christianity, there was a debate among the Jewish rabbis about the meaning of "Day One." There were many suggestions; one was that it meant the Day when the Holy One was One in his creation, or perhaps One with his creation.[7] The debate was linked to the origin of the angels, who were also divine beings and so participated in the divine state. The rabbis could not agree when the angels originated: on the second day, or on the fifth day? All the rabbis agreed, however, that there were no angels on/in Day One.[8] The issue was plurality within the divine, participation in the divine; and the response was emphatic: the angels did not originate on/in Day One.

Christianity emphasised the lore of the holy of holies and the angels. They called it the Kingdom because it was the place of the throne and they were the new holy ones, the saints (see, for example, Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1). This prompted a great sensitivity among Jewish teachers about the term "sons of God" in the Hebrew scriptures,[9] and about the angels in Day One and their being part of the divine. The matter was complicated by the fact that the Hebrew word "God" is a plural form, *ʾelohim,* that can also mean gods or divine beings. Psalm 82 begins:

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5. See L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews,* 4 vols. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909), 1:51.

6. This distinction is observed in the Hebrew and Greek texts of Genesis.

7. Genesis Rabbah 3.8.

8. Genesis Rabbah 1.3; 3.8.

9. See, for example, P. Alexander, "The Targumim and Early Exegesis of 'Sons of God' in Genesis 6," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 23 (1972): 60–71.

Elohim has taken his place in the council of El
In the midst of *elohim* he gives judgement. . . .
You are all *elohim* and sons of Elyon [the Most High]. (Ps. 82:1, 6)

Here, the first *elohim* has a singular verb, but this *elohim* is in the midst of *elohim,* who must, somehow, be plural. Further, the plural *elohim* were sons of the Most High God, *el elyon.* The psalmist must have known about other divine beings in the heavenly council, and so, we assume, around the heavenly throne that was in the holy of holies. The older belief was that there were angels on/in Day One.

In Genesis 1, there are only echoes of the older belief. God, *elohim,* is the Creator, but the verbs are sometimes singular and sometimes plural in form: "God said [singular], 'Let there be light'" (Gen. 1:3); but also "God said, 'Let *us* make a human being, *adam,* in/as our image'" (Gen. 1:26). The story continues: "God created the *adam* in/as his own image, in/as an image of God he created him, male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27). Here, in these few lines, we see the problem that faces any investigation into what the Hebrew scriptures record about participation in the divine. Was God, *elohim,* a plural of majesty used to indicate a singular reality, or was there a memory of plurality within the divine such that a male and a female were necessary to be the image? And who was *el elyon,* God Most High, the father of these divine *elohim*? Gabriel told Mary that her son would be called a son of the Most High (Luke 1:32), so presumably the first Christians thought of Jesus as one of these *elohim.* And how could *adam* be the image of *elohim,* or function as the image of *elohim*?

In temple discourse, Adam, the image of *elohim,* was the original high priest. Just as the temple building represented the creation, so the high priest represented the Creator. He was the image of *elohim* in his temple. The human who was anointed as high priest became the presence/image of the Creator on earth, and anointing, as we shall see, was important for glimpsing how the temple ritualised participation in the divine. The high priest wore the sacred name *Yahweh* on his forehead (Ex. 28:36).[10] In the anointing ritual, he was marked on his forehead with an X, the ancient symbol for the Name. *Participation in the divine also implied incarnation, and so a high priest was regarded as a son of God in human form.* The Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy when he claimed to

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10. Exodus 28:36 is better translated "a plate of pure gold, and you shall engrave it like the engraving of a holy seal belonging to the Lord."

be a son of God, but Jesus reminded them of the sons of God in Psalm 82, and of the one who was consecrated (literally "made a holy one") and sent out into the world, namely the high priest (John 10:33–36).

In the time of Jesus, Adam was known as a son of God (Luke 3:38), and Paul showed that all Christians were sons of God (Rom. 8:14). All Christians were also anointed—the name means anointed ones—and so they were heirs to the high priestly role: "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9). The issue of plurality within the divine, participation in the divine, and incarnation of the divine underlie all early Christian discourse, and this is why the matter of the angels on/in Day One was sensitive among Jewish teachers at the end of the Second Temple period and into the early years of the Church. The rabbis' position was clear: the angels did not originate on/in Day One.

Other pre-Christian texts, however, said there were angels on/in Day One. The *Book of Jubilees,* a Hebrew text used at Qumran, says that "the spirits which serve before him" were created at the very beginning (Jub. 2:2). So too, Psalm 104, which describes the creation while praising the Creator. It follows the Genesis pattern from the second day onward: dry land and waters, then plants, the lights of heaven, sea creatures and Leviathan, but the psalmist knew that the angels and spirits existed before the earth and sea were set in place. This implies that they existed on/in Day One. The Lord was clothed in light, his chariot throne was the clouds, and his angels/messengers were spirits/winds (the same word in Hebrew) (Ps. 104:1–4). All these existed before the earth was set on its foundations. In temple discourse, this meant the angels were in the holy of holies, around the chariot-throne of the cherubim, and this is where Isaiah and Daniel saw them (Isa. 6:1–8; Dan. 7:9–10). The Lord asked Job if he had witnessed the creation, when the angels sang as the foundations of the earth were set in place (Job 38:4–7). So too in the song of the three young men in the furnace,[11] which became for them the fiery holy of holies. The angel of the Lord came down into the furnace/holy of holies, and the three began a great song of praise to the Creator on his cherub throne. All the works of the Lord were exhorted to praise him, and the order was that of Genesis 1, except that in this song the first half (17 verses) calls on all the powers of heaven in the holy of holies, and only in the second half (17 verses) does it call on the visible creation—earth, plants, waters, sea creatures, birds, animals, and human beings—to praise the Lord.

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11. This is better known as the Benedicite, which is not in the Hebrew Bible but is found in the Greek after Daniel 3:23.

The angels and powers on/in Day One, which are listed in texts outside the Hebrew canon—in Jubilees 2 and in the song of the three young men—are not mentioned in Genesis 1:1–5 as a work of Day One, even though their existence is implied in several canonical tests: Psalm 104, Job 38, and the prophets' visions. In other words, the ancient canonical accounts of the creation included the angels, but the account in Genesis did not. This is because there was a cultural revolution in the seventh century BCE, and the scribes who later shaped the transmission and formation of the Hebrew Bible tried to suppress all knowledge of heavenly matters, such as angels, becoming divine, and union with the divine. Teachings about the holy of holies—matters "within the veil" (Num. 18:7)—were entrusted only to the high priests, and the revolutionaries said that what mattered was keeping the Law of Moses: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29).

Thus, ancient lore about becoming divine and the incarnation of the divine now lies *beneath the surface text of the Hebrew scriptures and in the writings that were not accepted into the Hebrew canon.* The manifesto of the revolutionaries was Deuteronomy, and their influence was both widespread and long-lasting. They removed key concepts from the older texts: one of them was "the hosts," the heavenly powers, and another was the belief that the Lord could be seen in human form.

An ancient title for the Lord was "Lord of hosts," but in the books the Deuteronomists compiled or edited, the hosts disappeared. King Hezekiah's prayer is a good example of this: Isaiah's version begins "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim" (Isa. 37:16), but the Deuteronomists' version begins "O Lord, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim" (2 Kgs. 19:15). The angel hosts have disappeared from the text. A similar process accounts for the beginning of Genesis, although an echo of the angels is found in Genesis 2:1: "The heavens and the earth were finished and *all their host*."[12] The account in Genesis 1 has not mentioned the hosts, but they appear in the conclusion. The Lord as ruler of the hosts lost its context and meaning. The Christians, however, when they claimed that Jesus was the Lord, also claimed that he was Lord of the angel hosts. This can be seen from the proof texts at the

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12. The Greek has "and all their order/ornament," possibly because the translator read the Hebrew word host, ṣb' as the very similar "beauty," ṣby.

beginning of Hebrews (Heb. 1:5–14). He was superior to the angels, and when he came into the world, the angels had to worship him.

The Deuteronomists also denied the ancient belief that the Lord was seen in human form, what the Christians would later call incarnation. Isaiah saw the Lord enthroned as the King, the Lord of hosts (Isa. 6:5), and John said this had been a vision of the One who was incarnate as Jesus (John 12:41). Ezekiel saw "the likeness of a human form" enthroned in radiant glory (Ezek. 1:26–28). Daniel saw a man clothed in linen and girded with a golden sash, which was the dress of a high priest (Dan. 10:5; compare Rev. 1:13). When Hippolytus wrote his commentary on Daniel, about 200 CE, he said that the man in linen was the Lord "not yet indeed as perfect man, but with appearance and form of man."[13] The Deuteronomists, however, said that no divine form was seen, even when Moses received the Ten Commandments: "The Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice" (Deut. 4:12). The older account of Sinai was very different: "They saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness" (Ex. 24:10). The people who transmitted the texts that became the Hebrew scriptures tried to suppress the older belief that the Lord appeared in human form, despite the testimony of Isaiah and Ezekiel, and yet Christian commentators such as John and Hippolytus knew the significance of the visions of a human form.

Jesus's high priestly prayer in John 17 had this temple setting. He and his disciples knew of the glory of the holy of holies and what it represented, they knew of the conflicting beliefs about the angels in the holy of holies, and they knew that the Lord had appeared in human form as the king. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . . we have beheld his glory" (John 1:14). Jesus's prayer assumed the older beliefs: he and his Father were One, he and his disciples would be One, and those whom the disciples brought into the community would also become One (John 17:20). Jesus had almost completed his time as the human presence of the Lord: "I have glorified thee on earth"; "I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world" (John 17:4, 6), and he was preparing to return to the state whence he had come: Day One. "The Father and I are one [thing]" (John 10:30).

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13. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writing of the Fathers down to A.D. 325,* vol. 5 (Buffalo, N.Y.: Christian Literature, 1886), 182.

The divine unity was not broken while the Lord was incarnate. He would return to the holy of holies, as did the high priest, with the self-sacrifice of the Day of Atonement. The One who emptied himself while in the form of the Servant (Philip. 2:7) refers to the high priestly ritual of self-emptying on the Day of Atonement, when "the Servant of the Lord" poured out the blood that represented his own life—the life of the Lord—to cleanse and consecrate the temple/creation (Lev. 16:19; Isa. 53:10). Hebrews explained that the death of Christ was the final act of atonement, in which there was no substitution of a goat to represent the Lord/high priest (Heb. 9:11–14). Hebrews begins: "When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the Name he has obtained is more excellent than theirs" (Heb. 1:3b–4). The Anointed One who emptied himself in atonement did not lose anything of his divinity at his incarnation. This was the high priest who was the Lord of Hosts.

Jesus prayed that his disciples would see him in the glory of Day One to which he was returning after his atonement self-sacrifice: "Father, I desire that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). Jesus had shared the glory of Day One: he had come forth from Day One—"He was in the beginning with God" (John 1:2); the Father had consecrated him and sent him into the world (John 10:36); in other words, he had come forth as the high priest anointed in the holy of holies. As he prepared to die, he prayed that his disciples would also see him restored to glory in the holy of holies. The hymn in Philippians 2:5–11 celebrated the enthronement, when heaven and earth recognised the exalted Jesus as the Lord, the Anointed One.

It was this vision that John recorded at the end of Revelation. The title of the book shows that John was preserving and interpreting Jesus's own visions: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to show his servants what must soon take place" (Rev. 1:1). In John's stylised arrangement of the material, the great revelation opens with Jesus's vision of the Servant/Lamb[14] enthroned, receiving the sealed book that symbolised the heavenly knowledge, and being worshipped by all creation (Rev. 5:1–14). It culminates in the vision set in the holy of holies with the golden throne and the tree of life (Rev. 22:1–5). Both the

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14. Wordplay on the Aramaic word *ṭalya,* which means both lamb and young servant.

throne and the tree had been removed from the temple in the cultural revolution more than six hundred years previously,[15] but people had not forgotten the older ways. In fact, they cherished them and looked for the Messiah to restore them. Jesus prayed that his disciples would see him in that restored glory: "The throne of God-and-the-Lamb shall be in [the holy of holies/Day One], and *his* servants shall worship *him*; they shall see *his* face, and *his* name shall be on their foreheads. And night shall be no more, they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:3b–5, italics added).

The disciples, "his servants," would wear the Name on their foreheads; in other words, they would all be, or would collectively be, the high priest. When the high priest was anointed, he was marked on his forehead with the sign of the Name, X,[16] and here the servants all bear the X and see the glory of his face/presence, the same word in Hebrew. Bearing the Name in the divine presence meant that the servants had become divine, and even while they still lived on earth, they were part of the divine. It was not an exclusively postmortem state. John described how the transforming glory came to earth: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; and we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (John 1:14). This holy of holies state of unity underlies such familiar lines as "You are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Paul's emphasis was setting out the practical implications of participation in the divine state of the holy of holies: that after baptism, when the Christian was washed, anointed, and marked with the Name as a high priest, there was neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, because they were all one in Christ Jesus.

"God-and-the-Lamb," here "the throne of God-and-the-Lamb," was one of the ways that Hebrew storytellers and visionaries indicated the human participating in the divine. The divine and the human[17] were listed, always in that order, but followed by singular verbs and adjectives. Thus, in the Chronicler's account of Solomon's coronation, *but not in the Deuteronomists'*, "the people bowed their heads and worshipped

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15. In the Deuteronomists' account of the revolution, the tree of life was called the Asherah, and this was taken from the temple and burnt. The chariot throne was the chariot(s) of the sun which was also burned (2 Kgs. 23:6, 11).

16. Babylonian Talmud *Horayoth* 12a.

17. It was the convention in visionary texts to describe humans as animals and angels as men (for example, Matt. 25:32), the nations as sheep and goats, and (Rev. 21:17) the man/angel who measured the heavenly city.

the-Lord-and-the king" (1 Chr. 29:20). This is what the Hebrew actually says. *The Lord and the human king were One.* It is stated but not explained. Modern translations such as the RSV alter the Hebrew text to "They bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord, and did obeisance to the king," implying two distinct actions: one for the Lord and another for the king. By changing the text, such translations remove one of the most important pieces of evidence in the Hebrew scriptures for how the king became divine.[18] "To him-who-sits-upon-the-throne-and-to-the-Lamb" (Rev. 5:13) is another divine and human singular, as is the Greek text chosen for the AV of Revelation 6:16–17: "Hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of *his* wrath has come, and who can stand before it?"[19] The phrase "Lord-and-Christ" is similar: he was both the divine Lord and the transformed human anointed one. The ancient kings were known as "the Lord and his anointed" (Ps. 2:2). When the seventh angel blew his trumpet, the voices in heaven proclaimed, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15); and Peter preached, "God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36). The heavenly Lord and the earthly Messiah were One.

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In his high priestly prayer, Jesus was interpreting the Shema: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God one Lord" or "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One" (Deut. 6:4). This text is known only in Deuteronomy and understood as a proclamation of monotheism within Deuteronomy's characteristic scheme that allowed no angels and no human form of the Lord. But Deuteronomy, the manifesto of the revolutionaries, gave a new meaning to many of the older temple concepts, and it is possible that the Shema was also reinterpreted. In the world of the Deuteronomists, the Law of Moses replaced the older wisdom teachings (Deut. 4:5–6). Covenant was transformed from the older creation covenant based on loving-kindness[20] into the Moses/Sinai covenant, a very

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18. The Authorized Version is accurate, apart from the comma: "They bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord, and the king."

19. There are two versions of the Greek text here: one has "his" and the other has "their."

20. This was the eternal covenant or covenant of peace, based on *ḥesedh,* a word with no exact English equivalent. See my book *The Mother of the Lord* (London: T and T Clark, 2012), 206–30.

different idea, but the word itself was unchanged. The fundamental concept of righteousness, *ṣedheq/ṣedhāqâ,* almost disappeared, and where it did survive it had a new meaning. Their heirs changed the way texts were read; the ancient calendar texts, for example, that commanded all men to go to the temple to see the face of the Lord were read differently and became a commandment that all men should present themselves before the Lord. The expression "seeing the face of the Lord" disappeared, because this implied a human form.[21]

Crucial for our investigation is how they changed the meaning of *dābhaq,* a verb that originally meant "to join closely to," "to cleave." In Job, the tongues of distressed people "cleaved to the roof of their mouth" (Job 29:10). In Genesis, "a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). Here, "one" means the close union of two parts. The same word is used for "the Lord our *elohim* is one Lord," and so the Shema could imply the union of manifold *elohim* as the Lord. In Deuteronomy, however, *dābhaq* means "obey" (Deut. 10:20; 11:22), but one cannot imagine Adam being commanded to obey his wife. The meaning had changed. The Deuteronomists took the older idea of serving and cleaving to the Lord, and made it part of their emphasis on obeying the law: "You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him, and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and cleave to him" (Deut. 13:4). "Serving and cleaving" had once described the beings in the holy of holies, the servants who had entered the divine presence and become part of it, joined to the Lord.

The meaning of "cleave" was still an issue in the time of Jesus and focused on the meaning of Deuteronomy 4:4: "You who cleaved to the Lord your God are all alive this day." The reference was to an incident during the Israelites' time in the wilderness, when some of them bound themselves to another deity, Baal Peor, and Moses condemned them to death (Num. 25:1–4). Those who held fast (*dābhaq*) to the Lord remained alive. Describing the same incident, Hosea says the apostates *dedicated* themselves to Baal Peor (Hos. 9:10), so "cleaving" at that time meant an exclusive attachment. The rabbis debated the meaning of "cleaving to the Lord," and they did not agree. Some said it meant only attachment to the Lord, others that the bond was closer, that it meant

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21. See Frances Brown, Samuel R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 816, 908.

literally cleaving. Yet others—clearly the heirs of the Deuteronomists—said it meant doing good deeds.[22] This "cleaving" became a model for the relationship between Christ and the Church, based on Adam cleaving to his wife: "We are members of [Christ's] body. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to[23] his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:30–32). The claim to a bond of union between Christ and the Church may have been a factor in the rabbis' debate.

Since the Deuteronomists are known to have changed the meaning of several older concepts, it is possible that they changed an older meaning of the Shema. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One" could once have been an acclamation for the king, affirming his divine status as the Lord in human form. In the older temple, the royal high priest represented the Lord, but this was more than simply acting a part. In a way that is no longer clear, the king *was* the Lord. He and the Lord were One. One of his titles was Immanuel, God with us (Isa. 7:14; 8:8). Solomon was worshipped as the Lord when he sat on the throne of the Lord, and the psalmist had seen "my God, my king" going in procession into the temple (Ps. 68:24).

The earlier meaning would have included: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our angels, the Lord is One," with the plural form *'elohim,* "God" is, understood as "angels." Josephus, a Jewish historian writing towards the end of the first century CE, understood the Lord to be a group of angels. He came from an aristocratic priestly family, and so his unexpected views must be those of an educated Jew of his time. In his *Antiquities of the Jews,* he paraphrased the stories in the Hebrew scriptures, and in his retelling of the appearance of the Lord at Mamre, he said that three angels appeared to Abraham, but he does not mention the Lord (Ant. I.11.2). The original story in Genesis 18 has the Lord appearing to Abraham as three men (Gen. 18:2), but two of them are later described as the angels who went on to Sodom (Gen. 19:1). We assume that the theophany was the Lord and two angels, all in human form. This was the Hebrew text Josephus knew, and yet he did not mention

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22. For detail and discussion see M. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 38–39 and notes.

23. This is the same verb as in the Greek text of Genesis 2:24, although the rest of the quotation is a free translation from the Hebrew.

the Lord. Later Jewish versions of the story are similar: not the Lord but three angels appeared to Abraham at Mamre: Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael (Babylonian Talmud *Baba Metzia* 86b, Genesis Rabbah L.2). We assume that a Jew reading those texts knew that the Lord was a group of angels.

The plurality of the Lord is apparent in the Greek translation of Isaiah. When the angels in the holy of holies announced the heavenly birth of the new king, the Hebrew text says they proclaimed his titles: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father [better translated "father of booty"], Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). These would later become the four archangels, respectively, Uriel, meaning divine illumination; Gabriel, meaning divine strength; Michael, the warrior, meaning who is like God?; and Raphael, meaning divine healing. The high-priest-king in Jerusalem, Immanuel, "God with us," embodied the four archangels. The Greek translation, however, chose just one title for all four: Angel of Great Counsel. The Jewish community in Egypt who made the Greek translation knew that the four titles/archangels were One. The Christians claimed this for Jesus: "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation [Adam]. . . . For in him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" (Col. 1:15, 19).

Both meanings of the Shema, or perhaps we should say the full meaning of the Shema, underlies Jesus's teaching about the great commandment in response to a question from the scribes. After reciting the Shema, he interpreted it to mean loving the Lord, and loving your neighbour (Mark 12:28–31). The unity of the one Lord was a bond of love that united a person to the Lord, and people to each other; in other words, it was the older covenant based on loving-kindness. This understanding of the Shema also underlies Jesus's high priestly prayer: Jesus and the Father were One—the claim of the ancient kings in Jerusalem; and the unity of the angels in heaven was the unity of the disciples in earth, who were collectively the presence of the Lord. "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20) shows that the Christians shared this belief. Gathering in the name of the Lord meant gathering as his presence, being his angels on earth. The unity of the disciples on earth would be proof that Jesus had been sent from heaven: "I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me" (John 17:23). The bond was love, the sign that they were already living life within the ancient covenant, the life of the holy of holies (John 13:34–35; 1 John 3:13–14).

This declaration is repeated: the first concerns the shared glory of the holy of holies, and the second concerns the shared love.[24]

> *hina*   that they may all be one;
> *kathōs*   even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee,
> *hina*   that they may also be in us,
> *hina*   so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.[25]
> The glory which thou hast given to me I have given to them. (John 17:21–22a)

> *hina*   that they may be one,
> *kathōs*   even as we are one, I in them and thou in me,
> *hina*   that they may become perfectly one,
> *hina*   so that the world may know that thou hast sent me . . .
> Thou hast loved them even as thou hast loved me. (John 17:22b–23).

Participation in the divine was sharing in the divine love and receiving the divine glory; and so Jesus prayed, "May [they] be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given to me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

The disciples would become perfectly one. The Greek verb here is *teleioō eis hen,* complete/make perfect into one. The Hebrew equivalent would have been *tāmam,* make complete into one. The words of Jesus here are very similar to the Community Rule at Qumran (1QS), which describes the covenant of *ḥesedh* that bound the members together "to be joined as one by/in the wise counsel of God," *ʾel,* and to conduct themselves in/as his presence *tāmîmʾ,* a word that has no single equivalent in English. It implies perfection and unity, completeness. There is an ambiguity, maybe intentional, in the word translated "before his presence," since it can also mean "as his presence." The community were to live in a unity of perfection, and they had to love all the sons of light, those who enjoyed divine illumination and so shared the light of the holy of holies. They were the divine presence.

Those who walked *tāmîm* would see the face/presence of the Lord in the holy of holies, just as Jesus prayed that his disciples would see him in glory (John 17:24; compare Rev. 22:4). The Community Rule expands the high priestly blessing: "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May

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24. Based on R. E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John, XIII–XXI* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 769.

25. The word *hina* means "so that"; *kathōs* means "as."

the Lord make his face/presence shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his face/presence upon you and give you peace" (Num. 6:24–26). For the community/unity of *tāmîm,* the divine presence would enlighten their heart/mind with the wisdom that gave life and would graciously bestow the knowledge of eternity (1QS II). Those who walked *tāmîm* were part of the covenant of eternal unity (1QS III); they would learn the knowledge of the Most High and the wisdom of the sons of heaven. God had chosen them for/as the everlasting covenant, and all the glory of Adam would be theirs (1QS IV).

John emphasised that the transforming glory had been seen among them: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten (*monogenēs*) Son from the Father" (John 1:14). "Only-begotten" here could be seen as a problem. If Jesus really was the only divine son, that would exclude others from participation in the divine. John himself shows that this was not what he meant: he said that all who believed were able to become children of God (John 1:12). Paul taught that all who were led by the Spirit of God were sons of God, and that Jesus was the Firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:14, 29). Understood literally, Jesus could not have been the only-begotten and the firstborn. "Only-begotten" here translated the Hebrew *yāḥîdh,* the word used to describe Isaac (Gen. 22:2, 12, 16). The Greek translated the word as "beloved," *agapētos,* but Hebrews chose *monogenēs* (Heb. 11:17). The Son whose glory was seen incarnate was therefore the *yāḥîdh,* the beloved, the ancient royal title that became the name David. It is also a form of the word that means unity or community, suggesting that unifying was part of the role of the beloved.[26]

The beloved, unitary Son brought the glory to earth, and those who saw the incarnate glory were transformed into sons of God, angels, in the way that those who had entered the glory of the holy of holies became holy ones. Jesus's words about this have not survived well the translation from Hebrew into Greek, and the original nuance has been lost. "For their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth" (John 17:19) means "I will show myself as holy" or perhaps "I will show my holiness." "I consecrate myself" represents the *niph'al* form of the verb *qādhaš,* to be holy, and means "show oneself to be holy." Thus,

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26. See N. Wyatt, "'Jedidiah' and Cognate Forms as a Title of Royal Legitimization" in *Biblica* 66 (1985): 112–25; and my book *King of the Jews* (London: SPCK, 2014), 162–63.

the Lord said to Moses, "I will show myself holy among those who are near me, and before all the people I will be glorified" (Lev. 10:3). When Jesus showed his holiness to his disciples, they were consecrated and became divine. Jesus sent out his disciples as holy ones on earth, just as he had been sent out from heaven (John 17:18). Their role was to join all things together.

An early Christian hymn celebrated this (Col. 1:15–20), and teaching that was later labelled "Gnostic" shows how the first Christians understood joining all things together into the divine. There is an early explanation of this unity of the angels written by Theodotus. He was a disciple of Valentinus, a brilliant Christian teacher in mid-second-century Rome who almost became bishop there. It is unlikely that his contemporaries labeled him a Gnostic. "Now they say that our angels were put forth in unity, and are one, in that they came out of the One. Now since we existed in separation, Jesus was baptised that the undivided should be divided until he should unite us with them in the Pleroma [fullness] that we the many, having become one, might all be mingled in the One which was divided for our sakes."[27]

This was no Gnostic innovation, nor is the idea of the Son uniting all into the divine unity a sign of Gnostic influence among the Colossian Christians. It was temple lore from the holy of holies, Day One when the Creator was One with his creation. The Enoch tradition preserves some of this lore, and in *1 Enoch* there is a summary of one of his visions of wisdom (*1 En.* 37:1). Enoch was taken up among the angels, and there he learned the hidden things, the matters within the veil that were known only to the high priests (Num. 18:7). Since this was the place of the throne, he was learning the secret things of the Kingdom: how the Kingdom, Day One, was divided, and how the actions of men were weighed in a balance (*1 En.* 41:1). He saw all parts of the creation moving in their appointed ways, "keeping faith with each other in accordance with the oath, i.e. covenant, that they observe" (*1 En.* 41:5). This was the eternal covenant, covenant as it was understood before the Deuteronomists changed the emphasis and applied it only to people keeping the Law of Moses rather than to the whole creation functioning within the bonds of the eternal covenant. This is why they wrote, "The secret things belong to the Lord our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever; that we may do all the words of this law"

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27. Clement of Alexandria, Excerpts from Theodotus 36, in R. P. Casey, *The Excerpta ex Theodoto of Clement of Alexandria* (London: Christophers, 1934).

(Deut. 29:29). Jesus restored the wisdom of the holy of holies, which Paul taught the Christians at Corinth: "We impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification" (1 Cor. 2:7). "Secret," "hidden," and "before the ages" all indicate the teachings of the holy of holies, matters beyond the veil (Num. 18:7). "For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph. 1:9–10).

Like Enoch, Isaiah saw the whole creation. He was taken up to see the throne, and he heard the seraphim calling out that the whole world was full of the glory of the Lord. His reaction was to recognize that he was not teaching the truth, that he was "a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5); and the revelation in his vision was the threefold holiness of the King, the Lord of Hosts, whose glory filled the world. This vision can be dated to 742 BCE,[28] and so this is the earliest known example of the temple mysticism of the holy of holies: participation in the divine. Isaiah saw the glory and the Lord of Hosts, he heard of the triple holiness—presumably meaning the degree of holiness that imparted most holiness—and was then purified as a messenger/angel. Isaiah's vision offers a glimpse of the royal cult at that time: the king was enthroned amid his angel priests and sat upon the throne as Lord-and-King (1 Chr. 29:20).

Isaiah recorded other aspects of the temple cult. The king was the child of his heavenly mother, the hidden/eternal Lady (the word often translated "Virgin," Isa. 7:14); he was born among the angels and given the fourfold angel names (Isa. 9:6); and he was anointed with the Spirit that made him the Lord and endowed him with manifold heavenly wisdom (Isa. 11:2–3). With the government upon his shoulder (Isa. 9:6), he became the human presence of the Lord, and Isaiah recorded this role too. A later disciple reused these poems, and so they are now found in a later part of the book of Isaiah, but they originated in the time when there was still a divine king in Jerusalem. The Servant-King was the covenant (Isa. 42:6); in other words, he was himself the focus and the means of unity. The Servant-King was the one in whom the Lord glorified himself (Isa. 49:3), just as Jesus had glorified him, that is, had been his glory on earth (John 17:4). In the same way, Jesus would be glorified in his disciples (John 17:10).

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28. The year that King Uzziah died (Isa. 6:1).

The Servant-King was raised up and given understanding,[29] he was anointed,[30] he saw the light of the glory,[31] and the knowledge he acquired enabled him to put right/restore many people or things. The clearest description of his role as the means and focus of unity is hidden under the familiar words of Isaiah 53:5, which are an example of temple word-play and double meanings. The line "Upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5) can also be read "Our covenant bond of peace was upon him/his responsibility, and by his joining us together, we are healed."[32] This is the central line of the poem,[33] because this was the main role of the Servant-King, and this is the prophecy expounded by Jesus on the road to Emmaus when he explained his suffering and resurrection to his disciples. The original has to be reconstructed from texts that were not transmitted by the spiritual heirs of the temple revolutionaries,[34] who managed to obscure so much of the ancient temple wisdom.

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We now turn to the most important evidence for the ritual of *theosis,* the human becoming divine, and it is a text that has suffered from the scribes who sought to obscure the older ways. They were the spiritual heirs of the revolutionaries opposed to the sacral kingship of the first temple, which was restored in Christianity. The Hebrew scriptures were finally formed after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE and so after the advent of Christianity; and there are places where this seems to have influenced which texts were included in the Hebrew scriptures. Significantly different pre-Christian versions of the Hebrew texts were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and many of the differences suggest that the Jews adopted a form of the Hebrew text that excluded material important for Christian claims.[35] The two most-quoted texts in the New

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29. Reading the better-preserved text in the Greek of Isaiah 52:13.

30. Reading Isaiah 52:14 as in the Qumran text, 1QIsaᵃ.

31. Reading Isaiah 53:10 as in 1QIsaᵃ.

32. For detail, see my book *Temple Mysticism* (London: SPCK, 2011), 157–59.

33. The symmetry is restored when verse 12 is recognized as an addition to apply the ritual pattern to Hezekiah and his recovery from the plague. See my "Hezekiah's Boil," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 95 (2001): 31–42.

34. See above, notes 28, 29, and 30.

35. For example, the text used by Jesus in his Emmaus-road discourse (Luke 24:26–27) is not in the current Hebrew text but *is* in the Qumran version of Isaiah 52–53, which says that the servant figure was anointed and saw

Testament (Isa. 52:13–53:12 and Psalm 110) are examples of this: the text of Isaiah is now perfectly readable, but there was a different version used at Qumran; and the text of Psalm 110, not found at Qumran, is now damaged and in places impossible to read. Both texts deal with the Messiah: Isaiah 52–53, as we have seen, is about the anointed and exalted Servant who sees the glory and receives heavenly knowledge; Psalm 110 is about the anointing and heavenly birth in the holy of holies. These two texts—and there are many more—are an illustration of why it is necessary to read beneath the current Hebrew text in order to recover the temple tradition about participation in the divine.

Psalm 110 describes the anointing and heavenly birth of the king as the Son, that is, the incarnation of the Lord. This is the temple precedent for John's claim: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The most damaged verses in this psalm are 3 and 7, but the setting is clear: it was the MelchiZedek ritual (Ps. 110:4), and since Jesus was proclaimed as MelchiZedek returned (Heb. 7:1–25), the process of his anointing and heavenly birth was important for the Christians. The two damaged verses once gave the vital information. Reconstructed, Psalm 110:3 is about the heavenly birth of the king. By reading the words with different vowels,[36] "On the day you lead your host upon the holy mountains" becomes "on the day of your birth in the glories of holiness/in the glorious garments of a holy one"; "Like dew your youth will come to you" becomes "With dew, that is, the holy oil, I have begotten you." The Greek translation has "I have begotten you," showing that this was indeed the royal birth text. The king was not born from the womb of the morning, as many English translations say, but born from the gracious Lady as the Morning Star. "Morning Star" was a Davidic title used by Jesus: "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright Morning Star" (Rev. 22:16).

The newly born MelchiZedek then drank from the stream in the holy of holies. The usual translation is "He will drink from the stream by the way; therefore he will lift up his head" (Ps. 110:7), but a simple restoration of the text, replacing one letter with another that looks almost the same, reveals "He will drink from the stream in the holy of holies." The scribes

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the light. The proof text about the angels worshipping the Lord as he comes to earth (Heb. 1:6) *is* in a Qumran text of Deuteronomy 32:43 but not in the current Hebrew text.

36. Which were added to "fix" the text after the advent of Christianity.

often obscured an older text by exchanging two letters or replacing one letter with another that was similar.[37] Here "the way" concealed "the holy of holies." A stream features in many visions of the holy of holies, and so presumably there was at some time a stream or fountain in the holy of holies. It was not water in a bowl or bath; it was flowing water, "living" water, and it gave life. "With thee is the fountain of life," sang the Psalmist (Ps. 36:9). "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High" (Ps. 46:4). Enoch saw fountains in his vision of the holy of holies: the fountain of righteousness and the fountains of wisdom (*1 En.* 48:1), and "wisdom flowing like water . . . before him for ever and ever" (*1 En.* 49:1). The end time visions of Ezekiel (Ezek. 47:1–12), Zechariah (Zech. 14:8), Joel (Joel 3:18), and John (Rev. 22:1–2) had water flowing out from the temple. Solomon was anointed king by the gushing Gihon spring (1 Kgs. 1:38) before the temple was built. Wisdom described herself as water flowing out of the temple where she was established on Zion, pouring forth her teaching (Ben Sira 24:30–33). Water from the temple symbolised wisdom, the hidden knowledge of the holy of holies that flowed forth to irrigate the land. The newly born MelchiZedek drank this water, and the letters "therefore he will lift up his head" can also be read "therefore he had been exalted as leader." In Psalm 110 alone, the heavenly birth, ritualised in the holy of holies by the anointing oil, the holy garments of glory, and the water of wisdom have all been obscured, and thus the temple ritual of *theosis* has almost disappeared from the Hebrew scriptures.

The heavenly birth in the holy of holies was no longer familiar to the Jewish teachers in the time of Jesus. John opens his gospel by showing how this fundamental of old temple lore had been forgotten. Nicodemus simply did not understand when Jesus spoke of being born from above/born again, *anōthen* (John 3:3), and seeing the kingdom. John described him as "the teacher of Israel" (John 3:10), and yet he did not recognise what Jesus was saying. The traditions preserved outside the texts that eventually formed the Hebrew scriptures did recall this heavenly birth in detail. Enoch, recording what must have been the inner experience of the anointed one, said this:

> I saw the Lord. . . . And I fell and did obeisance to the Lord. . . . And Michael, the Lord's greatest archangel, lifted me up and brought me in front of the face of the lord. . . . And the Lord said to Michael, "Take

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37. Here, *bdbr* has become *bdrk*, *b* and *k* looking very similar in Hebrew.

Enoch, and take him from the earthly clothing, and anoint him with the delightful oil and put him into the clothes of my glory." And Michael took me from my clothes. . . . He anointed me with the delightful oil, and the appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light, its ointment is like sweet dew, its fragrance like myrrh and its shining like the sun. And I gazed at myself, and I had become like one of the glorious ones. (*2 En.* 22)

The early Christians shared this experience and sang of it. *The Odes of Solomon* are a collection of Syriac hymns identified in 1909, but at first they revealed no obvious context because their content was so strange.[38] It is now clear that their setting was early Christian initiation, and the *Odes* show how they understood baptism and anointing. These Christians were temple mystics, and they continued to use the *theosis* ritual of the temple.

And speaking waters touched my lips
From the fountain of the Lord generously.
And so I drank and became intoxicated
From the living water that does not die. . . .
And the Lord renewed me with his garment,
And possessed me by his light. . . .
My eyes were enlightened,
And my face received the dew;
And my breath/soul was refreshed
By the pleasant fragrance of the Lord. (Ode 11:6–7, 11, 14–15)

I rested on the Spirit of the Lord,
And She lifted me up to heaven;
And caused me to stand on my feet in the Lord's high place,
Before his perfection and his glory,
Where I continued glorifying him by the composition of His Odes.
(The Spirit) brought me forth before the Lord's face.
And although I was a man,
I was named the Light, the Son of God;
Because I was the most glorified among the glorious ones,
And the greatest among the great ones.
For according to the greatness of the Most High, so She made me;
And according to his newness He renewed me.
And he anointed me with his perfection;
And I became one of those who are near him.

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38. J. R. Harris, "An Early Christian Hymn-Book," *Contemporary Review* 95 (1909): 414–28.

And my mouth was opened like cloud of dew,
And my heart gushed forth like a gusher of righteousness.
And my approach was in peace,
And I was established in the Spirit of Providence. Hallelujah. (Ode 36)

The roots of these hymns and of so much in the New Testament and other early Christian texts is the world of the holy of holies, where human beings could enter and be transformed by the most-holiness that surrounded them. In the old temple, this was a privilege of the high priesthood, which included the king. The experience empowered them with wisdom and bound them into the covenant of loving-kindness. They became part of the Lord, and on earth, they continued to be the presence of the Lord, using their wisdom to uphold the covenant of loving-kindness. Jesus extended the ancient priesthood to his followers, empowering them to share his role as the Lord on earth. To those who recognised in him the transforming glory of the beloved Son, he gave power to become children of God.

Margaret Barker is an independent scholar who read theology at Cambridge, England, and has published seventeen books as well as numerous articles and reviews. She has developed a method of biblical study now known as temple theology, for which she was made a Doctor of Divinity by the Archbishop of Canterbury. She was the cofounder of the Temple Studies Group and is a past president of the Society for Old Testament Study.

Margaret Barker's "The Lord Is One"—
a Response

Andrew C. Skinner

Margaret Barker's essay "The Lord Is One" aims at extending the discussion about the doctrine of theosis or deification of humans back to its earliest scriptural roots. From a certain perspective, then, the title of the essay could very well be changed from "The Lord Is One" to "The Lord Is *Many,*" for by its very definition that is the nature of theosis—many gods. Barker's paper provides a resource in helping us trace the Old Testament roots and rituals of the doctrine of theosis.

The first thing that immediately strikes one is that Barker begins by quoting John 17, the record of Jesus's high priestly prayer, which I suspect some readers do not automatically associate with the doctrine of theosis. However, there is ample evidence from the history of interpretation to demonstrate that deification of his disciples is exactly what lies behind Jesus's prayer: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee. . . . And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them" (John 17:21–22). Though Jesus Christ is the only natural heir of the Father—that is, the only heir by nature or physical birth—we, through the grace or empowerment extended to us by Christ, may inherit the glory he (Jesus) possesses.

This idea was very much a part of the theology of the Greek Fathers of the Church, and also the Greek theologians who came after. In fact, the Greek Fathers and their successors regarded the whole Johannine corpus as "an especially rich witness to theosis"[1] (see, for example, John 3:8; 14:21–23; 15:4–8; 17:21–23; 1 Jn. 3:2; and 4:12). Having this in mind, theologian

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1. Daniel B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 1994), 126.

Peter of Damascus (who died in the eighth century) invoked the authority of Christ found in this and other passages to state that we become "gods by adoption through grace" (*Philokalia* 3:79).

The second thing that one immediately notes is that Barker uses John 17 as a springboard to take us back to the temple, its structure, and rituals described in Old Testament scripture (the Hebrew Bible), which Barker argues are the very elements, in their original form, that brought about the great transformation. This is something with which Latter-day Saints readily resonate. It is in the temple that gods are established through rituals and covenants.

Here one cannot help but reflect on another Johannine text that is also a temple text, but a text about theosis as well. This is John's Apocalypse, chapters 2 and 3. This observation is not extraneous to Barker's discussion, since she talks about the connection between Jesus Christ, theosis, and the temple as found in the book of Revelation. Barker indicates that even though Old Testament texts were changed over time, John and others of his era were still aware of the earlier meanings and concepts found in the original language of biblical texts. Note some of the specific language used by John in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation to describe the ultimate rewards given by Jesus Christ to faithful disciples and the connection of these rewards to the temple.

- Revelation 2:7—"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I [Jesus Christ] give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." As Dr. Barker has noted, the image of the tree of life is a temple image.

- Revelation 2:10—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

- Revelation 2:17—"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

- Revelation 2:26–27—"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."

- Revelation 3:5—"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment [temple clothing]; and I will not blot out his name

out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

- Revelation 3:12—"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

- Revelation 3:21—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Taken all together, it seems to me that the connection between ancient temple ritual and theosis is unmistakable. From beginning to end, John's Apocalypse has the temple in mind as the underlying platform from which his vision procedes. It seems to me that chapters 2 and 3 also provide a helpful context for Barker's discussion of later passages in the book of Revelation.

An important section of Barker's essay tackles the meaning of *ʾelohim* as it relates to the concept of theosis in early Old Testament texts. She notes that the Hebrew word for "God" (*ʾelohim*) is a plural form that can also mean gods or divine beings. She quotes one of the most famous Old Testament texts underpinning the concept of theosis—Psalm 82:1 and 6. She provides a translation from the Hebrew, which is more literal and in my view much more accurate than the King James Version. Compare the two:

King James Version: "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. . . . Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High."

Barker's translation: "*Elohim* has taken his place in the council of El. In the midst of *Elohim* he gives judgement. . . . You are all *Elohim* and sons of Elyon [the Most High]."

Barker points out that the first *ʾelohim* in the passage has a singular verb, but this *ʾelohim* is in the midst of *ʾelohim,* who must somehow be plural. Furthermore, these plural *ʾelohim* were sons of the Most High God. Complicating the picture is the language of Genesis 1 where the term *ʾelohim* as creator is used with both singular and plural verbs. Barker asks some pointed questions: Was *ʾelohim* a plural of majesty used to indicate a singular reality, or was there a memory of plurality within the Divine, such that a male and a female were necessary to be the image of God? And who was El Elyon? Was he the father of the divine *ʾelohim*?

One Latter-day Saint response might well invoke a passage from what we consider to be additional scripture that seems to clarify and provide answers to the questions being asked. Yes, the term ʾ*elohim* does refer to a plurality of gods. And yes, the term ʾ*elohim* comprehends gods of both genders. And yes, El Elyon, the Most High God, presided over ʾ*elohim* or gods. I quote from the LDS canon, the book of Abraham chapter 4, verses 26 and 27: "And the Gods took counsel among themselves and said: Let us go down and form man [*adam*] in our image, after our likeness. . . . So the Gods went down to organize man [*baraʾ adam,* as it would appear in Hebrew] in their own image, . . . male and female to form they them."

Barker notes that Jesus himself quoted Psalm 82:6 to certain Jews who wanted to stone him for making himself out to be God. As an aside, but a relevant one in the context of Barker's paper, Jesus was walking in the Jerusalem Temple precinct when he quoted Psalm 82:6. Some have argued that Psalm 82:6, and hence John 10:33–36, cannot mean that Jesus was saying mortals can be deified. But given the context, it can hardly mean anything else. Of this passage in John, we read from *The Interpreter's Bible*: "If an inspired scripture allowed that title to mere men to whom God entrusted a message, how much more can he, whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, claim to say I am the Son of God (v. 36), without incurring the reproach of blasphemy?"[2]

Jesus says the term "gods" in Psalm 82:6 refers to those "unto whom the word of God came" (John 10:35)—which includes mortal disciples. I would also argue that the divine heavenly court in Psalm 82:1, which refers to "gods"—plural—is composed of those who have become gods. The early Christian theologian Irenaeus (circa AD 180) offered a similar interpretation and presented a revised translation of Psalm 82:1. He said: "And again, 'God stood in the congregation of the gods; He judges among the gods.' He [the psalmist] refers to the Father and the Son, and to those who have received the adoption."[3]

Though there is indeed great debate regarding the meaning of ʾ*elohim*, with huge theological ramifications, an argument by Professor William

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2. George Arthur Buttrick, ed., *The Interpreter's Bible: The Holy Scriptures in the King James and Revised Standard Versions with General Articles and Introduction, Exegesis, Exposition for Each Book of the Bible,* 12 vols. (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952), 8:634.

3. David W. Bercot, ed., *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs: A Reference Guide to More Than 700 Topics Discussed by the Early Church Fathers* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), 200.

Brownlee, one of the early experts on the Dead Sea Scrolls, can, in fact, help us in our quest to define the term ʾelohim by looking at the phrase *Yahweh ʾelohim* in the Hebrew Bible, usually translated as "Lord God" in the King James Version. Professor Brownlee maintains that the divine name *Yahweh* is a causative form of the verb "to be, to exist" and means literally "He will cause to be." Thus, Brownlee renders the phrase *Yahweh ʾelohim* literally as "'He creates gods,' i.e., 'He creates the members of the divine assembly.'"[4]

Another scholar has written:

> The most influential advocate of the view that *yhwh* [Yahweh] is a causative form of the verb "to be" in origin is undoubtedly W. F. Albright. . . . He writes, "If we . . . regard Yahweh as an imperfect verb, it is most naturally to be derived from [the Aramaic and Hebrew verb], 'to come into existence, to become, be.'" . . . The causative (*hiphʾil*) sense of the verb means, "He Causes to Come into Existence," and the early jussive means, "Let Him Bring into Existence." Albright has been closely followed in this interpretation by D. N. Freedman, and by Frank Moore Cross, Jr.[5]

These interpretations are extremely controversial in most theological circles because they suggest that the early Hebrew texts were saying the Lord creates or makes others into gods, which contradicts the fundamental notion of monotheism. However, taken to a logical conclusion, I think that is precisely what Barker is suggesting, what the most ancient versions of biblical texts are inferring.

Barker makes an important point when she says that Adam was known as a son of God (Luke 3:38), and Paul showed that all Christians were sons of God (Rom. 8:14). "All Christians were also anointed—the name means anointed ones—and so they were heirs to the high priestly role: 'A chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation' (1 Pet. 2:9). The issue of plurality within the divine, participation in the divine, and incarnation of the divine underlie all early Christian discourse." I think many Latter-day Saints would agree with this comment. There is much evidence to show that participation in the divine was a cornerstone of early Christian doctrine. In addition to John's writings, we should consider texts such as 2 Peter 1:4. To what is Peter referring when he speaks

4. William H. Brownlee, "The Ineffable Name of God," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 226 (April 1977): 39.

5. G. H. Parke-Taylor, *Yahweh: The Divine Name in the Bible* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1975), 58–59.

of becoming "partakers of the divine nature" if it is not the doctrine of theosis? D. Todd Christofferson put it this way: "No one is predestined to receive less than all that the Father has for His children."[6]

Barker maintains that the Deuteronomistic editors were responsible for significant changes in the Hebrew biblical texts. From my perspective, there is no doubt that plain and precious truths were suppressed, elided, or accidentally left out of the biblical text as we have it today.

One of the changes Barker discusses was the Deuteronomistic editors' denial of "the ancient belief that the Lord was seen in human form." She cites evidence from Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John. I think additional evidence can be marshaled from the book of Psalms, a major theme of which is that worshippers could come into the presence of God in his tabernacle or his temple and see him face-to-face. Elsewhere, Barker has stated that the psalms were the hymns of the temple. Thus, we should expect to find some discussion of one of the tabernacle's or temple's central purposes, which was to bring worshippers into God's presence. Elsewhere Barker has also argued that Exodus 23:14–17, which outlines the three annual pilgrimage festivals in ancient Israel, was later edited to change the original meaning. Instead of the traditional translation, "Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord," the text was actually meant to be read, "Three times in the year every male of yours will see the face of the Lord." Some of the psalms that speak of seeking and seeing the face of God in his temple include Psalm 17, Psalm 24 (23 in the Septuagint), Psalm 27, and Psalm 105.

In the last section of her paper, Barker refers to an early Christian collection of hymns in Syriac, which were used in initiation rites and point us to the conclusion that those Christians "were temple mystics, and they continued to use the theosis ritual of the temple." This is stunning, I think. Indeed, we now know that not a few early Syriac Christian hymns speak of theosis. From the fourth-century Syriac Christian poet Ephrem the Syrian, we find this moving refrain:

> The Most High knew that Adam wanted to become a god,
> so He sent His Son . . .
> in order to grant him his desire.

From Ephrem's hymn "On Virginity," we find allusion to Athanasius's epigram—"God became man, so that man may become God."

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6. D. Todd Christofferson, "Why Marriage, Why Family," *Ensign* 45 (May 2015): 52.

Divinity flew down and descended
    To raise and draw up humanity.
The Son has made beautiful the servant's deformity,
    And he has become a god, just as he desired.

Finally, from Ephrem's hymn "On Faith" we hear:

He gave us divinity,
We gave Him humanity.[7]

Conclusion

What does all this mean to us personally, or what can it mean? How might we liken all of the foregoing to our personal circumstances? In answer, the following remarkable statement was penned by contemporary Greek Orthodox theologian Christoforos Stavropoulos:

> In the Holy Scriptures, where God himself speaks, we read of a unique call directed to us. God speaks to us human beings clearly and directly and he says: "I said, 'You are gods, sons of the Most High—all of you'" (see Ps. 82:6 and John 10:34). Do we hear that voice? Do we understand the meaning of this calling? Do we accept that we should in fact be on a journey, a road which leads to Theosis? As human beings we each have this one, unique calling, to achieve Theosis. In other words, we are each destined to become a god; to be like God Himself, to be united with Him. The Apostle Peter describes with total clarity the purpose of life: we are to "become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). This is the purpose of your life; that you be a participant, a sharer in the nature of God and in the life of Christ, a communicant of divine energy—to become just like God, a true God.[8]

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7. Quoted in Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Christianity*, 129.
8. Archimandrite Christoforos Stavropoulos, *Partakers of Divine Nature: An Inspiring Presentation of Man's Purpose in Life According to Orthodox Theology*, trans. Stanley S. Harakas (Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing, 1976), 17–18.

Response to
Margaret Barker's "The Lord Is One"

David J. Larsen

I appreciate the opportunity to be here and to give a brief response to what Margaret Barker shared with us. I would like to talk about some of the ideas she explored and perhaps how we may apply them to our LDS scriptures to better understand what we are reading there. Barker touched on the idea of the ascent to heaven and the fact that we can find this ascent, this journey to the heavenly holy of holies, in the writing of Isaiah and other prophetic texts in the Bible. There is so much to consider as we look at these texts. We can imagine these prophets ascending into heaven and standing before the Lord and what these experiences would have entailed. Margaret Barker has greatly helped explore that world.

I wanted to examine somewhat further some of the ascent texts that we can find. Barker has suggested that a lot of these types of texts, describing the journey to the throne of God, did not make their way into the biblical writings because of prejudice against the older temple cult. However, if we look at some of the apocryphal texts or pseude-pigraphal texts that circulated in that second temple period, we see many aspects of the ancient temple cult reappear. Barker mentioned Enoch ascending to heaven and standing there in the divine council. Some interesting aspects of that tradition play into this idea of becoming one with the Lord. James VanderKam described a tradition found in several ancient Jewish texts that expresses the notion that humans somehow have a heavenly double or a counterpart in heaven, and when

they ascend to heaven, they find themselves, or are shown themselves in vision, sitting upon the throne of God.[1]

Andrei Orlov has explored this idea and found similar concepts in the Enoch text known as *Second Enoch.* In *2 Enoch* 33, the patriarch Enoch is installed in heaven as the heavenly scribe. Then God commands Enoch to write certain things—the things he has learned in heaven—and then sends him back to earth to share the content of these writings. However, when he commands Enoch to go down and share these writings, God declares that they are things that he himself has written, although he had commanded Enoch to write them. So we start to see this overlapping of the role of God and the role of Enoch. God is taking on Enoch's role, Enoch is taking on God's role. Enoch is promised a throne in heaven, he is given a position very similar to God's, and we see this theme running throughout these texts.[2]

Similar traditions in these texts involve the patriarch Jacob. A scholar named Jarl Fossum has discussed the idea that Jacob is taken up to heaven, and he sees his image engraved on the throne of God.[3] Then the angels show him that his image is not only engraved on the throne, but he is somehow identical with the form of God on the throne. These texts are very confusing. Christopher Rowland has similarly proposed that in these texts we see Jacob's image as "identical with the form of God on the throne of glory."[4]

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1. James C. VanderKam, "The Angel of the Presence in the Book of Jubilees," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 7 (2000): 378–93; James C. VanderKam, "Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37–71," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity, The First Princeton Symposium on Judaism and Christian Origins*, ed. J. H. Charlesworth and others (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 182–83.

2. See Andrei Orlov, "Moses' Heavenly Counterpart in the *Book of Jubilees* and the *Exagoge* of Ezekiel the Tragedian," *Biblica* 88, no. 2 (2007): 153–73; Andrei Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 165–76; Andrei Orlov, "The Face as the Heavenly Counterpart of the Visionary in the Slavonic Ladder of Jacob," in *From Apocalypticism to Merkabah Mysticism: Studies in the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 399–419.

3. Jarl E. Fossum, *The Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christology,* Novum Testamentum et orbis antiquus vol. 30 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz; Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 1995), 140–41.

4. Christopher Rowland, "John 1.51, Jewish Apocalyptic and Targumic Tradition," *New Testament Studies* 30, no. 4 (1984): 504.

One text that is a little clearer is an account about Moses called *Exagoge,* written by Ezekiel the Tragedian; in this text Moses is taken up into heaven and sees this noble man sitting on the throne. Moses comments, "He beckoned me and I stood before the throne. He handed me the scepter and told me to sit on the great throne and gave me the royal crown and he departed from the throne."[5] The exact identity of this noble man on the throne is not given; we may assume that it is God himself, but in any regard, Moses is given his place on this divine throne and given a scepter and a crown. So again, we see this conflation of the one who ascends to heaven with the figure on the throne—and their identities are shared in some way.

Barker mentioned the conflation of God and the Lamb, including the idea that there is a divine throne "of God and of the Lamb" (see Rev. 22:3). I thought it was interesting to compare that to Joseph Smith's vision of heaven where he saw the "blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son" (see D&C 137:3; compare 76:21). They both seemed to be seated on the same throne, and so this idea that we can find in these ancient texts is perpetuated in Joseph Smith's vision. Also, in the Pearl of Great Price, in the Book of Moses, Enoch is promised a throne in heaven. So, whether it is the same throne that God is seated on or if it is his own separate throne, the individual is promised a position similar, if still subordinate, to God's.

Another interesting ancient text, known as the *Testament of Abraham,* has some very intriguing ideas. In this text, Abraham ascends to heaven, and he sees a man seated on a glorious, golden throne. Most would assume that this figure would be God himself. Abraham notes the appearance of this man is "like that of the Sovereign Lord himself."[6] Abraham sees this figure weeping and sorrowing and he asks his angelic guide, "Who is this most wondrous man, who is decked out with so great a glory, and who at one moment weeps and wails, and at the next rejoices and exults?"[7] And he is told that it is actually Adam, that Adam is enthroned there and he is weeping because he has seen so many of his children on earth making wrong choices and following the wrong path.

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5. Howard Jacobson, *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 55.

6. *Testament of Abraham* 11:5–6, in *The Apocryphal Old Testament,* ed. H. F. D. Sparks (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 408.

7. *Testament of Abraham* 11:9–10, in Sparks, *Apocryphal Old Testament,* 409.

But we see that from Abraham's initial perspective, this figure looks like the Lord; to him, it is a figure identical with the Lord. On that note of "weeping" in heaven, this imagery also shows up in the Pearl of Great Price where Enoch witnesses God himself weeping because of the sins and suffering of his children—the human race—so, a very similar situation. When Enoch is allowed to see through God's eyes and witness this suffering for himself, he is then also moved to weep just as God did (see Moses 7:28–62). This is a significant aspect of the oneness that exists in the heavenly holy of holies. The individual is often able to see what God sees, know what God knows, and even feel what God feels.[8]

As a side note, I was speaking with my father about these traditions and this idea of the empathy of seeing through God's eyes. My father works a lot with near-death studies, and he commented to me that in many accounts of near-death experiences is this feeling of unity or oneness with the light they behold, or with God himself, or with other individuals. Some have described being able to see through God's eyes or to share briefly in God's knowledge or experience the empathy or love God has for others, or being able to see through the eyes of another individual and feel what they are going through. I thought that was an interesting parallel.

In the *Testament of Abraham,* Abraham then sees another figure on a throne who is in the act of passing judgment. This figure looks just like the previous figure he had seen enthroned (Adam), and he says that this second one was bright as the sun and looked like the Son of God. Abraham is told by his angelic guide that this second enthroned figure is, in fact, Abel, the son of Adam. So, we see these parallels in which Adam looks like God, and Abel looks like Adam and like God (or the Son of God). A type of "oneness" is created where there is this great similarity among all these figures who have ascended to heaven.

I would like to return to my discussion of Enoch, who, in *2 Enoch,* takes on the role or position of the Lord when he was sent to share his sacred writings with mankind. I would point out that this notion is found throughout the Holy Scriptures that we use, although it often goes unnoticed. There are many instances in scripture in which it is unclear if an individual is interacting with God or with a messenger

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8. For more on this, see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Jacob A. Rennaker, and David J. Larsen, "Revisiting the Forgotten Voices of Weeping in Moses 7: A Comparison with Ancient Texts," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 2 (2012): 41–71.

from God. For example, in Genesis 32, we read of Jacob wrestling with an angel. We assume that it is an angel, but the text says only that "there wrestled a man with him" (v. 24). The odd thing is that after this experience, as the text states, "Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (v. 30). We see in ancient texts, generally, a belief that if one saw the face of God, he or she would perish. So, Jacob wrestles with a "man," but also believes that he has seen God's face.

A similar story in Judges 13 involves Manoah and his wife, the parents of the hero Samson. The couple are visited by, again, a "man," but this man is also specifically called "the angel of the Lord" (v. 13). The text says that the name of the angel was secret, and he would not share it (vv. 17–18). Directly after stating that Manoah "knew that he was an angel of the Lord," the text goes on to say that "Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God" (vv. 21–22).

Another example is that of Joshua the high priest, in Zechariah 3, who stands before the angel of the Lord in the heavenly court. At some points, the text states that the angel is speaking to Joshua, but at other times, it appears that the Lord himself is there speaking. At times, when the angel speaks, he is apparently dictating what the Lord wants said, but at other points it is hard to tell who exactly is talking. The figures of the Lord and the angel of the Lord seem to blend together.[9] We see something similar happening in the story of Abraham's near sacrifice of Isaac, where the "angel of the Lord" is heard out of heaven, speaking as if he were the Lord (Gen. 22:11–18).

Latter-day Saints might see these occurrences as examples of the notion of divine investiture of authority. During his ministry, Jesus declared that he came in his Father's name (John 5:43). He was doing and saying exactly what his Father would have done and said. As Elder Bruce R. McConkie noted, "The Father-Elohim has placed his name upon the Son, has given him his own power and authority, and has authorized him to speak in the first person as though he were the original or primal Father."[10]

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9. The voice of Zechariah himself seems to be intermingled with that of the Lord and the angel as well. See verse 5, where someone speaks in the first person (we may assume that it is Zechariah, who is narrating the chapter), but says what we might expect the angel to say.

10. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 63.

One example of this can be found in The Pearl of Great Price, where we have the account of Moses standing before God, face to face. We should likely understand that Moses is speaking with Jehovah, the premortal Jesus Christ. The Lord declares to Moses that he is the Almighty, and that Moses is his son. Interestingly, the premortal Christ declares to Moses: "And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior" (Moses 1:6). It might seem odd for Christ to refer to the Only Begotten, the Speaker himself, in the third person, but that is apparently what he does here.

The Lord does this again when he is speaking to Enoch in Moses 7. He is giving Enoch a vision of future events and begins to comment on the mission of the Messiah. Speaking of the promised Savior, the Lord states: "And that which I have chosen hath pled before my face. Wherefore, he suffereth for their sins; inasmuch as they will repent in the day that my Chosen shall return unto me" (Moses 7:39). Again, what we are apparently observing is Jehovah, the premortal Christ, speaking about himself and his messianic mission in the third person. Later in the chapter, when Enoch asks the Lord if, after Christ's ministry, he will not come upon the earth again, the Lord tells Enoch: "As I live, even so will I come in the last days" (v. 60). So, we have the Lord speaking as if he were God the Father, referring to Christ in the third person, but then also declaring himself to be "the Son of Man" (v. 65) who will come to dwell on the earth in righteousness for a thousand years. This is because of the divine investiture of authority. Christ speaks as if he were the Father, just as the angel of the Lord can speak as if he were the Lord. It is not unlikely that for the mortal figures involved in these scriptural passages, there was, indeed, some confusion over who, exactly, they were seeing or with whom they were speaking.

This phenomenon should be used to guide our understanding of the many similar passages in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon frequently refers to the premortal Jesus Christ as God, the eternal God, or even the Eternal Father.[11] For the Nephites, Jehovah, the premortal Christ, was God. There are a number of clear references to God the Father, as distinct from God the Son, in the Book of Mormon, but the Son is clearly the God that they are interacting with most of the time. The roles and titles of God the Father and God the Son overlap significantly.

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11. See, for example, 2 Nephi 11:6–7; Mosiah 7:26–28; 1 Nephi 11:13–21, 1830 edition.

We get more insight into the relationship between the Father and Son when Jesus finally comes to visit the Book of Mormon people after his resurrection. Christ speaks frequently of the Father, and how he has been sent by the Father and is doing his will. But he also strongly emphasizes his Oneness with the Father as well. There is a story in 3 Nephi to this regard that is also a very interesting parallel to what Barker was saying about John 17 and the high priestly prayer, or the intercessory prayer; this is when Jesus is with the people in the Book of Mormon and he prays for them. His prayer is very similar to the prayer he gives in John 17, where he asks that the disciples who are with him, and the people who are with him, can become one in the way he is one with the Father. When Jesus asks his chosen disciples to pray, they pray to him, "calling him their Lord and their God" (3 Ne. 19:18). It is hard to tell if they are confused or if they simply recognize the glory of the Deity who is present there with them. When Jesus then begins to pray, he makes the distinction between himself and the Father clearer, but also the nature of their Oneness. He prays:

> Father, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen; and it is because of their belief in me that I have chosen them out of the world. Father, thou hast given them the Holy Ghost because they believe in me; and thou seest that they believe in me because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them. And now Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one. (3 Ne. 19:20–23)

The result of this prayer is that all who are present are transfigured to literally become like Jesus. What is very interesting—and I think this parallels a lot of what Barker was saying, with the temple context of all this—is that when Jesus hears the people pray, he in turn prays to the Father, and then the record says: "And it came to pass that Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him; and his countenance did smile upon them and the light of his countenance did shine upon them" (3 Ne. 19:25). Now, these are the words of the high-priestly blessing from Numbers 6:24, 26, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee . . . the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee." That's exactly what is happening here, that "the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus; and behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof" (3 Ne. 19:25). So,

we see in this prayer that Jesus asks for them to be one; they are trans-figured, and they look like Jesus. In a very real sense, they are becoming one with him.

I appreciate very much Barker's insights here, today, and I believe that what she is uncovering with all of this temple context, the high-priestly context, has a lot in common with what we find in our LDS scriptures, in the Pearl of Great Price, and in the Book of Mormon. We would benefit greatly from applying some of these concepts that she is sharing with us to our study of our own scriptures.

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An Improvisation on Margaret Barker's "The Lord Is One"

Daniel C. Peterson

It's a privilege to be here, and I want to thank Dr. Barker for a really, really interesting, dense, and rich paper. What I'm going to do is not so much add to it or comment on it as do an improvisation based upon it. The thought that came to my mind as I was reading it—and as I was thinking about it just now as she was reading it—was that, first of all, Latter-day Saints are naturally going to be very sympathetic to an attempt to view the temple as a model of the universe, something of a scale-model representation of reality. That's a theme that is congenial to us, and I appreciate the temple focus here. So I'm going to talk about certain aspects of the temple as I see it, and about some matters related to deification or *theosis* from a somewhat different angle.

The temple is often regarded as a place of ascent; it is the mountain of the Lord's house. And, in many Latter-day Saint temples worldwide, you actually do climb; you physically climb. That is, it's not just a metaphorical climb, but, in very many if not most Latter-day Saint temples, there is actually a rising up in the building. The Salt Lake Temple is a classic illustration of that. And you have a notion of ever-increasing holiness as you go deeper into the structure—just as, on a horizontal plane, the temple in Jerusalem was organized. This is, as I say, sometimes a literal ascent, a physical ascent.

It reminds me of a story in the tradition that I spend most of my time with—the Islamic tradition—that's very closely related to the temple. That is the story called, in Arabic, the *mi'raj* or *isra'*—the night vision or ascension of Muhammad. This is a story that doesn't actually show up in the Qur'an. Although there may be some Qur'anic allusions to it, they

are very unclear if they actually exist at all. But it shows up in traditions that date to a very early time in Islam after the death of Muhammad. Maybe, indeed, and as they claim, they go back all the way to him.

In that story, Muhammad is taken either before or during his ministry, from some place, some physical location, the identity of which varies depending on the account. Sometimes it's said to have happened when he was very young and was in Mecca. Sometimes it's when he was older and was in the city of Medina. In all of the variant accounts, however, he is awakened in the middle of the night by three angels, Gabriel being in the lead, who take him off in a miraculous way from wherever he starts to Jerusalem, and specifically to the Temple Mount, which I think is significant. When he's there on the Temple Mount, he leads the prior prophets in prayer and then there appears to him a *mi'raj*—which can mean *ascent* but can also mean a *means of ascent,* a ladder or a staircase or something like that. And by means of this *mi'raj* he climbs up or ascends through the seven heavens into the presence of God, who is always depicted in these stories as being literally enthroned in the highest heaven.

Now, that story became very, very significant in Islamic tradition. Subsequent mystics tried to replicate it. You get all sorts of variations on it. It's often taken as metaphor. The mystics are trying to ascend into the presence of God through a sort of mental or spiritual process; for them, it's not a literal ascent through physically distinct heavens. Nonetheless, it's an ascent, the journey of the mind to God—the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*—as St. Bonaventure (d. 1274) called it in the West. It also becomes a standard feature in some areas of Islamic philosophy— in al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, al-Kirmani, and others roughly in the tenth and eleventh centuries. They have a philosophical view of the same thing. But their conception of ten steps up to the presence of God is correlated with their understanding of Ptolemaic astronomy; they're passing through the planetary spheres in order to ascend up into the presence of God.

In the case of the founder of Islam, Muhammad ascends into the physical presence of God and receives his commission as a prophet or at least is given instructions for his behavior *as* a prophet or told things that he's commanded to then teach the people. In the mystical experiences of the later Muslim Sufis, they achieve what sometimes is known as *fana',* which signifies disappearance, vanishing, becoming one with deity—which can obviously be understood as, in a sense, becoming deified.

I was struck by some things that David Larsen said about accounts in which people go up into the divine throne room and see themselves, or something like themselves, seated upon the divine throne. One of the most famous mystical texts from medieval Islam is a text called the *Mantiq al-Tayr* or, in English, *The Conference of the Birds.* In it, the Persian writer Farid al-Din 'Attar writes about a group of birds who get together—it's all metaphorical, of course, all allegorical—to seek the king of the birds, the monarch of the birds. The monarch of the birds is known in Persian legend as the Simorgh. Hundreds of thousands of birds start off, but it's a very difficult path, and they pass through various valleys and ordeals and tests. By the time they get up to the throne room of the Simorgh, there are only thirty of them left. Only thirty have made it. And then, to their astonishment when they get there, upon the throne they see themselves. The climax of the allegory rests upon a pun in Persian: *Simorgh* is not only the name of the mythical bird, but, in Persian, it also means *thirty birds.* This is, thus, very similar to what Larsen was describing.

Now, I'm struck too by the emphasis that Barker places on the idea of the temple officiator, the high priest as a representative, as almost the reality of the Lord himself. I think of our own practice and of the statement in the Doctrine and Covenants that says of a person speaking or acting in the proper way and with legitimate priesthood authority, that it's as if the Lord himself were acting or speaking: "whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same" (D&C 1:38).

I can't help but think, too, of situations in which temple officiators actually represent the Lord—the earthly presence of the Lord, in a sense—and even of our ordinary mode of speaking in the Church when, in prayers, performatory utterances, ordinances, and talks in church, we conclude with *in the name of Jesus Christ,* as if Jesus Christ himself were there speaking or acting. We very often do this rather perfunctorily and without thought, but it's a serious thing to claim to be acting or speaking in his name. It certainly seems to me to put a real burden on us, to try to make sure that what we are saying or doing is at least roughly the kind of thing that ought to be done or said on that occasion!

I like Barker's emphasis on John 17, on the oneness there in the high priestly prayer. Let me just say something very briefly about that, because it is a powerful, powerful passage.

There is a trend now, in certain areas of Christian thought, to apply John 17 to the doctrine of the Trinity. Some people, not only in Catholic

and Protestant circles but in Orthodox circles, are now formulating a doctrine of the Trinity called *Social Trinitarianism.* It is intended to replace what you might call the older Nicene *Substance Trinitarianism.* In Social Trinitarianism, the idea that there is a perfect oneness between Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost does not make them one substance. Substance Trinitarianism rest on a Middle Platonic or Aristotelian conception that is quite foreign to the scriptures. Instead, Social Trinitarianism makes the three members of the Trinity or Godhead absolutely one in purpose, in mind. An old Greek term that is used for this kind of unity is *perichoresis,* which refers to a sort of perfect mutual indwelling, where each one is perfectly aware of what the other is thinking and feeling. There is, in this view, not a hair's breadth of difference between them, and the idea here is that that kind of social fellowship, that perfect fellowship that exists between the members of the Trinity or the Godhead, is the kind of fellowship into which, to some degree or another, based on John 17, human beings might have the potential of gaining admission. For, if we are to be one as the Father and the Son are one (John 17:11), then it's possible that, if we learn to align our wills perfectly with theirs and to be thoroughly indwelt by their spirit, we might be one with them, too. And then we could be one with them in that divine fellowship, and that, surely, would be a form of deification.

Finally, I wanted to allude just briefly to one area where I think the Latter-day Saints take to the idea of deification in a very special way. It's reflected in the New Testament in Paul's address to the Athenians on Mars Hill. He faces a really interesting challenge there, because he's not able to cite scripture. Using proof texts from the Bible while speaking to a group of pagans atop Mars Hill near the Acropolis in Athens would have been rather pointless; they didn't know anything, or care anything, about the Bible. And so he appeals to them using a different approach, and one of the passages from his speech is of extreme interest to me. This is where, in Acts 17:28–29, he quotes a couple of pagan poets to his pagan audience there. Paul is well-educated; he knows pagan literature, as well as the Bible. So, he says, speaking of God, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Now, one of the interesting things about this passage is that he's not citing a Christian poem or even a Jewish poem. He's quoting a pagan Greek poem by Aratus of Cilicia, a third-century BC writer who is referring to Zeus. Paul is assimilating the God of Christianity to Zeus and saying, I'm going to quote this passage because it's true, just as your poet said, that we are God's offspring.

Now, the Greek word that is translated as *offspring* there is quite interesting to me. It's *genos*. *Genos* is closely (and obviously) related to the Latin word *genus*. But it's also, interestingly enough, related to our word *kind* and, perhaps more significantly, to our word *kin*. Aratus and, therefore, Paul—who quotes Aratus with obvious approval and as an authority—are saying that we are in some sense akin to God. And that is one of the reasons why he then goes on to say to the pagan Athenians that they shouldn't be worshipping stone or wood or anything like that; it's beneath you to do that, he says, because you are God's offspring, and stone and wood are lower than you are. So you should worship a God worthy of you, worthy of the description *God.* And one of the ways he makes that point to them is by saying that they are akin to God.

That is one of the reasons why, it seems to me, *theosis* is something that humans can possibly attain. Because we are of the right kind. I won't go into it here this afternoon, but that's a fundamental ideal of Neoplatonic philosophy, which becomes very influential in Islamic thought and across much of the Mediterranean world—that we are emanations from God and that, because of that, we are in some sense related to God. Therefore, it's possible in a sense—the different schemes for accomplishing it vary from Plotinus to Proclus and Iamblichus and others in the Neoplatonic tradition—to climb back up to God because we are of that nature and because that is where we came from. We come from God and, if we navigate things successfully in this mortal life, in the many tests we have to undergo, we return to God.

This idea of *theosis* or human deification, divinization, is an extraordinarily rich one. I used to think that we Latter-day Saints stood alone in thinking about it and believing in it. But that was an ignorant error on my part, because it's all over the place—in Islam, in Judaism, in Christianity, and well beyond them, in pagan thought and in other faiths and traditions around the world. It's a fascinating theme.

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Let there be light—

the story we're still
trying to tell:

the initial collapse
and compression

of gases—
the game of chicken

every atom
refuses to lose—

the glowing furnace
of their union,

quantum syllables
blistering this tongue

of a universe still
trilling with verbs

from God's sigh—

—Tyler Chadwick

"An Angel or Rather the Savior" at the Kirtland Temple Dedication

The Vision of Frederick G. Williams

Frederick G. Williams

At the Kirtland Temple dedication on Sunday, March 27, 1836, President Frederick G. Williams testified that he saw a holy angel enter the temple during the opening prayer and take his seat between Joseph Smith Sr. and himself in the upper pulpits on the Melchizedek priesthood side of the room, a holy site that had just been dedicated and consecrated to the Lord earlier that morning. This study collects nine eyewitness statements regarding Williams's vision of the heavenly personage to see if the identity of the angel as well as the purpose of his visit can be determined from their records. This article also suggests that Williams's vision was of Christ because such a vision would fulfill the prophecies and pattern of having all the first First Presidency witness the Savior for themselves, so they, as spokesmen, could spread "the word . . . to the ends of the earth" (D&C 90:9).

There has been some confusion on this matter because one account, given by Truman Angell in 1884, nearly fifty years after the fact, states that Joseph Smith identified Peter as the angel who had "come to accept the dedication,"[1] while four other eyewitnesses, writing nearer to the time of the event, recorded that the angel was the Savior himself who had come to the dedication.

Oliver Cowdery published an account of the proceedings of the day in the *Messenger and Advocate.* The service began at 9 a.m. and had one thousand people in attendance. Sidney Rigdon read the 96th and

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1. Truman O. Angell, Autobiography, 1884, p. 16, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

24th psalms. A choir sang "Ere Long the Vail Will Rend in Twain," which was written by Frederick G. Williams.[2] President Rigdon gave an opening prayer, another hymn was sung, and then Rigdon spoke for two and a half hours on the temple. Rigdon then presented Joseph Smith Jr. as prophet and seer to the presidency of the Church, to each quorum, and to the congregation, which was acknowledged in each instance by a unanimous vote. Another hymn was sung. The meeting had a short intermission and recommenced in the afternoon with another hymn, remarks from Joseph Smith, and then Joseph presented the several presidents of the Church as being equal with himself, acknowledging them to be prophets and seers. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative. Another hymn followed, and then Joseph Smith gave the dedicatory prayer, which is recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 109. Another hymn was sung, President Smith asked the quorums and the congregation if they accepted the prayer, and then he conducted a vote. The sacrament was administered. Joseph Smith then spoke about his mission. Don Carlos Smith spoke, Oliver Cowdery spoke on the Book of Mormon, and then Frederick G. Williams spoke. Cowdery reported, "President F. G. Williams bore record that a Holy Angel of God, came and set between him and J. Smith sen. while the house was being dedicated." Hyrum Smith spoke, and Sidney Rigdon gave "closing remarks; and a short prayer which was ended with loud acclamations of Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna to God and the Lamb, Amen, Amen and Amen! Three times." Brigham Young spoke "in tongues," and David Patten "interpreted and gave a short exhortation in tongues himself." Joseph blessed the congregation, and at about 4 p.m. the meeting closed.[3]

Joseph Smith's journal records Williams's statement in this manner: "I [Joseph Smith] then bore testimony of the administering of angels.[4]—

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2. Frederick G. Williams, "Singing the Word of God: Five Hymns by President Frederick G. Williams," *BYU Studies* 48, no. 1 (2009): 69. The veil in fact was rent in twain by a heavenly visitor whom Williams saw immediately following the singing of the hymn.

3. "Kirtland, Ohio, March 27th, 1836," *Messenger and Advocate* 2 (March 1836): 274–81.

4. Joseph sometimes spoke of the post-mortal Christ as an angel and even as a man "like ourselves" (D&C 130:1). Four months before the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, Joseph refers to the Savior and even the Father as angels, when speaking to Erastus Holmes (who was not a Church member) on November 14, 1835, about his First Vision: "I commenced and gave him a brief relation of my experience while in my juvenile years, say from 6, years old up

Presdt Williams also arose and testified that while Presdt Rigdon was making his first prayer an angel entered the window and <took his> seated ~~himself~~ between father Smith, and himself, and remained their during his prayer Presdt David Whitmer also saw angels in the house."[5]

Another meeting was held later that same day in the temple, and the visions continued. Joseph Smith's journal records, "Met in the evening and instructed the quorums respecting the ordinance of washing of feet which we were to attend to on wednesday following."[6] Joseph Smith's history adds that in this evening meeting, he and others saw glorious visions: In fact, the temple was filled with angels.

> I gave them Instruction in relation to the spirit of Prophecy and called upon the Congregation to speak, and not fear to prophecy good concerning the saints, for if you prophecy the falling of these hills and the rising of these valleys, The downfall of the enemies of Zion, and the rising of the Kingdom of God—it shall come to pass.—do not quench the spirit—for the first one that opens his mouth shall receive the spirit of prophecy.—brother George A. Smith arose and began to prophecy when a voice was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind which filled the Temple and all the congregation simultaneously arose being moved upon by an invisible power many began to speak in Tongues and prophecy others saw glorious visions and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels which fact I declared to the <to the congregation> The people in the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within and seeing a bright light like a piller of Fire resting upon—the Temple) and where astonished at what was transpiring The number present on this occasion was 416 (being a greater number of official members

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to the time I received the first visitation of Angels which was when I was about 14, years old and also the visitations that I received afterward, concerning the book of Mormon, and a short account of the rise and progress of the church, up to this date." "Journal, 1835–1836," 36–37, Church History Library, available online at Church Historian's Press, *The Joseph Smith Papers,* http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-1835-1836/37; Dean C. Jessee, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, *The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals, Volume 1: 1832–1839,* vol. 1 of the Journals series of *The Joseph Smith Papers,* ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2008), 100.

5. "Journal, 1835–1836," 184–85; Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Volume 1,* 210–11.

6. "Journal, 1835–1836," 185; Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Volume 1,* 211.

than ever assembled on any former occasion) this continued until the meeting closed at 11 P.M.[7]

Additional Accounts

Unfortunately, Frederick G. Williams left no personal account of this experience. However, other records give us more information about Williams's vision. Some reports tell of Williams's description of the visitor's appearance. Most importantly, four accounts add that the angel was the Savior. The accounts are given in rough chronological order of the time they were written. The accounts are charted in the accompanying table.

Stephen Post. Brother Stephen Post kept a journal from his baptism in 1835 until his death in 1879. The entry for March 27–31, 1836, tells of his attendance at the Kirtland Temple dedication and of the testimony Frederick G. Williams bore of seeing an angel:

> President F. G. Williams arose & testified that in the A.M. an angel of God came into the window (at the back of the pulpit) while Pt. Rigdon was at prayer & took his seat between him & Father Joseph Smith sen. & remained there during the prayer.[8]

Edward Partridge. Bishop Partridge also penned a few important lines about the temple dedication in his 1833–36 diary. In addition to confirming the participants' roles and the sequence of events, Partridge's brief account also includes the appearance of the heavenly messenger to Frederick G. Williams, whom Partridge stated was the Savior.

> Sunday the 27 [March 1836] Met and dedicated the house of the Lord. Prest. Rigdon preached in the forenoon. Prest. J. Smith Jun made many remarks and delivered the dedication prayer. Met at 8 morn & dismissed ¼ past 4 afternoon Met again in the evening that is the authorities of the church. many spoke in tongues some saw visions &c.

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7. "History, 1838–1856, Volume B-1 [1 September 1834–2 November 1838]," Addenda, Note J, March 27, 1836, Church History Library, available online at Church Historian's Press, *The Joseph Smith Papers,* http://www.josephsmith papers.org/paperSummary/history-1838-1856-volume-b-1-1-september-1834 -2-november-1838?p=306; see also Joseph Smith Jr., *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), 2:428.

8. Stephen Post, Journal, March 27–31, 1836, MS 1304 [Second Acquisition, Journals, 1835 July–1839 March], Stephen Post Papers, 1835–1921, Church History Library, available online at *Church History Library,* https://dcms.lds.org/ delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE2336708, images 15–16.

Accounts of Frederick G. Williams's Testimony

Witnesses	O. Cowdery	J. Smith	S. Post	E. Partridge	N. Knight	L. Knight	G. A. Smith	H. C. Kimball	T. Angell
Year recorded	1836	1836	1836?	1836?	Before 1847	Before 1884	1864	Before 1868	1884
Williams saw an angel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
The vision happened at the morning meeting of the temple dedication		X	X	X					X
The place the angel occupied in the temple: The pulpit	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Williams described the appearance of the angel					X	X	X	X	
Reason for the angel's coming: To accept the dedication					X		X	X	X
Identity of angel: The Savior				X	X	X	X		
Identity of the angel: Peter									X
It was Joseph Smith who identified the angel					X	X			X

> Doct. F. G. Williams saw an angel or rather the Savior during the fore-noon service.[9]

Newel Knight. Newel Knight, another eyewitness, wrote an entry in his diary that supports the account that Joseph Smith identified the angel as Christ himself.

> When he [Williams] had described the dress and personal appearance of the holy visitor brother Joseph said it was Christ himself. This was to me a satisfaction to know that the Lord did come into the house we had labored so diligently to build to his name, and that he had accepted it of his servants.[10]

Lydia Knight. Lydia, Newel Knight's wife, recorded a similar testimony and possibly wrote it at about the same time.

> F. G. Williams arose and testified that while the prayer was being offered, a personage came in and sat down between Father Smith and himself, and remained there during the prayer. He described his clothing and appearance. Joseph said that the personage was Jesus, as the dress described was that of our Savior, it being in some respects different to the clothing of the angels.[11]

George A. Smith. Apostle George A. Smith told about Williams's vision and about further visions in a speech in Utah in 1864:

> On the first day of the dedication, President Frederick G. Williams, one of the Council of the Prophet, and who occupied the upper pulpit, bore testimony that the Savior, dressed in his vesture without seam, came into the stand and accepted of the dedication of the house, that he saw him, and gave a description of his clothing and all things pertaining to it. That evening there was a collection of Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, etc., amounting to four hundred and sixteen, gathered in the house; there were great manifestations of power, such as speaking in tongues, seeing visions, administration of angels. Many individuals

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9. Edward Partridge, Diaries, 1818 and 1835–36, 40–41, Church History Library.

10. Newel Knight, Journals and Autobiography, Allen version, in a private collection, quoted in William G. Hartley, *Stand by My Servant Joseph: The Story of the Joseph Knight Family and the Restoration* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 241. Newel recorded that Williams's vision happened during Rigdon's opening prayer. The date of this writing is uncertain; Newel Knight died in 1847.

11. "Homespun" [Susa Young Gates], *Lydia Knight's History,* vol. 1 of Noble Women's Lives Series (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1883), 33.

bore testimony that they saw angels, and David Whitmer bore testimony that he saw three angels passing up the south aisle, and there came a shock on the house like the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and almost every man in the house arose, and hundreds of them were speaking in tongues, prophecying or declaring visions, almost with one voice.[12]

Heber C. Kimball. President Heber C. Kimball recorded in his journal what Frederick said and included many details about the appearance of the messenger.

> During the ceremonies of the dedication an angel appeared and sat near President Joseph Smith, Sen., and Frederick G. Williams so that they had a fair view of his person. He was a very tall personage, black eyes, white hair, and stoop shouldered, his garment was white, extending to near his ankles, on his feet he had sandals. He was sent as a messenger to accept of the dedication.[13]

Truman O. Angell. Angell, who helped to build the Kirtland Temple and later was the designer of the Salt Lake Temple, wrote late in life concerning the angelic visitor that Frederick G. Williams saw and said that Joseph identified the visitor as the Apostle Peter come to accept the dedication.

> The Hall was filled at an early hour in the forenoon, I being present among the rest. The Dedicatory prayer was offered Sidney Rigdon being mouth[.]
>
> When about midway during the prayer there was a glorious sensation passed through the House; and we, having our heads bowed in prayer felt a sensation very elevating to the soul.
>
> At the close of the prayer F. G. Williams being in the upper East stand (Joseph being in the speaking stand next below) rose and testified that midway during the prayer an holy angel came and seated himself in the stand.

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12. George A. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses,* 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 11:10 (November 15, 1864).

13. Heber C. Kimball, Journal, quoted in Helen Mar Whitney, "Life Incidents," *Woman's Exponent* 9 (February 1, 1881): 130; and in Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball, an Apostle: The Father and Founder of the British Mission* (Salt Lake City: Kimball Family through the Juvenile Instructor Office, 1888), 103. These publications used Kimball's journal as a source. Kimball died in 1868.

> When the afternoon meeting assembled Joseph feeling very much elated, arose the first thing and said the Personage who had appeared in the morning was the Angel Peter come to accept the dedication.[14]

Angell's recollection claims that the dedicatory prayer was offered by Sidney Rigdon, when in fact it was offered by Joseph Smith. Also, Angell's recollection is the only one that says that Joseph Smith identified the angel as Peter, when four other accounts (Edward Partridge, George A. Smith, Newel Knight, and Lydia Knight) specifically state that the angel was the Savior. The evidence strongly supports the latter identification.

It is unfortunate that Angell's account is the one that some historians prefer regarding the identity of the angel. In 1975, Lyndon W. Cook published a note titled "The Apostle Peter and the Kirtland Temple."[15] Cook cites the accounts of Joseph Smith (or the scribe who wrote his journal), Heber C. Kimball, and Truman O. Angell and concludes that Peter was the angel that Williams saw. Alexander Baugh in 1999 also favored the idea of the visitor being Peter in his article on Joseph Smith's visions.[16] The incomplete study of the identity of Williams's angel continues in the 2008 publication of *The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals, Volume 1.*[17] The book cites Edward Partridge's account that the angel was the Savior but suggests that Partridge is conflating Williams's March 27, 1836, vision with the vision of Jesus Christ shared by Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery a week later, as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 110. The book acknowledges that Angell's account was written decades later. Likewise, Karl Ricks Anderson in *The Savior in Kirtland* (2012) cites the accounts of Edward Partridge and George A. Smith in favor of the heavenly visitor being the Savior, but finds that since the Savior came to the

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14. Angell, Autobiography, p. 16; see also Archie Leon Brown and Charlene L. Hathaway, *141 Years of Mormon Heritage* (Oakland, Calif.: Archie Leon Brown, 1973), 124–25; and Truman O. Angell Sr., "His Journal," in *Our Pioneer Heritage,* comp. Kate B. Carter, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1958–77), 10:198.

15. Lyndon W. Cook, "The Apostle Peter and the Kirtland Temple," *BYU Studies* 15, no. 4 (1975): 550–52.

16. Alexander L. Baugh, "Parting the Veil: The Visions of Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies* 38, no. 1 (1999): 40–41; reprinted in *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820–1844,* ed. John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), 286. The second edition of *Opening the Heavens* (2017) was changed to acknowledge that the visitor was more likely the Savior.

17. Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Volume 1,* 211.

temple on April 3, "it seems unlikely that the Savior would appear twice to accept the dedication," and finds the Partridge and George A. Smith accounts "problematic."[18]

When the accounts stated herein are considered, the evidence that Joseph Smith stated the angel was the Savior is stronger than Angell's single account. The idea that the Savior would come to the temple only a week after its dedication on April 3 but not attend the actual dedication ceremony does not correlate well with the Savior having already visited Joseph Smith and others in the Kirtland Temple on January 21, 1836 (a portion of which vision was later recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 137) and several other recorded instances besides the First Vision and the temple dedication.[19] It is unlikely that the Savior would appear in the temple before the dedication and soon afterward but not during the actual dedication. Also, when Christ appeared to Joseph and Oliver on April 3, he did not say, "I accept this house," but rather, "I have accepted this house," which form suggests something done in the past. The sentence forms part of the Lord's command to tell the people that built the house to rejoice, for he had accepted the temple: "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. Yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice" (D&C 110:6–8).

In further support that the angel was the Savior, Truman Angell's recollection states that Joseph was elated that the heavenly personage had come. The Lord's acceptance of the temple had been promised and had been prayed for in the dedicatory prayer, which was given to Joseph earlier by revelation. In the following passage, the Prophet asks for the Lord's divine acceptance of the house as a fulfillment of the promise that the Lord's holy presence would continually be in this house.

> And now, Holy Father, we ask thee to assist us, thy people, with thy grace, in calling our solemn assembly, that it may be done to thine honor and to thy divine acceptance; And in a manner that we may be found worthy, in thy sight, to secure a fulfilment of the promises which

18. Karl Ricks Anderson, *The Savior in Kirtland* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 238. The Savior also appeared in the temple on March 30 and April 3.

19. Baugh, "Seventy-Six Accounts of Joseph Smith's Visionary Experiences," in *Opening the Heavens,* 2d ed. (2017), 302–9; see the report of many visions on January 21, 1836, in Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Volume 1,* 170.

thou hast made unto us, thy people, in the revelations given unto us; That thy glory may rest down upon thy people, and upon this thy house, which we now dedicate to thee, that it may be sanctified and consecrated to be holy, and that thy holy presence may be continually in this house; And that all people who shall enter upon the threshold of the Lord's house may feel thy power, and feel constrained to acknowledge that thou hast sanctified it, and that it is thy house, a place of thy holiness (D&C 109:10–13).

Unfortunately, Truman Angell confused the personage who had come to accept it, just as he had confused the person who had offered the dedicatory prayer.

A Secondary Account. Ebenezer Robinson quoted Oliver Cowdery's *Messenger and Advocate* account and then added a personal note:

"President F. [Frederick] G. Williams bore record that a holy angel of God came and sat between him and J. [Joseph] Smith, Sen., while the house was being dedicated."

We did not see the angel, but the impression has evidently obtained with some, that we did see the angel, from the fact that different persons, strangers from abroad, have called upon us and expressed gratification at meeting with a person who had seen an angel, referring to the above circumstance. We told them they were mistaken, that we did not see the angel, but that President F. [Frederick] G. Williams testified as above stated. We believed his testimony, and have often spoke of it both publicly and privately.[20]

Robinson's account adds no personal information about Joseph or Frederick's statements given at the dedicatory meeting but adds evidence that the vision was known among the Saints.

The Significance of This Vision

When presenting his counselors at the temple dedication for a sustaining vote as prophets and seers, Joseph Smith made a point of saying that they were equal with himself. Furthermore, Oliver Cowdery made it a point of recording it that way in the minutes: "President J. Smith jr. then rose, and after a few preliminary remarks, presented the several Presidents of

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20. Ebenezer Robinson, "The Return," Donald Q. Cannon faculty and family papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

the church, then present, to the several quorums respectively, and then to the church as being equal with himself, acknowledging them to be Prophets and Seers."[21] The idea of the several presidents being equal was not a new concept: D&C 90:6, received on March 8, 1833, reads, "And again, verily I say unto thy brethren, Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams, their sins are forgiven them also, and they are accounted as equal with thee in holding the keys of this last kingdom."

On December 5, 1834, Joseph Smith, aided by his two assistant presidents, Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams, ordained Oliver Cowdery an assistant president of the Church, an office the two counselors already held and would again have confirmed upon them at that same meeting. Joseph explained that the office of assistant president, besides assisting in presiding over the whole church, was to act as a spokesman.

> Friday Evening, December 5, 1834. According to the direction of the Holy Spirit, President Smith, assistant Presidents, Rigdon and Williams, assembled for the purpose of ordaining <first> High Counsellor Cowdery to the office of assistant President of the High and Holy Priesthood in the Church of the Latter-Day Saints.
>
> It is necessary, for the special benefit of the reader, that he be instructed <into, or> concerning the power and authority of the above named Priesthood.
>
> First. The office of the president is to preside over the whole Chu[r]ch; to be considered as at the head; to receive revelations for the church; to be a Seer, ~~and~~ Revelator <and Prophet—> having all the gifts of God:—~~having~~ taking Moses for an ensample. . . .
>
> Second. The office of Assistant President is to assist in presiding over the whole chu[r]ch, and to officiate in the absence of the President, according to ~~their~~ <his> rank and appointment, viz: President Cowdery, first; President Rigdon Second, and President Williams Third, as they <were> ~~are~~ severally called. The office of this Priesthood is also to act as Spokesman—taking Aaron for an ensample. . . .
>
> Presidents Rigdon, and Williams, confirmed the ordinance and blessings by the laying on of hands and prayer, after which each were blessed with the same blessings and prayer.[22]

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21. "Kirtland, Ohio, March 27th, 1836," 277.

22. "History, 1834–1836," 17, 19, Church History Library, available online at Church Historian's Press, *Joseph Smith Papers,* http://www.josephsmithpapers .org/paper-summary/history-1834-1836/19; Karen Lynn Davidson and others, eds., *Histories, Volume 1: Joseph Smith Histories, 1832–1844,* vol. 1 of the Histories

Why would the members of this first First Presidency be considered equal with the Prophet, according to the Lord? Why were they considered spokesmen? In what way could they demonstrate they were equal with and spokesmen for the Prophet? Certainly as fellow-witnesses of Jesus Christ and the restoration of his Church. Joseph Smith testified that he saw the Savior, and by April 1836 these men could each add their own witness that they had also seen the Savior. As prophets and seers equal in holding the keys of this last kingdom, they were each special witnesses of Jesus Christ.

The sequence of these visions is much like the pattern followed by the special witnesses to the gold plates. Joseph first saw the angel Moroni and the plates in 1823. It wasn't until 1829, however, that three others saw the angel and the plates, which lifted a great burden from Joseph's shoulders, for he was no longer the only witness. Others also saw the plates, of course, but these three special witnesses were designated and were fulfilling a prophesy given in the Book of Mormon itself (2 Nephi 27:12).

In like manner, Joseph saw the Savior and the Father in 1820. But it wasn't until 1832 that Sidney Rigdon became a second witness of the Savior, as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 76:20, 24: "We beheld the glory of the Son, . . . 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." Frederick G. Williams saw the angel of the Lord (and was instructed by Joseph that it was the Savior) at the Kirtland Temple dedication on March 27, 1836. Oliver Cowdery saw the Lord a week later, on April 3, 1836. The individual testimonies of the Savior witnessed by each of the three assistant presidents occurred at different times, but each in public, where others could hear or see that something sacred was occurring, and not in hidden settings.

It is also significant that the Book of Mormon prophesied that the Latter-day prophet who would bring forth the record of the Nephites would have a "spokesman" that "shall write the writing of the fruit of [Joseph of Egypt's] loins" (2 Nephi 3:18). We often associate that spokesman with Sidney Rigdon; a scripture given in 1833 (D&C 100:9–10) and Rigdon's activities corroborate that he was a spokesman. But "spokesman" is more a reference to a position or calling rather than to a person, as Joseph explained on December 5, 1834, and all three assistant presidents became spokesmen for Joseph: by witnessing and witnessing of the

Savior and by writing the Prophet's words. Oliver was the scribe for most of Joseph's translation of the Book of Mormon and a witness to the restoration of both priesthoods by heavenly angels. Sidney was the most vocal spokesman for Joseph, but also the scribe for most of Joseph's translation of the New Testament. Frederick was the scribe for Joseph's early history, the bulk of Joseph's words in the revelations found in the Doctrine and Covenants, and most of Joseph's translation of the Old Testament.

Doctrine and Covenants 90 tells much about their shared responsibilities, unique to that first First Presidency. It states that they are also equal in holding the keys of the School of the Prophets, so that "they may be perfected in their ministry for the salvation of Zion, and of the nations of Israel, and of the Gentiles, as many as will believe" and then "through your [Joseph's] administration they may receive the word, and through their administration the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth" (D&C 90:7, 8, 9). In addition, it is these three men with Joseph that select the revelations for the Book of Commandments and Doctrine and Covenants (and their names are on the title page), and it is F. G. Williams & Co. that publishes the Doctrine and Covenants, the hymnal, the *Messenger and Advocate* and the continuation of the *Evening and Morning Star*, plus several other publications containing Joseph's words.

The visions and testimonies of the Savior by Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams, and Oliver Cowdery are all recorded in foundational Church histories. However, the canonization of the testimonies of these four special witnesses as scripture is not parallel. Sidney Rigdon's vision was canonized first in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (section 76). The compilers of the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants included Oliver Cowdery's vision as section 110. Joseph's First Vision was not canonized as scripture until 1880, in the Pearl of Great Price.[23] Frederick's vision has not been canonized as scripture, and very little of the other appearances of the Savior have been canonized. For example, only a portion of the glorious vision of the Father and Son to Joseph on January 21, 1836, was canonized and included in the Doctrine and Covenants in 1981 as section 137.[24]

Many besides the three witnesses who corroborated Joseph Smith's testimony of the plates saw the plates of gold. Many besides the three assistant presidents who corroborated Joseph's testimony of the Savior saw the Savior before and during the Pentecostal outpouring in

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23. See the introduction to the Pearl of Great Price.
24. See the introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants.

connection with the temple dedication, including at the solemn assembly held March 30, 1836, where "the Saviour made His appearance to some, while angels minestered to others, and it was a penticost and an enduement indeed, long to be remembered."[25] But in the case of the members of the Presidency, these were special witnesses, set apart for just such a testimony.

It is not by coincidence that Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams are listed on the title page of the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (1835) and identified as the "Presiding Elders of said Church." These four also signed the preface and dated it February 17, 1835.

Frederick G. Williams had been told in a blessing that he would see the Savior. The blessing was given when the Quorum of the Seventy was formed, on March 1, 1835. Frederick was told, "Thou shalt stand according to thy desires and see the face of thy Redeemer."[26] Frederick's patriarchal blessing, given by Joseph Smith Sr. on September 14, 1835, has these words: "Thou shalt have the ministering of angels not far hence, and the visions of heaven shall be unfolded to thy mind."[27]

Was Truman Angell incorrect that Peter visited the Kirtland Temple? There were so many visions in connection with the temple, beginning in January 1836 and continuing into at least April 1836, that it might be considered unusual if Peter did not come to the temple at some point, since he played an important role in the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood. In fact, Joseph had said on that evening, "I beheld the Temple was filled with angels which fact I declared to the congregation."[28] Most assuredly many others who helped in the Restoration were also present. Latter-day Saints wish more could be known for certain about the identity of these heavenly visitors. Even though we may not know who they were, we can all rejoice that there is a heavenly presence in temples. Eliza R. Snow wrote concerning the dedication held March 27, 1836, "The ceremonies of that dedication may be rehearsed, but no

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25. "Journal, 1835–1836," 189; Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Volume 1,* 215–16.

26. "Minute Book 1," 186, Church History Library, available online at Church Historian's Press*, Joseph Smith Papers,* http://www.josephsmithpapers .org/paper-summary/minute-book-1/190.

27. Patriarchal Blessing Book 1:30–32, Church History Library, cited in *Early Patriarchal Blessings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* comp. H. Michael Marquardt (Salt Lake City: Smith-Petit Foundation, 2007), 53–55.

28. "History, 1838–1856, Volume B-1," Addenda, Note J, March 27, 1836.

mortal language can describe the heavenly manifestations of that memorable day. Angels appeared to some, while a sense of divine presence was realized by all present, and each heart was filled with 'joy inexpressible and full of glory.'"[29]

The place the angelic visitor appeared in the Kirtland Temple in Williams's vision is significant because those pulpits had been dedicated earlier that morning by the First Presidency in a separate ceremony preceding the dedication of the temple as a whole: "The presidency entered with the door kepers and aranged them at the inner and outer doors also placed our stewards to receiv donations from those who should feel disposed to contribute something to defray the expenses of building the House of the Lord—<we also dedicated the pulpits & consecrated them to the Lord> The doors were then opened President Rigdon President Cowdery and myself seated the congregation as they came in."[30] It was in that same pulpit location, with the veils dropped, that Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery a few days later, on April 3, 1836, for that was the most holy of holy spaces in the temple.[31]

In summary, the details surrounding the appearance of the angel of whom President Frederick G. Williams testified at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple are remarkably consistent among the nine eyewitnesses, with the one exception. Six state that the personage sat between Williams and Smith Sr. (Oliver Cowdery, Joseph Smith, Stephen Post, Lydia Knight, Heber C. Kimball). Four state the vision took place in the morning (Joseph Smith, Stephen Post, Edward Partridge, Truman Angell). Four recorded some portion of President Williams's description of the personage's dress (Newel Knight, Lydia Knight, George A. Smith, Heber C. Kimball). Four reported that the heavenly personage was

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29. Eliza R. Snow, quoted in Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York, 1877), 95.

30. Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Volume 1,* 200.

31. "When enclosed by the hanging 'veils,' the pulpits functioned as an inner sanctum analogous to the veiled 'most holy place' in Solomon's temple." Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Journals, Volume 1,* 200 n. 415. On March 29, 1836, two days after the dedication of first the pulpits and then the whole temple, the presidents met in that sacred place seeking a revelation: "At 11 o clock A.M. Presidents Joseph Smith Junr., Frederick G. Williams, Sidney Rigdon, Hyrum Smith, and Oliver Cowdery met in the most holy place in the Lord's house and sought for a revelation from him to teach us concerning our going to Zion, and other important matters." "History, 1838–1856, Volume B-1," 723.

the Savior (Edward Partridge, Newel Knight, Lydia Knight, George A. Smith). One reported that the personage was Peter (Truman Angell). Three reported that it was Joseph Smith who identified the personage (Newel Knight, Lydia Knight, Truman Angell). Four reported that the purpose of the angel's appearance was to accept the dedicated temple (Newel Knight, George A. Smith, Heber C. Kimball, Truman Angell).

It would be most befitting that the heavenly visitor was the Savior himself, for this was his house, the House of the Lord, and, as Newel Knight reported, "This was to me a satisfaction to know that the Lord did come into the house we had labored so diligently to build to his name, and that he had accepted it of his servants."[32]

Frederick G. Williams is the Gerrit de Jong Jr. Distinguished Professor of Luso-Afro-Brazilian Studies at Brigham Young University and the author of twenty-six volumes and more than fifty articles. He is a grandson twice removed of Frederick G. Williams and wrote his namesake's biography, *The Life of Dr. Frederick G. Williams: Counselor to the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 2012). He serves on the BYU Studies Church history editorial board.

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32. Newel Knight, in Hartley, *Stand by My Servant Joseph*, 241.

No Words

Elizabeth Dodds

After all these years, I'm still afraid of getting a brain aneurysm. Just a few weeks ago in church, my head started hurting, and I reached up and felt a vein throbbing on the side of my skull. I leaned over to my uncle sitting beside me and whispered, "What if it's a brain aneurysm?" He laughed and said it wasn't. "But how can you be sure?" I thought. Because I looked up brain aneurysms a long time ago and found out that they have no symptoms. No warnings before they hit you like an air bag. *Wham.* Suddenly, there's an artery bursting in your brain and you're bleeding to death inside your own mind.

I wasn't always afraid of getting a brain aneurysm. The fear came years ago when I was still taking classes at BYU–Idaho. I had written "learn sign language" on my bucket list, so for my last semester, I had signed up for the one and only ASL class they offered on campus.

We were assigned to groups of about five in the class. Twice a week, we were expected to meet up with our group and practice sign language. For our first meeting, my group chose a busier part of the library to meet in, hoping we wouldn't be noticed by the other students as we attempted to communicate with wild gestures and incomprehensible expressions.

I don't remember a whole lot from that first meeting. In fact, I remember only one moment. It's funny how some of life's scenes stick in your mind, playing like perfect moving pictures, while others seem to slowly dissolve until they've disappeared completely down the black canal of your mind. This one moment stuck with me. It tacked itself permanently on the bulletin board of my brain.

It's the memory of Tracie. Tracie was the only other girl in my group (that I can remember, at least). She was younger than me and was married to a guy in our group named . . . I actually can't remember. I know that it started with a *T* because I remember thinking that their names had alliteration. Well, anyway, she had been married to T for maybe a year, maybe less.

Our assignment that meeting was to introduce ourselves to our group. Signs only. No words. The problem was, we had learned only about two signs so far in class, so we would basically be pantomiming the entire time.

I don't know who went first, but Tracie had her turn at some point. I know because I remember how she sat there across the table from me, her eyes huge behind black, plastic glasses as she attempted to explain to us without words how she loved fireworks. First, she puffed out her cheeks as far as they would go. Then, in a sudden theatrical display, she leaned forward and threw her arms out wide, releasing the air from her cheeks in a silent explosion of unseen color and light. A firework.

The next day in class, we played the game Spoons. Our teacher silently explained to us that we would be playing it because it used the same body parts that sign language used: the hands, the eyes, and the brain.

We sat in a circle on the dirty gray carpet and passed out four cards to each person. I sat cross-legged and kept one eye on the spoons and one eye on my cards, passing them almost without looking. The way I saw it, you didn't need all the same cards to win—you just needed a spoon. Using this technique, I made it to the final round. All the other players had been eliminated except for me and Tracie.

We started the final game. Cards flew so fast you couldn't tell if they were clubs or diamonds. The neat piles turned into scattered numbers across the floor, the one remaining spoon sitting between us, waiting. Then, just when I had gotten my last card for the win, Tracie snatched up the spoon and pumped her fist into the air in unspoken victory. I looked at her cards and saw that she had used two jokers to win, which was not technically fair because I had not known we were using jokers as wild cards. I'll admit that I was a little bitter about it.

Two days later, I was glad she'd won.

It was already dark outside when I got to class that evening at 6:00 p.m. Tracie and T were not there, which bothered me because we had a group meeting scheduled right after class. Where were they? Had they dropped the class?

I decided I had better give them a call. As soon as class was over, I called Tracie. Her phone rang a few times, and then her recorded, electronic voice said, "Leave a message after the beep." Instead of leaving a message, I hung up to try her husband. I waited impatiently for him to pick up. Finally, he did.

"Hello?"

"Hey, T," I said. "Are you and Tracie still in the class? We had a meeting today."

You would have thought there would be a dramatic pause—a hiatus that signified something important was about to be said. But there was no pause and no warning. I listened without any inkling that something life-altering had just occurred as T spoke his next words.

"No, my wife and I are not in the class anymore. She passed away."

No expression. No emotion. Just "She passed away." Three words that didn't make any sense with how he had said them. Had he been talking about his wife? About Tracie? Or had I momentarily zoned out, and it was his grandmother who had died?

I heard "brain aneurysm," "hospital in Utah," and something about time or relatives. But really I had no idea what he was saying because I couldn't figure out who he was talking about. It sounded like he was speaking about his wife when he had first told me. About the girl who had explained to us that she loved fireworks. Who had beaten me with two jokers at Spoons. But he just sounded so natural, so calm. So didn't that mean she couldn't possibly be dead?

T stopped talking. I was supposed to say something then, something helpful, but there was nothing in my brain. No words to say. I was as silent as the sign language I'd been trying to learn for the past two weeks.

I think I ended up saying something stupid like, "I'm sorry." As if "I'm sorry" could make up for anything that had just happened to him. I said goodbye numbly and pressed the "end call" button on my phone.

"What's going on?" A kid in my group with blonde hair and braces had seen my face after the call.

I still wasn't entirely sure, but I told him what I thought I had heard. "I think his wife just died. Tracie."

"Think?"

"It was sort of hard to follow."

I swallowed and looked away, but Braces Kid kept looking at me.

"How did it happen?"

I wished I could just leave. I breathed out and tried to remember.

"I think he said something like . . . brain aneurysm?"

I expected him to gasp or grimace or say how horrible that was, but Braces Kid just nodded his head knowingly. "Yep. Sometimes those just happen."

I blinked. *Sometimes those just happen?* It was as if he were talking about rainstorms. Or pancakes on weekends. Yep, sometimes those just happen.

I was still hoping that I had understood wrong and T was talking about his grandma the whole time. "Oh, you thought I was talking about Tracie? Ha! No way!" But something in the back corner of my mind knew it wasn't his grandma.

It was confirmed by a campuswide email a couple of days later that I was right. The email stated the name of a student who had died, and the name was Tracie's. It didn't say how she died, but I knew.

Brain aneurysm.

By then I had looked it up, but I had shut my computer right away after reading the definition. It made me think too much. It made me wonder if a brain aneurysm were creeping up on me that very moment, crawling into my head, embedding itself into an artery to suddenly and stealthily kill me with no warning.

It sounds like paranoia, but it's not. I'm afraid only when I think of it—*really* think of it. It's only when I remember a girl in my class who had no idea and no notice that something was wrong that I reach up and check the side of my head to feel if there's anything different.

But who knows when something is different? What does different feel like anyway? Do we get any kind of warning before we die? How do we know when we are suddenly going to be gone? People are not made with expiration dates. They are not milk cartons waiting on the shelf with numbers stamped on them, signifying the time when they are thought to spoil. We can spoil at any time.

These are some of the more unsettling ideas that bother me still years after the experience. But the thing that has always troubled me the most isn't the riddle of when someone is going to die or even the haunting feeling that an artery could burst in my head at any moment. No, the thing that has always bothered me the most concerns Tracie's husband. I've wondered for some time why he wasn't emotional on the phone. How could he tell me about his wife's death so naturally? How did the words come? How did he even know what to say after such a heart-bending blow? Maybe he didn't know. Maybe there were simply no words to speak, just like in sign language.

But you see, that's just it. Because even though you cannot hear the words out loud in sign language, they are still there. They exist. They are real without making a single sound to notify you of their presence. So couldn't it be possible to have *another* language where words exist without being heard? Could it be that there is a silent language all its own reserved for all of us when we are shattered, torn, and broken?

I believe it is possible. I believe there is an unspoken dialect hidden beneath the words "She passed away." It was there in that moment I was told Tracie had died, even though I could not hear it. And maybe those were T's real words. The silent ones buried deep underneath the spoken parts, too close to the heart to be spoken out loud.

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This essay by Elizabeth Dodds received an honorable mention in the 2016 Richard H. Cracroft Personal Essay Contest.

The Kingdom of God

(After James Goldberg)

is not the soil. It's the weed
parting loam between lots,
snaking through sod not yet
rooted to earth.

The Kingdom of God

is not the seed. It's the husk
gone to ground when the seedling
sheds its vestments and stretches
toward the sun.

The Kingdom of God

is not the tree. It's the shrub
reaching ragged branches
through the neighbor's fence,
imposing sprouts in your lawn.

The Kingdom of God

is not the plant. It's the dodder
entangling the plant. It's
the morning glory's herald,
the mistletoe's kiss, the broomrape's tongue
persuading the earth to give way.

—Tyler Chadwick

Envisioning Brigham Young University

Foreword to John S. Tanner's *Learning in the Light*

Bruce C. Hafen

Editor's note: Bruce C. Hafen, an emeritus General Authority and former president of Ricks College, wrote this foreword to Learning in the Light: Selected Talks at BYU *by John S. Tanner, who is the current president of BYU–Hawaii. This book, a new title offered by BYU Studies, gives insight into John Tanner the person and into his views on the Latter-day Saint endeavor to advance in light and knowledge "by study and also by faith." The following encapsulates well the issues that have long concerned both educators and students of the Mormon community.*

We needed a Thomas Jefferson.

It was the early 1990s at BYU, and I was the university's provost. Circumstances on the campus had made clear that we needed to clarify some key concepts and relationships among faculty, students, administration, and the school's trustees about the very idea of BYU. We needed a meeting of the minds; we needed to become of one heart. And our resolutions needed a written form that would bless both us and those who would come after us with clarity, harmony, and shared purpose.

So we asked John Tanner to help, and he became our Jefferson. The following brief context will shed light on the historic value of what John has done for all who have a stake in BYU, both then and—as evidenced by the talks in this volume—since then.

During the 1970s and '80s, BYU took an astonishing leap in the quality of its teaching, learning, and scholarship. The higher education

Contents of *Learning in the Light*

community began to see the university in an increasingly favorable light—a national *U.S. News* poll in the mid-1990s ranked BYU among the country's top twenty-five undergraduate teaching universities.

These decades ran parallel with a general cultural revolution that had been ignited on college campuses by student free speech protests at Berkeley in 1964—a movement with vague but multiple causes that eventually shook the very foundations of American education, challenging traditions and institutional authority at every hand. The momentum of the student movement was accelerated by perceived overlaps with such broader public causes as the campaign for racial equality and opposition to the war in Vietnam. It also fueled, and was fueled by, growing secularization and a passionate emphasis on individual rights.

In this environment, BYU's increased academic quality attracted many able new faculty whose graduate training often reflected the new individualistic, anti-institutional assumptions. Still, most of these new professors felt downright liberated by BYU's religious atmosphere, because nearly all of them were devoted Latter-day Saints who welcomed the freedom—not allowed elsewhere—to include their religious beliefs in their teaching. As the number of new faculty grew, so did the number of gifted students. Their presence and their curiosity enriched both the intellectual and spiritual quality of campus-wide conversations. They wanted to know how to articulate and how to exemplify BYU's educational vision in ways that would enliven its spiritual foundations while helping the university contribute seriously to a society riven with intellectual confusion and growing moral decay.

During this stimulating yet provocative season, the BYU administration identified two major projects that called for Jefferson-like capacities—we needed (1) a faculty-generated and Board-approved policy statement that defined and integrated the roles of both individual academic freedom and the university's institutional academic freedom and (2) a full articulation of the "Aims of a BYU Education." For leadership in both projects, we turned to John S. Tanner—a young English professor who until then had not yet served as a department chair, a dean, or a university administrator—to be assisted by BYU law professor James D. Gordon, John's equally able friend. The two had been graduate students at Berkeley together.

Why John Tanner? In addition to his considerable skill and judgment as a writer, thinker, and mediator, John didn't need to have anyone draw a picture for him of what the very idea of BYU looked like—he was himself a uniquely accurate, complete picture of what that idea looked

like. He was a scholar/teacher with impeccable credentials—a Berkeley Ph.D. and an award-winning book on John Milton published by Oxford University Press. And he had a believing heart. What John once said about famed LDS chemist Henry Eyring aptly fit himself as well: "He was devout in his faith as well as a world-class [scholar] who never lost his boyish enthusiasm for learning and teaching."

Like Jefferson, then, John was not just a hired wordsmith but the personal embodiment of the educated, mature, well-disciplined liberty he was raised up to describe. Moreover, it was critical for the BYU faculty to understand, participate in, own, and fully share in the relevant ideas, even to the details. Chairing the committee on academic freedom thus was not a job for a "manager" who would issue demands and edicts. It was, rather, a task for a teacher and leader who could teach, inspire, and incorporate the best ideas from other faculty—building an informed consensus that would blend individual and institutional academic freedoms into a harmonious and lasting whole.

Looking back now, the established outcomes from these two projects have stood the test of time so well that one might wonder why they seemed so daunting when first launched. As John said in a BYU Devotional in 1992,

> About a year ago, Bruce Hafen asked me to chair a committee that would draft recommendations on academic freedom. Knowing this issue had swamped far larger vessels than my small craft, I did what any of you would have done. I had an anxiety attack and looked for the nearest exit. Over the next several months, I tried lots of creative evasion strategies, but I also felt a growing conviction that maybe, just maybe, this was work I was supposed to do. Perhaps, unknown to me, this is why I studied Milton and Kierkegaard, two ardent advocates of liberty and faith. I felt the tug of Mordecai's question to Esther: "And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" So, like Esther, I went forward, resolving, "And if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:14, 16).

Why would John have been looking for exits, and why did his work matter so much, both then and now? In his landmark 1957 book *The Mormons,* Catholic sociologist Thomas O'Dea looked at the strong LDS emphasis on higher education and postulated that Mormonism's authoritarian and literalistic nature was probably incompatible with the genuine intellectual inquiry that characterizes truly legitimate higher education. Thus, said O'Dea, "the encounter of Mormonism and

modern secular learning is still taking place. It is a spectacle of the present, of which no history can as yet be written. Upon its outcome will depend in a deeper sense the future of Mormonism."[1]

Over the next two generations, BYU's increasing academic rigor began to test O'Dea's proposition. A few faculty members probed the boundaries in ways that attracted considerable attention, both from BYU's governing Board and from the public.

I recall, for example, a visit to our campus from a *New York Times* education writer. As I tried to explain both our spiritual commitments and our commitments to intellectual rigor, he said, "If I didn't believe that BYU is serious about its devotion both to academic excellence and to Mormon religious values, I wouldn't be here—there would be no story. It's the combination that makes you unique and interesting. Nearly all other religious universities wind up choosing mostly a secular path or mostly a religious one. I hope you succeed, but it won't be easy."

President Boyd K. Packer once said that reason and revelation will mix only when they're interactively in motion, like stirring oil and water. When the motion stops, they may separate and pull apart. But with all that movement, it is possible to get motion sickness. Perhaps that's why President Packer added that it helps to have a third ingredient, a catalyst, which itself remains unchanged in the blending process. That catalyst is the Spirit, he said, and it can be aided by our effort to give revelation the priority it deserves.

I thought of his idea when a close BYU friend said to me late one night during the early '90s, "All of my professional life I've believed in the dream of building a truly first-rate university that is fully dedicated to the leadership and the values of the Church. But tonight I don't know if the idea of BYU can really work." He and I exchanged glances that reflected the weight of our both having invested our time and energy over many years in this campus we cared about so much. Then we concluded that whether the idea of BYU works was basically up to us—BYU faculty, students, and administrators. What President Gordon B. Hinckley called "this great experiment" of BYU's devotion to both sacred and secular knowledge won't succeed all by itself.

So much good occurs when BYU does succeed in the lives of its students and faculty that we shouldn't be surprised when the Adversary tries to pull our dreams apart. And we're often dealing with the contrary elements of some large and important paradoxes—elements in apparent contradiction that can in fact work wonders together, like justice and

mercy; personal freedom and submission to legitimate authority; the life of the mind and the life of the spirit; the world of the Church and the world of higher education.

When we actively wrap our arms around such paradoxes and lovingly but knowingly hold their moving forces together in a dynamic equilibrium, the BYU idea works. I've seen it work, time after time, in my life and in the lives of many others, and its blessings are worth every ounce of strength it takes to clasp our arms around the dream and hold on to it dearly—if need be, to "stretch forth [our arms] all the day long" (Jacob 6:4).

That's what John Tanner—and many others like him—have exemplified so well. The very best resolution of O'Dea's challenge lies not in abstract statements but in the lives of teachers and students who have productively combined the quest for the highest intellectual and professional rigor with the quest for authentic spiritual values and personal character. Successful role models are the best answer in resolving any paradox. And that resolution is what this collection of talks and essays offers us—both in what its author says and in what he has become.

The volume's first section includes John's talks to the BYU faculty during 2004–11 when he was academic vice president. My personal favorite in this group is "Learning in the Light," which takes the faculty on a virtual tour of the new exhibit in the Joseph F. Smith building called "Educating the Soul: Our Zion Tradition of Learning and Faith." Here John teaches us how to let this original, student-influenced exhibit instruct us about the "soul" dimension that has always been the core of BYU's mission. His language and approach naturally integrate both academic and spiritual forms of excellence, and he models fine education by multiple, well-focused allusions and references to literary and historical sources that feel innate with him.

Section 2 includes other talks on education and section 3 includes talks of a devotional nature. My favorite in these sections is "One Step Enough," a BYU devotional from 1992 that looks candidly at both the faith and the fear in scriptural, literary, and first-person stories of faith, sacrifice, and uncertainty. Here we see especially well how John Tanner's own life experience embodies the "aims of a BYU education."

Since I began teaching at BYU forty-five years ago, I have heard many talks and read many essays about BYU's spiritual and intellectual mission. I've not heard that mission described more eloquently or with more insight than in John's work (see also his *Notes from an Amateur*[2]).

At his best, he is reminiscent of Elder Neal A. Maxwell, with whom he has much in common—intuitive confidence in gospel premises as the best foundation for sound reasoning; a high degree of awareness about cultural context; equally fluent, even native-tongued, in both the language of the scriptures and the language of liberal education; meek, bright, and empathic; and is married to Susan Tanner who, like the late Colleen Maxwell, is both his editor and his equal in sharing these same qualities.

Notes

1. Thomas O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 240.

2. John S. Tanner, *Notes from an Amateur: A Disciple's Life in the Academy* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011), which is a book of essays based on brief messages sent periodically to BYU faculty.

"What Is It about This Place?"

Truman Madsen, Religious Education, and the Mission of BYU

Bruce C. Hafen

Barnard ("Barney") Madsen has written a readable, thoughtful, and well-informed biography about his charismatic father, Truman Madsen.[1] Although Truman didn't keep a conventional journal, he maintained "journal files"—"crucial journal entries or documents he preserved for his posterity."[2] Those files, along with Barney's intimate and observant relationship with his father, have now yielded rich biographical resources.

Barney paints a warm portrait of Truman's colorful personality, from his Salt Lake City boyhood through his impressive educational attainments, missionary service, family life, and his contributions as a gifted teacher who blessed many Latter-day Saints, on and off BYU campus. The professional springboard for Truman's contributions was his role as a BYU faculty member for nearly forty years. Thus this review essay sees his biography as an opportunity to reflect on what his approach to teaching and scholarship—and his relationships with both intellectual and spiritual communities—might suggest to us today about the present and future mission of BYU.

Highlights of the Madsen Story

Truman Grant Madsen (1926–2009) grew up in Salt Lake City, served a mission in New England, and was educated at the University of Utah, University of Southern California, and Harvard University. His mother,

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1. Barnard N. Madsen, *The Truman G. Madsen Story: A Life of Study and Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2016).

2. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 489.

Emily Grant Madsen, the daughter of President Heber J. Grant, was the first woman to graduate in mathematics from the University of Utah. She also studied literature at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and taught at LDS High School. Truman's father, Axel Madsen, after serving in World War I, caught President Grant's eye in a local oratory contest—prompting President Grant to invite Axel to attend a stake conference with him—and with Emily as their driver.

Barely after the birth of Axel and Emily's third child (Gordon), Emily died from an infection. Truman, the second child, was two at the time. After sending his sons to live with aunts and uncles for a few years, Axel brought them back together and raised them as an unusually devoted single parent—assisted by "Aunt Edna" Skinner, whom Axel employed as a housekeeper for twenty-four years and then married. Truman's older brother Grant was killed in action during the Korean War.

These early events helped shape young Truman, and his first mission in New England also affected him deeply. There, he once said, "the Lord had to sink a shaft into me" and bring out the ore of his faith—especially when his mission president, Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy, assigned him and his companion to do summer "country work" on Prince Edward Island, off the coast of Nova Scotia. In one stretch, they learned to depend totally on the Lord as they trudged the rural farms and roadways for sixty-six days carrying only Church pamphlets—no money and no food ("without purse or scrip").

Then, in 1953, Truman married Ann Nicholls, who energetically sustained him through the rigors of graduate school, his service as a young mission president back in New England (he was thirty-six and she was twenty-nine), and in his early years as a BYU professor of philosophy and religion. He likewise energetically sustained her in raising their three children together—Emily, Barney, and Melinda ("Mindy"). Once Mindy was in high school, Ann completed a graduate degree and began her own teaching career, focusing on Hebrew, the Old Testament, and Isaiah. In their later years, people who knew them typically thought of them together—as did their friends from Vienna, Johann and Ursula Wondra: "Thinking [of] Truman includes always thinking [of] Ann too—it is not possible to think of one without thinking of the other."[3] Both Ann and Truman hoped "that's the kind of oneness that . . . will eventually take us back into the presence of God."[4]

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3. Johann Wondra to Bruce C. Hafen, email, December 15, 2016.
4. Ann Madsen as quoted in Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 224.

Truman began teaching at BYU in 1957. Overcoming his initial hesitation about the university's just-emerging academic stature, he quickly found that "the total freedom to . . . interrelate the Mormon heritage with philosophical and historical issues was a perpetual delight."[5] The way he built on that insight with continuing delight over the next half century is so significant that it is a central theme of his life. And, as discussed in parts 2 and 3 below, it is a central theme in the mission of Brigham Young University.

The BYU Philosophy Department in those days was located in BYU's College of Religious Instruction—which probably facilitated Truman's desire to integrate philosophy and religion while still honoring key differences between the two disciplines. It also helped that his college dean, West Belnap, and his philosophy colleagues, David Yarn and Chauncey Riddle, all shared an uncommonly deep commitment to teaching BYU students to live lives of serious spiritual discipleship. These three shared that commitment with faculty in other departments, including a close friend from their graduate studies at Columbia University, Robert K. Thomas. A professor of English, Thomas became the founding director of BYU's Honors Program in 1959 and then served as academic vice president to presidents Ernest L. Wilkinson and Dallin H. Oaks.

My wife, Marie Kartchner, and I were among an entire generation of BYU Honors Program and other students whose intellectual and spiritual lives were profoundly touched during the 1960s and 1970s by this handful of people and by other faculty who shared their attitudes. They opened our minds and our hearts in ways that helped us desire to move from being just *active* Church members to becoming *consecrated* disciples of the Savior. And they motivated our desires to take our education seriously enough to contribute to society—not in spite of our religious faith, but because of it. Their influence sparked many in the next generation of BYU faculty, who were guided by this perspective during their graduate and professional training elsewhere.

For example, one of our early Honors classmates was Noel Reynolds, who later wrote that Truman's "four-square stand for the gospel of Jesus Christ . . . was always the key to the power and influence [he] held on me as a student. That commitment made it safe for me to take philosophy seriously."[6] Reynolds went on to earn his own PhD in philosophy and politics at Harvard before returning to the BYU faculty—a pattern followed by many others from that era in all academic disciplines.

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5. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 232.
6. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 301.

As Truman's BYU career unfolded, it also expanded, until his influ-
ence began to reach two important audiences beyond the borders of
the campus—non-LDS scholars and the general LDS membership.
As the first holder of BYU's Richard L. Evans Chair of Religious Under-
standing for twenty years, he was what Hugh Nibley called "an emis-
sary of the gospel."[7] This became a personal ministry well suited to his
robust intellectual background and gregarious personality; he made
long- and short-term visits to over one hundred U.S. and fifty interna-
tional universities. In addition to teaching groups of non-LDS faculty
and students about Church doctrine and philosophy, he built numer-
ous personal relationships with such influential religious scholars as
John Dillenberger, Krister Stendahl, and Rabbi David Rosen. He also
found appropriate ways to invite his erudite friends, who had usually
known little about the Church, to come to Provo and share with BYU
faculty and students what they were learning about LDS perspectives.

Truman's strength in this emissary role was not that he knew ancient
languages but that he was so fluently bilingual in the languages of schol-
arship and faith—in both Mormon and non-Mormon discourse.[8] With
Truman as their window and their example, scholars from other faiths,
as Noel Reynolds said, increasingly saw Latter-day Saints as "honor-
able, intelligent, contributing members of society."[9] And significantly, as
Elder Dallin H. Oaks wrote after reading Truman's work from a sympo-
sium at the BYU Jerusalem Center, Truman had "the wonderful bilin-
gual capacity of speaking to scholars who are not LDS without diluting
LDS doctrine."[10]

The initial platform for Truman's outreach to the general LDS audi-
ence was his teaching in such BYU Continuing Education programs as
"Know Your Religion" and "Education Week"—religion and other adult
education classes taught periodically by BYU faculty, both on campus
and at LDS population centers off campus.

His Education Week lectures on Joseph Smith gave Truman an
opportunity to teach Church members what he was learning from
his lifelong interest in Joseph Smith—an interest that harked back to
a stirring personal experience at Joseph's birthplace in Vermont, just
as Truman was completing his first mission to New England.[11] Those

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7. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 368.

8. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 358.

9. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 368.

10. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 358.

11. See Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 10–11.

lectures, developed over the years, became the basis for his eight hours of audio tapes on Joseph Smith recorded at BYU Education Week in 1978. In the years that followed, these tapes and a book that refined the tapes brought "the life, character, and testimony of Brother Joseph" to thousands of people—a broader reach and influence than anything else Truman said or wrote.[12]

Another major theme of Truman's off-campus educational influence was his interest in the Holy Land. Nearly every year since 1969, the Madsens returned to Israel—partly to help plan for and later for him to act as director of the BYU Jerusalem Center (1991–94); partly to lead travel study groups, including numerous private tours; and partly for him to serve as a guest professor at the University of Haifa (1980). Truman's knack for nourishing personal relationships with prominent scholars and other influential figures helped BYU build a network of key relationships in Israel—such as with Teddy Kollek, mayor of Jerusalem from 1965 to 1993, and with the scholars who invited BYU into their massive project to build a searchable database for the Dead Sea Scrolls. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, who as BYU president led the challenging task of building the Jerusalem Center, said that Truman's gift for articulating Israel's religious heritage was "one of the quintessential elements of Truman's lifetime contribution to BYU and to the Church. His legacy will be pretty closely tied to the Holy Land."[13]

Truman also addressed the general Church audience, as well as BYU students, with his keen personal interest in the doctrinal and practical blessings of the temple. His last book was *The Temple: Where Heaven Meets Earth.* The biography candidly shares a story from Truman's graduate school days, when he heard a provocative discourse by President David O. McKay in the Los Angeles Temple that had the effect of shifting Truman's own paradigm about the temple from lukewarm to passionate.[14] From then on, he found increasingly influential ways to learn, and then teach, how "nearly everything connects in the temple"[15] as the sanctuary "of full access to Christ's most pervasive life-giving powers."[16] After all, he said at a BYU commencement, "the temple and Christ are the heart of our spiritual life."[17]

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12. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 375.

13. Quoted in Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 416.

14. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 432–33.

15. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 434.

16. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 435.

17. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 436.

The intimate connection Truman saw between the temple and Christ was much like the close connection he saw between Joseph Smith and Christ. He often said that Joseph was and is "a clear window . . . to the living Christ." He added that this window was a primary reason for his ongoing interest in Joseph. He found that really knowing Joseph, his example and his teachings, would prepare us—"free us"—for our own "direct experiences" with Christ.[18]

Truman realized that Joseph himself had seen the temple endowment as opening a symbolic window to Christ. As Richard Bushman wrote, "The temple's sacred story stabilized and perpetuated Joseph's governing passion," which "was to have his people *experience* God."[19] Through the temple, Joseph wanted to bring his people as close as possible to what he himself had experienced in his relationship with the Lord.

And the same can be said of Truman's passion for the Holy Land as another window to Christ—geographically, historically, and spiritually. Little wonder that Johann Wondra would summarize Truman's life and work by saying that "his only purpose, as we have witnessed, was to lead to Christ."[20]

Historical Perspective:
David O. McKay's Prophetic Articulation of BYU's Mission

Just as David O. McKay shifted Truman's paradigm about the temple, he also influenced Truman's attitudes about higher education in the Church. He became President of the Church shortly before Truman and Ann were married; and he performed their temple marriage. Then his two decades as Church President, when he was a vigorous proponent of education, matched the years when Truman was emerging as a premier LDS teacher and scholar. It is no accident, then, that Truman's vision and values about education at BYU would reflect those of President McKay. And with the hindsight of history, we can now see that the prophetic McKay vision significantly shaped the spiritual and intellectual foundations on which all three of the present BYU campuses still stand. Let us consider some of the steps in that history.

In the early 1990s, BYU launched its biggest ever (to that time) capital campaign. Seeking the best available advice, the administration engaged a sophisticated Chicago-based consultant on university

18. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 371–72.
19. Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 451, italics added.
20. Johann Wondra to Bruce Hafen, email, December 15, 2016.

fund-raising. After he had interviewed about a hundred of BYU's most prominent "stakeholders," such as university trustees and major past donors, I heard the consultant say, "I have conducted similar interviews for many of the largest and most elite universities in the country. I have never seen a university whose main stakeholders feel so passionate about wanting their own children and grandchildren to be admitted as BYU students. What is it about this place?"

I'm now seeing that same passion in my own family. Like thousands of other LDS parents, all of our married children begin early and work hard to prepare *their* children to establish the educational, spiritual, and financial qualifications required for eventual admission to one of the three BYU campuses. Despite their best efforts, however, many active LDS young people will not find it feasible to attend one of these schools.

For many years, the Church's primary response to this challenge has been to offer religion courses in LDS Institutes near the campuses of state colleges and universities. More recently, by expanding an initiative that began in 2009 at BYU–Idaho, the Church has also launched a "BYU Pathway" program, which offers students across the globe an introductory Church college experience through a combination of online classes and local gatherings—often housed in Institute buildings or other Church facilities.

A complex but key issue in all of these developments has been whether education on a BYU campus is qualitatively different from education at a state school combined with attending a nearby LDS Institute; in other words, "What is it about this place?" Any such qualitative difference is difficult to quantify, partly because so many key variables are hard to measure—such as comparative educational quality; social opportunities, especially marriage to another well-grounded Latter-day Saint; and the likelihood of real religious growth—in both understanding Church doctrine and learning to live it.

Moreover, how can one quantify the unique, multilayered effects of simply living for a few years in a Mormon village (like Laie, Rexburg, or Provo)—experiencing daily the reality and the spirit of "the gathering" as the Saints knew it in Nauvoo or in the early pioneer settlements? And, of course, some students will benefit more than others in such a place, depending on what a given student brings to the table. Some are simply more ready for it than others, whether by attitudes or aptitudes.

Yet clearly, many thousands of LDS students and their families all over the Church believe that these qualitative differences—"the BYU

experience," whatever that is and however it is measured—are worth years of preparation and sacrifice.

A question worth asking is how the most influential founders of the three modern BYU campuses saw the differences between a Church campus experience and a state university plus an Institute. By substantially enlarging all three student bodies in the last six decades, what were they trying to create, and why? They surely didn't need to invest in the Church universities just because state schools didn't have room. On the contrary, in recent years, access to U.S. higher education has become almost universally available. So let's consider the historical context that gave rise to today's BYU campuses.

The Church's commitment to educating LDS youth came as a doctrinal mandate of the Restoration. For example, "I, the Lord, am well pleased that there should be a school in Zion" (D&C 97:3). The application of this premise is further displayed in the impressive historical exhibit in the Joseph F. Smith building on the Provo campus, "Educating the Soul: Our Zion Tradition of Learning and Faith." On this foundation, Church efforts to find the right balance between the religious and the secular in its approach to higher education have a long history.

Due primarily to inadequate public education in Utah, an influx of non-LDS settlers, and the creation of new pioneer colonies beyond the Great Basin, by 1900 the Church had created over thirty stake "academies" for secondary education, stretching from Canada to Mexico. And even though the Utah Territory began establishing public schools in 1890, most of the academies continued to function as private Church schools and colleges until well into the twentieth century.[21] BYU–Provo became a university in 1903.

By 1920, the Commissioner of Church Education was a young Apostle named David O. McKay. He recommended to the Church Board of Education that the Church divest itself of all but a handful of its post-secondary schools, because the Church simply couldn't afford to provide a college education for all its members.

Then in 1926, also citing costs, Commissioner Adam S. Bennion went even further. He recommended that the Church *entirely* "withdraw from the academic field [in higher education] and center upon religious education" by creating new Institutes of Religion near selected

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21. Harold R. Laycock, "Academies," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:11–13.

state colleges. Elder Bennion told the board that he believed the people teaching in the state universities were "in the main . . . seeking the truth." However, Elder McKay replied that the Church had not established Church schools "merely because the state didn't do it;" rather, he said, the Church established its schools "*to make Latter-day Saints*." Thus, he continued, "*we ought to consider these Church schools from the standpoint of their value to the Church more than from the standpoint of duplicating public school work.*"[22]

Elder McKay later said he had therefore "voted against . . . [giving] the Church's junior colleges to the states of Utah, Arizona, and Idaho."[23] However, the First Presidency decided in 1930 that the Church should (1) divest itself of all its colleges except BYU and LDS College in Salt Lake City (now LDS Business College), and (2) establish a system of Institutes of Religion on selected other campuses.

Thus, the Church transferred such junior colleges as Snow, Dixie, and Weber to the state of Utah. The Church also offered Ricks College (now BYU–Idaho) to Idaho beginning in 1931, but the state legislature repeatedly declined, even though the Church offered to donate all of the college's assets if Idaho would just agree to operate the school. And that's why the Church eventually kept Ricks College.[24]

The Institutes of Religion grew during the 1930s and 1940s. Then in 1951, David O. McKay became President of the Church, and Ernest Wilkinson was appointed as both the president of BYU and the Church Commissioner (then the "Chancellor") of Education. During the ensuing twenty years, President McKay actively established a new vision of Church higher education. Both BYU and Ricks College began to

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22. Quotations found in "To Labor in the Most Honorable Cause," a talk to the BYU Religious Education faculty in 1990 by Bruce C. Hafen, then Provost of BYU. The quoted language is from an unpublished report by a committee appointed by the Church Board of Education in 1964; italics added

23. Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005), 196.

24. Negotiations between the Idaho state legislature, local college leaders, and the Church continued throughout the difficult Depression years of 1931 to 1937. In 1934, David O. McKay was called into the First Presidency and became "'the dominant educational advisor in the church.' His influence was evident" when the college finally received "the welcome news that Ricks was to be maintained as a Church school." David L. Crowder, *The Spirit of Ricks: A History of Ricks College* (Rexburg: Ricks College, 1997), 142. For a complete account, see pp. 109–51.

grow rapidly, and the Church College of Hawaii, now BYU–Hawaii, was founded in 1955.

In 1957, the Church announced plans to purchase land for the possible construction of eight additional junior colleges in western U.S. locations—potential feeder schools for BYU. However, after a full feasibility study, the leadership of the Church decided in 1963 that the junior college plan was just too expensive. Instead, they reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the Institutes of Religion.[25]

Nonetheless, the Church's commitment to BYU, Ricks, and Hawaii remained strong. During the McKay presidency, BYU's enrollment expanded from 5,500 in 1950 to 25,000 in 1971, and is now at about 32,000. In 2001, Ricks College became BYU–Idaho, now a four-year university with a current on-campus enrollment of about 17,000. BYU–Hawaii enrolls about 2,700.[26]

So the three BYU campuses are clearly exceptions—large and significant ones, but still exceptions—to a general policy of not providing higher education on a Church campus for Latter-day Saints. The First Presidency established that pattern ninety years ago and has since reaffirmed it often as Church policy. The spiritual architect who magnified the exceptional window in the 1950s and 1960s was President David O. McKay, and I don't believe that a long-term exception of this magnitude was an unintended anomaly.

The BYU campuses are therefore living monuments to the educational vision of President McKay, who, prior to his call to the Twelve in 1906, had been a faculty member then principal of the Weber Stake LDS Academy. And what was his vision? President McKay answered that question with his entire life's work. He also applied his educational vision to the mission of BYU in a talk to faculty and students in 1937:

> *Brigham Young University is primarily a religious institution.* It was established for the *sole purpose* of associating with facts of science, art, literature, and philosophy the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . . In making religion a paramount objective, the university touches the very heart of all true progress. . . . I emphasize religion because the Church university offers more than theological instruction. Theology as a science "treats of the existence, character, and attributes of God," and

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25. See report cited in note 22. See also President McKay's diary entry, Prince and Wright, *David O. McKay,* 196–97.

26. Current enrollment estimates are from the websites of the respective three campuses.

theological training may consist merely of intellectual study. Religion is subjective and denotes the influences and motives of human conduct and duty which are found in the character and will of God. One may study theology without being religious.[27]

This is an expanded version of what President McKay told the board in 1926 when he said, "We established the schools to make Latter-day Saints." He also taught as a fundamental personal belief that "character is the aim of true education." Yet he believed that "modern education" gave inadequate emphasis to helping students develop the "fundamental elements of true character."[28] And he was disturbed as early as 1926 by "the growing tendency all over the world to sneer at religion" in secular state education.[29]

I sense in President McKay's point of view an implicit belief that providing religious education next to the campuses of state universities would not do as much "to make Latter-day Saints" as might be possible on a BYU campus. For him, something unique and spiritually significant could grow out of a conscious fusion of fine academic departments, extracurricular programs, and the teaching of the religious life—all on the same campus, pursuing a unified vision about becoming followers of Jesus Christ and blessing the Church by blessing the youth of Zion. So when he said, "*We ought to consider these Church schools from the standpoint of their value to the Church,*" he was describing a religious mission, not simply an educational mission; but it is a religious mission in which higher education plays a central role.

Truman Madsen and the Mission of BYU

Now we're ready to ask—what does all of this history have to do with the biography and core values of Truman Madsen? I believe that Truman's work as a teacher and scholar exemplifies President McKay's ideal approach to higher education—to *associate* "science, art, literature, and

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27. David O. McKay, "The Church University," *Messenger,* Provo, Utah; remarks delivered at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, October 1937; italics added; available online at http://aims.byu.edu/sites/default/files/founda tiondocuments/The_Church_University--David_O_McKay.pdf.

28 McKay, "True Education," quoted in Prince and Wright, *David O. McKay,* 160–61.

29. Church Board of Education minutes, quoted in Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years,* 4 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 2:75.

philosophy [with] the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" in ways that will "make [better] Latter-day Saints" of the students. Then, as a direct result of this integrated approach, those students generally tend to be better off personally, and they are probably more likely to have greater "value to the Church" than if they had received only a secular higher education, even if supplemented by Institute classes.

Truman's career illustrates what that kind of thinking and teaching looks like—where it comes from, how it applies, and why it matters. And, fortunately, he wasn't, and isn't, the only BYU (or LDS) professor to think and teach this way. Many of them do. Church leaders have often encouraged BYU faculty toward such writing, teaching, service, and role modeling. Indeed, the first of "the aims of a BYU education," a formal part of the university's stated purpose since the early 1990s, states that "the founding charge of BYU [from Brigham Young's original advice to Karl G. Maeser] is to teach every subject with the Spirit." In the words of President Spencer W. Kimball, this doesn't mean "that all of the faculty should be categorically teaching religion constantly in their classes," but it does expect "that every . . . teacher in this institution would keep his subject matter bathed in the light and color of the restored gospel."[30]

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, Truman's classmate at the University of Utah and Church Commissioner of Education from 1970 to 1974, also shared President McKay's attitude about integrating secular and religious perspectives. On one hand, Truman and Elder Maxwell would have both agreed with the BYU Aims document that education at a Church university should be "intellectually enlarging" with regard to intellectual skills, depth, and breadth; that BYU students should thoroughly "understand the most important developments in human thought as represented by the broad domains of knowledge"; and that their intellectual preparation and rigor should make them "capable of competing with the best students in their field" in U.S. higher education.

On the other hand, the Maxwell/Madsen approach does not simply "balance" the sacred and the secular, or faith and reason, as if the two realms were of equal importance. Rather, they consciously avoid allowing the academic discipline to judge or stand superior to the gospel or

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30. Spencer W. Kimball, "Education for Eternity," address to BYU faculty and staff, Provo, Utah, September 12, 1967, available online at https://speeches .byu.edu/talks/spencer-w-kimball_education-eternity/ and printed in *Educating Zion,* John W. Welch and Don E. Norton, eds. (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1996), 54.

the Church, because, as one LDS scholar observed, "there is a danger that [the] use of scholarly tools—which requires the privileging of those tools—will breed habits of mind that reflexively privilege secular scholarship over the gospel."[31] This danger is one of the risks of some emerging approaches to Mormon studies, which often look at Mormonism primarily through the lenses of the academic disciplines.

Because of that risk, Elder Maxwell was always dismayed by LDS scholars and professionals who allow the premises and perspectives of their disciplines to take priority over their understanding of the gospel. And he was disappointed by LDS teachers who, as he put it, "fondle their doubts" in "the presence of Latter-day Saint students who [are] looking for spiritual mentoring." President McKay's model, illustrated by both Truman Madsen and Elder Maxwell, "looked at all knowledge through the gospel's lens." They knew they "could integrate a secular map of reality into the broader sacred map, but the smaller secular map, with its more limited tools and framework, often wasn't large enough to include religious insights. Thus the gospel's larger perspective influenced his view of the academic disciplines more than the disciplines influenced his view of the gospel."[32] For that very reason, in describing the desired breadth of an "intellectually enlarging" BYU education, the Aims document states, "The gospel provides the chief source of such breadth because it encompasses the most comprehensive explanation of life and the cosmos, supplying the perspective from which all other knowledge is best understood and measured."

It was precisely because he taught at BYU that Truman was able to teach and model this larger view of education. If he had been a philosophy professor at a state university, he would have been constrained by understandable academic conventions and circumstances from mixing his personal religious views too freely with his teaching and scholarly work. Indeed, on most campuses these days, he would have been expected to "bracket his faith" in his professional role, whether in Mormon studies work or otherwise, partly because the primary audience for that work is other scholars, not a broader LDS audience. The institutional academic freedom allowed by BYU's explicit, written religious mission consciously removes those brackets, like taking the mute out

31. Nathan Oman, "'Out of Zion Shall Go Forth the Law' (Isaiah 2:3)," *FARMS Review of Books* 12, no. 1 (2000): 132.

32. Bruce C. Hafen, *A Disciple's Life: The Biography of Neal A. Maxwell* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 166–67.

of a trumpet. And that unmuting allowed Truman Madsen's talented trumpet to give an especially certain sound—a fortunate quality both for BYU students and for Latter-day Saints generally.

And if he had been a teacher in an LDS Institute, his duties would have been different, and he probably would have had a more difficult time establishing and maintaining his credibility as a serious scholar in the fields of both philosophy and religion. That credibility is especially important in opening doors and building bridges with a wide array of scholars in other faith traditions and in helping LDS students see their teachers as role models as they learn how to integrate the sacred and the secular in their own emerging professional lives.

One of Truman's own role models for understanding and applying this scholarly paradigm was B. H. Roberts, a General Authority from 1888 to 1933. Elder Roberts wrote the six-volume *Comprehensive History of the Church,* published in 1930, which current LDS historians consider "a high point in the publication of Church history to that time. Most earlier works were either attacks upon or defenses of the Church. Although Roberts's study was a kind of defense, he set a more even tone, a degree of uncommon objectivity."[33]

In a major work of historical scholarship in its own right, Truman Madsen wrote B. H. Roberts's biography, *Defender of the Faith.* In that biography, Truman described Roberts's approach to writing Church history in terms that aptly capture Truman's own writing and teaching. Roberts did write with uncommon objectivity—but his faith was not in brackets:

> Some of Roberts's critics have sought to discredit the approach to history that makes it a passionate part of one's own being—lived through—and they make it instead a specialist's retreat, a professional game for which only the detached are qualified. Those critics build their reputations by poking at the ashes. At his best B. H. Roberts took from the altars of the past not the ashes, but the fire. And in the pages of his best writing, the fire still burns.[34]

In the pages of Truman Madsen's best writing and teaching, where his religious faith is clearly a passionate part of his being, that same fire still burns.

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33. Douglas D. Alder, "Comprehensive History of the Church," in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism,* 1:303.

34. Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 366.

The biography draws liberally from Truman's own journal entries and other writing, often creating an autobiographical feel. Some of these passages show that Truman's commitment to overtly religious scholarship and teaching took shape at a relatively early stage. At age twenty-four, for example, he wrote, "I yearn to teach. . . . To store my mind with truth, to fill it with the precepts that the best minds, the best literature of the day have set down." And what did he want to teach? "The Church is my home," he wrote. "The gospel is my element."[35] Then, just after his admission to graduate school at USC, he added, "There is a persistent push in my makeup to study and make vividly concrete in life the spirit of Jesus Christ. This I now propose to begin doing, writing of Him, and of my expanding conceptions of Him." Not many months later, as he prepared to transfer from USC to study philosophy at Harvard, he wrote what he had prayed: "It is . . . thy power—that has led me to . . . the all-enveloping desire to become a mighty witness of thy Son in writing and spoken word."[36]

He wanted to study philosophy as a means to this larger end because he respected the intellectual power that came from defining high and abstract thought, and he wanted the tools of "sane . . . analysis" to help him understand "the attitudes and intellectual trends of history." He wanted this understanding because he believed that the world is "ever hungry for better explanations" and "for solid moral guidance, for reasons of righteousness, and inspiration to fulfill them."[37] From the outset, however, Truman sensed that "if philosophy helped him ask the ultimate questions, the restored gospel . . . answered them."[38]

Perhaps the clearest example of how Truman learned to apply this perspective to his teaching arose after he had begun teaching philosophy and religion at BYU and had served as a young mission president in New England. The editors of one of the Church magazines felt that LDS young adults needed an "orientation to basic philosophical problems through the insight of a scholar who knows the gospel as well as philosophy."[39] So they asked Truman to write a series of magazine articles, which then became his first book, *Eternal Man* (1966). Its chapters

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35. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 199.
36. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 200.
37. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 193–94.
38. Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 197.
39. Lorin F. Wheelwright, associate editor of *The Instructor* magazine, in Truman G. Madsen, *Eternal Man* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1966), vi.

dealt with classic philosophical issues, such as the nature of human identity, the problem of evil and suffering, and the meaning of freedom and fulfillment.

Consistent with President McKay's hopes for BYU, Truman's approach showed what can happen when well-educated and well-anchored LDS teachers look at major secular issues through the lens of the gospel. As one BYU colleague put it, this book was one of the first instances of "a fully engaged, believing Latter-day Saint . . . framing the great questions of philosophy in gospel terms." Philosophers had for centuries sensed the importance of the questions, but after endless debates, most of the dilemmas remained unresolved. Truman's work articulated the issues in accessible but academically credible language then boldly gave Joseph Smith's answers to many of them—within the context of numerous continuing paradoxes.[40]

One other important component of Truman's influence was the way he mentored BYU students, both in his private interactions and in the broader power of his example. The best way for an LDS student to reconcile productively the competing values of faith and intellect is to know well—ideally to be mentored by—teachers and leaders whose daily life and attitudes authentically demonstrate how deep religious faith and demanding intellectual rigor are mutually reinforcing. One of the unique blessings of a Church campus is to offer students many faculty mentors who live that way.

Truman was that kind of mentor, not only in the realm of abstract ideas, but also by a daily walk and years of student counseling that showed—not just told—what it means to read and think both deeply and widely—and also, at the core, to follow Christ, follow the promptings of the Spirit, and follow the guidance of the Brethren. He believed in his students and taught them to believe in themselves and in God, as they learned to solve their own problems with His help. The biography offers several concrete illustrations of Truman's warm, focused, and caring approach to mentoring—such as his letters as a mission president to his missionaries, his personal interaction with students, his letters to his students as director of the BYU Jerusalem Center, and his correspondence with people immersed in personal struggles.

Truman Madsen's life and career exemplify President McKay's aspiration to make BYU "a religious institution" that responsibly "associates"

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40. Sterling van Wagenen, quoted in Madsen, *Truman G. Madsen Story,* 312, 315.

university disciplines with the gospel. Yet as well schooled as he was in philosophy, in that discipline he was more a classroom teacher than he was a publishing scholar. Still, his broad intellectual background and academic expertise gave him the credibility required to show his students by example the wholeness of a fully educated, contributing Latter-day Saint—"with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, *and with all thy mind*" (Matt. 22:37; italics added). And that same academic stature gave him significant professional currency in his interaction with non-LDS scholars in ways that benefitted BYU students and the Church.

Academic disciplines and individual personalities and circumstances vary enough that we may not see many other highly visible Truman Madsens at BYU. But, subject to that natural variety, we can and should expect to see many faculty who generally follow his pattern of looking at their disciplines, the world, and their students through the lens of the gospel. That's why BYU devotional speakers since the early 1990s now regularly include BYU faculty, not just General Authorities, as had typically been the past pattern.[41] That is also why the most capable BYU faculty from other academic disciplines have long been invited—often recruited—to teach religion classes on campus.

In addition, faculty whose lives reflect a completeness of heart, soul, and mind can fulfill much of President McKay's vision by mentoring their students—both in how they share themselves in class and in personal interactions. Research among current BYU students by the BYU Faculty Center tells us that a great deal of "spiritually strengthening" and "intellectually enlarging" teaching on the campus "comes from the personal example of professors and the sincere/caring mentoring they provide. Integrating faith and learning varies significantly in theme and opportunity across disciplines but example and mentoring with love and faith do not."[42] This kind of individualized "integrating" between the professional and spiritual realms may be less visible than public speaking and writing, but over the long run, it is not less significant for individual students.

Indeed, recent research among U.S. college students shows that having genuine mentoring relationships with faculty is a more important variable than a university's national ranking in influencing both

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41. I know this rationale for including more faculty speakers because I participated in the discussions leading to the policy change.

42. Alan L. Wilkins to Bruce C. Hafen, email, December 23, 2016.

the personal well-being and the future vocational satisfaction of college graduates.[43] For example, and unfortunately, only about half of today's graduates believe that their university education was worth what it cost; but the odds of their believing that their schooling was worth its price are about twice as high among graduates who said "their professors cared about them as a person."[44] If faculty mentors matter that much in secular universities, they matter even more when transmitting the unique values and aspirations of BYU.

When faculty feel responsible for students' personal development as well as their cognitive education, they will find ways to let their students see how gifted LDS teachers and scholars integrate their dedicated professional competence into their overarching religious faith—an opportunity those students are much less likely to find elsewhere.

These reflections may seem to some like stating the obvious. But as BYU's academic stature continues to grow, its faculty will probably feel increased natural pressures to be more concerned with published scholarship and national reputation than most faculty felt when Truman Madsen began his BYU career. Yet at the same time, for a variety of reasons, the current moment seems to pose greater challenges to students' religious faith, which heightens each student's need for informed but faithful mentoring. Alan Wilkins, former BYU academic vice president and current director of the BYU Faculty Center, aptly describes the implications of these competing pressures: "Some will certainly argue that we just have to be more scholarly in today's context than Truman was in his to have much influence in the larger academic community. *How and whether that can be done and still strengthen our students spiritually in ways that build faith and character and lead to a life of continued learning and service is the most important question before us at BYU currently.*"[45]

During my own years on the BYU faculty, I learned firsthand, both as a professor and a dean, about the high value of publishing scholarly work that seeks both to influence one's academic discipline and to

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43. Purdue University, "Gallup-Purdue Index Releases Inaugural Findings of National Landmark Study," May 6, 2014, http://www.purdue.edu/news room/releases/2014/Q2/gallup-purdue-index-releases-inaugural-findings-of -national-landmark-study.html.

44. "Gallup-Purdue Index Report 2015," *Gallup,* http://www.gallup.com/ reports/197144/gallup-purdue-index-report-2015.aspx.

45. Wilkins to Hafen, email, December 23, 2016; italics added.

enrich one's teaching. I also learned firsthand about the high value of building relationships with students that reciprocally nourish the religious foundations for our disciplines and for our lives.

In my experience, those two quests are not mutually exclusive—but only if we exert whatever energy it takes to pursue both goals wholeheartedly, with religious faith as the primary quest. Otherwise, "The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold."[46] When we do hear the Falconer, the fires from past altars will keep burning, and we—and those we touch—will know what it is about this place.

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46 W. B. Yeats, "The Second Coming."

Jill Mulvay Derr, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Kate Holbrook, and Matthew J. Grow, eds. *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society.*
Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2016.

Reviewed by Karen Lynn Davidson

*T*he *First Fifty Years of Relief Society* has the distinction of being the first published volume other than the Joseph Smith Papers to appear under the imprint of the Church Historian's Press. The stated purpose of the Church Historian's Press is to publish "accurate, transparent, and authoritative works of history about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," works that "meet the highest standards of scholarship."[1] Without question, *The First Fifty Years* rises to those standards in every way, with its broad research, meticulous transcriptions, inviting and thorough introductions, and accessible reference materials. Half a century unfolds in this book as we trace the Relief Society from its modest beginnings in Nauvoo to its much-expanded and influential role in the West.

The volume's editors are seasoned professionals whose names are well known in the world of LDS historical studies. Jill Mulvay Derr is a retired senior research historian for the Church History Department, and Carol Cornwall Madsen is a professor emerita of history at Brigham Young University. Kate Holbrook and Matthew J. Grow both work in the Church History Department, she as a specialist in women's history and he as director of publications. The research and editing skills of dozens of others, as listed in the front matter and the acknowledgments, add depth to the annotations and readability to the prose.

The range of the seventy-eight selected documents in this volume is impressive. As readers might expect, the book contains Joseph Smith's instructions and the sisters' minutes from the early days in Nauvoo. But the book also contains lesser-known jewels such as "Lamanite Sisters

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1. Church Historian's Press, "About the Press," https://www.churchhistorians press.org/about.

Testify," an 1880 Relief Society report from Thistle Valley, Utah. The book provides everything from personal jottings to polished oratory: minutes, personal letters, journal excerpts, articles from *Woman's Exponent* and *Deseret News,* poems, reports, petitions, and speeches. In following the growth of the Relief Society, readers learn about religious, economic, social, and political history as well. Some of these records reflect the broad history of the Society, while others reveal what the Society meant in the lives of individual women. Readers meet a whole cast of leaders and members far beyond the well-known players in Relief Society history.

Each of the book's four chronological sections draws on the documents that best represent that period. Part 1, 1830–45, focuses mainly on the Nauvoo minutes. As Joseph Smith organized the women "according to the law of Heaven," they welcomed his invitation to expand their spiritual natures and their sphere of service. But in 1845, Brigham Young dissolved the Society, resulting in a hiatus of almost a decade. Part 2 picks up the history from 1854 to 1866, as Brigham Young began to authorize the organization of local Relief Societies, and the women in at least twenty-five wards in the Salt Lake area came together to meet the needs of American Indians, destitute neighbors, and newly arriving immigrants. Part 3 spans the years 1867–79, when Brigham Young called upon wards churchwide to organize their own Relief Societies. Although the sisters are still without central leadership, the Relief Society movement expands in many directions as the women organize the Primary and Young Women and become active in commerce, politics, and home industry. Part 4 begins in 1880 and ends with the 1892 Jubilee celebration, when the Relief Society—now with its own general president and officers—celebrated a new hospital, their membership in the National Council of Women, and their success with the youth auxiliaries.

A scholarly publication like *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society* is of great value to historians, teachers, and anyone else interested in the history and culture of this era (and that would surely include readers of *BYU Studies Quarterly*). But what about the nonspecialist? At more than eight hundred pages, this volume might seem intimidating. But in fact, because early Relief Society documents encompass so many different events and trends, and because the editors provide such clear and to-the-point explanatory materials, any interested reader would be able to follow a favorite thread.

For example, most Latter-day Saints are familiar with the organization of the first Relief Society in Nauvoo. It has been reenacted in

pageants and films, retold in historical novels, and even painted on china plates. But what about the Relief Society after the westward trek? The trials, achievements, and dedication of these Salt Lake women deserve to be better known. Fortunately, the documents in this volume help to restore a larger view.

Another thread takes readers through the gap of almost ten years without a Relief Society. Using strong language, Brigham Young summarily dissolved the organization, but little by little, over a span of many years, he enabled and then encouraged its reorganization. Documents in this volume, along with their accompanying introductions and notes, explain the motives behind these events. Readers can easily browse the volume according to other interests as well: Speaking in tongues? Women giving healing blessings? Personal, organizational, and legal documents regarding plural marriage? The menu for a "Retrenchment Table"? Commerce, suffrage, fashion, education, raffles, silk production? It's all there.

Even glancing through the index can be quite absorbing. The name of a relative, Keziah Burk, caught my eye. She certainly is not a major figure in the history of Relief Society, but there was her name, in the handwriting of Eliza R. Snow, among the women who were "presented to the Society and were unanimously receiv'd" into membership at the seventh meeting in Nauvoo.

And sometimes the bare-bones account in the document itself is more moving and significant than any retelling or any scripted version could be. At the meeting in Nauvoo on July 28, 1843, Elizabeth Ann Whitney "suggested the necessity of having a committee so appointed to search out the poor and suffring—to call on the rich for aid and thus as far as possible relieve the wants of all." So what happened in the weeks to follow? Again and again, the minutes show notations like these:

> Mrs. Meecum . . . spoke of a Mrs. Nickerson Who had no home
>
> Mrs. Webb said she would take her in
>
> Mrs. Jones said a little girl was brought to her as an object of charity
>
> Mrs. Hunter gave calico for a dress for her
>
> Sister [Granger] spoke of Sister Broomley as being destitute of dresses said she would donate one of her own

Just see what was happening here. A need was reported, and that need was met, without delay. *Someone needs shelter.* Check. *A woman needs a dress, and a child needs fabric so a dress can be made.* Check, check. These women were first responders extraordinaire.

Like their counterparts in priesthood quorums, Latter-day Saint women knew that the keeping of records was a sacred duty. They treasured their beliefs and their mission; they wanted their work to be remembered. *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society* is a way to remember, touching our hearts and resonating with our own aspirations while at the same time assuming a proud place among the finest volumes of LDS scholarship.

Karen Lynn Davidson received BA and MA degrees from BYU and a PhD from the University of Southern California. She served as an editor for two volumes of the Joseph Smith Papers, *Histories, Volume 1,* and *Histories, Volume 2* (2012). With Jill Mulvay Derr, she co-edited *Eliza R. Snow: The Complete Poetry* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press; Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2009), and co-wrote *Eliza: The Faith and Works of Eliza R. Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2013). She is a member of the board of directors of the Mormon Scholars Association.

Stephen H. Webb and Alonzo L. Gaskill.
Catholic and Mormon: A Theological Conversation.
New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Reviewed by Elliott D. Wise

*C*atholic and Mormon: A Theological Conversation, by Stephen H. Webb and Alonzo L. Gaskill, initiates a long-overdue dialogue in doctrine and religious practice between the Roman Catholic Church and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The book, which is as thoughtful and amicable as it is scholarly and stimulating, comes at an important moment in the rapport between the two faiths. Church headquarters in Utah has long had a warm relationship with the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City, but in recent years, Mormons have increasingly found themselves working closely with their Catholic sisters and brothers on a national and international level as they administer humanitarian aid, advocate religious liberty, and argue for similar moral and social issues. In November 2014, a delegation of Apostles and other General Authorities was invited to Vatican City to participate in a worldwide conference on marriage and family. Brigham Young University has itself hosted prominent Catholic scholars and clergy to deliver campuswide addresses. Moreover, a number of recent talks in the general conferences of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have quoted Catholic leaders, including Pope Francis.[1]

One of the great achievements of Webb and Gaskill's book, however, is that it moves beyond solely social and charitable concerns to consider the doctrinal positions that bring these two faiths together. The authors, who refer to each other informally as Stephen and Alonzo, dislodge the assumption that certain characteristics of Mormonism, including the minimalistic

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1. See Dallin H. Oaks, "The Parable of the Sower," *Ensign* 45 (May 2015): 35; L. Tom Perry, "Why Marriage and Family Matter—Everywhere in the World," *Ensign* 45 (May 2015): 39–40; and Rosemary Wixom, "Returning to Faith," *Ensign* 45 (May 2015): 94.

nature of its Sunday worship, align it more closely with Protestantism than Catholicism. In fact, the Church's profound reverence for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the hierarchical structure of its leadership, its dependence on priesthood ordinances, its zealous concern for aiding the dead in their salvation, the unique place of the "feminine divine" in its doctrine, and its faith in living miracles and heavenly apparitions—to name just a few items—make Latter-day Saints important theological allies with Roman Catholics.

The book is organized around ten topics: authority, grace, Mary, revelation, ritual, matter, Jesus, heaven, history, and soul. Stephen, a former Campbellite Christian and convert to Roman Catholicism, discusses the Catholic position, while Alonzo, also a convert, but from Greek Orthodoxy to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, explains the Mormon position. Each chapter plays out as a doctrinal "conversation" between friends, whose sincerity, intellectual prowess, and admiration for each other model precisely the kind of Catholic-Mormon dialogue that the book hopes to foster.

Mormon readers will be touched by Stephen's unstinting praise for their most sacred beliefs: "Joseph [Smith] had the heart of a prophet combined with the mind of a pope" (34). "I personally think that Joseph had true and authentic visions of God . . . ; there is nothing stopping individual Catholics from entering into a prolonged, sympathetic, and serious investigation of how God has worked through Smith to deepen, clarify, and transform the lives of so many faithful Christians" (70). Stephen observes that "Mormon baptism for the dead is a beautiful ritual, and it is biblically grounded" (90), and he comments that "far from taking the place of the New Testament, the Book of Mormon deepens its witness to Jesus Christ. The Book of Mormon, in fact, could just as easily be called 'The Book of Jesus.' I would go so far as to assert that, page for page, it is just as focused on Jesus Christ as the New Testament" (121).

Likewise, Alonzo regularly expresses his esteem for Catholicism: "Becoming an LDS Christian has, in many ways, caused me to love and appreciate Catholicism in a way I did not prior to my conversion. It has made me more aware of the tremendous good that faith has done for Christianity, and for the world (and what God has done through it). I have prayed regularly (since his elevation) for Pope Francis—in the hope that God would use him for the good of the world" (20). As a scholar of the history of religious symbols, Alonzo forcefully acknowledges that "one aspect of history Catholics are good at—and all other denominations of Christianity could learn from—is having a sense of

the symbolically sacred" (161). He then relates his experience seeing the relic of the Holy Blood of Bruges. Whether or not it is an authentic remnant of Christ's blood, "it functions for thousands upon thousands who have viewed and venerated it as a symbol of a historical reality—'That for me a sinner, He suffered, He bled and died'" (161).

The authors openly acknowledge theological positions that separate their faiths even while they discuss obvious and not-so-obvious bridges that unite them. In contrast to the Bible-centric, *sola scriptura* position espoused by many Protestants, both Mormons and Catholics accept binding truths and revelations outside of the Old and New Testaments. Regarding grace and works, Stephen and Alonzo envision a faithful Catholic or Mormon participating energetically in "rituals, moral effort, charity, prayer, [and] Bible study" but ultimately kneeling before "our suffering Lord, nailed to the cross on our behalf" (46), wholly dependent on his mercy (48). Quoting Brigham Young, Alonzo decries the vanity of works without a mind "'riveted—yes, I may say riveted—on the cross of Christ'" (48). In the chapter on the Virgin Mary, Stephen admires the "cosmic significance" (61) of Mormon belief in a Heavenly Mother, a significance that he feels was partially lost from Marian theology after the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s (51). While Protestantism has, at times, had "something like an allergic reaction to all things Mary" (59), Alonzo eloquently expresses the esteem Latter-day Saints have for the Lord's beloved Mother: "Mormons are taught that they cannot think too highly of Mary and they generally speak her name with reverence" (57). "In so many ways, she typifies Heavenly Mother. As finite beings, she enables us to grasp—even if only ever so slightly— what a divine, godlike woman would be" (62).

In the chapters on matter and souls, Stephen and Alonzo reconsider ancient dogma and the theological erudition of St. Thomas Aquinas as they explore the disparate positions of Mormons and Catholics on the nature of God and the premortal life of spirits. The chapter on Jesus addresses, among other things, the Eucharist, or sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Transubstantiation—the miraculous change of bread and wine into the body, blood, and soul of Christ during the Mass—is at the heart of Catholic worship. Although Latter-day Saints regard the sacramental emblems as "power-filled symbols" (136) rather than the Real Presence of Jesus, Alonzo rightly explains that something miraculous and *transformative* happens for Mormon communicants: "God sanctifies, cleanses and forgives them of their sins and endows them with the power to overcome more and more of their fallen, human, sinful nature" (135). The

chapter on history contains a moving account of Stephen's baptism, when he prostrated himself before the altar while the congregation intoned the Litany of the Saints, calling on the "spiritual warriors" of the Church to become his "personal bodyguards" (157). Alonzo then addresses the cooperation of the living and the dead from a Mormon perspective, both in proxy temple ordinances and personal spiritual experiences.

In no way does Stephen and Alonzo's book purport to expound official Church doctrines, and naturally they bring their personal perspectives and biases to the conversation. Progressive Catholics may look askance at Stephen's nostalgia for the devotional rigor of the pre–Vatican II Church. Other readers may raise an eyebrow at Alonzo's enthusiasm for the hypothetical canonization of non-Catholics or his objection to the mystery of transubstantiation on grounds of logic. Mormons may disagree with Stephen's sense that Church organization and authority under the Prophet Joseph Smith seem like "reinventing the [Catholic] wheel" (12). There are also a few instances when Stephen slightly misunderstands Latter-day Saint doctrine: the supposition that recent Presidents of the Church primarily guard past revelations rather than receiving new ones or the idea that other worlds created by God might have "forms of salvation" independent of Christ (134).

If any criticism is to be leveled at this remarkable book, it might be one of structure. Stephen begins the discussions in all but one chapter, followed by a response from Alonzo, then back to Stephen, and so forth. The authors explain that since Stephen represents a vastly larger religious group, it makes sense for him to "set the stage" (170). He introduces the topic, outlines doctrinal differences, and suggests points of intersection where Catholics could learn valuable lessons from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Alonzo then responds to Stephen's queries, clarifies misunderstandings, and expresses admiration for Catholicism. Because the format places him in the respondent position, however, some of his arguments acquire an apologetic cast. As a result, his musings on what Latter-day Saints could learn from the Catholic tradition lack the same specificity and frequency as Stephen's tributes. Stephen's praise carries the confidence of an ancient and firmly established church generously engaging in ecumenical dialogue with smaller religious organizations. Yet, as the authors point out, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' bold claim to apostolic authority and antiquity belies its size and age. It is precisely this critical similarity with Catholicism that justifies a more equal structure in introducing and responding to discussion points.

Had the roles of the authors been shared more equally, Alonzo might have had even more opportunities to commend aspects of Catholicism for the consideration of his Mormon readers. The text mentions the beloved and recently canonized Mother Teresa and quotes from the great Carmelite mystic St. John of the Cross, but among the laudatory ranks of Catholic saints, Mormons will also be interested in zealous missionaries, like the sixteenth-century Jesuit St. Francis Xavier or St. Damien De Veuster, a nineteenth-century missionary priest, who sacrificed his life to minister in the Hawaiian leper colony of Kalaupapa. Incidentally, Father Damien was joined by another man who volunteered to live and die among the lepers—the Mormon Jonathan Napela, who would not abandon his wife after she had contracted the disease.

A people who appreciate soul-enlarging art, music, and drama as much as Mormons do could learn much from Catholicism, which has inspired some of the most profound sacred paintings, sculptures, oratorios, hymns, and mystery plays in Christian history. Latter-day Saints, who, as Stephen rightly points out, "base their theolog[y] in the precious blood of Jesus" (120) and fervently sing and testify of "our Savior's love," would be moved by Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which bleeds in redemptive compassion and burns with love for the world. Church leaders have frequently encouraged Latter-day Saints to quietly prepare for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper rather than visiting before Sunday services begin, and any Mormon who has attended Catholic Mass will have been impressed by the profound reverence of parishioners, many of whom await the commencement of the liturgy on their knees in silent prayer. This stirring book will both direct readers to the singular precepts of their own faiths and also broaden their perspective on truths they hold in common.

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Richard V. Francaviglia. *The Mapmakers of New Zion: A Cartographic History of Mormonism.*
Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2015.

Reviewed by Brandon S. Plewe

This book is the most comprehensive treatment of historical cartography of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to date. It is beautifully illustrated with over one hundred maps that have been created by, or at least used by, Mormons over the past two hundred years, and it further discusses many more, demonstrating that cartography has been an important, and underappreciated, part of the history of the Church. It should be noted that the term "historical cartography" can be interpreted two ways: a history of maps (as in this work) or maps of history (see *Mapping Mormonism*[1]). As Francaviglia discusses in his afterword (240), the two approaches are very different but can complement each other well.

The Mapmakers of New Zion is only partially a survey of historical cartography; in fact, that titular focus, "A Cartographic History of Mormonism," is probably of secondary importance. What Francaviglia has really created is a book about the evolving sense of place in the Mormon psyche: the sacred and secular way in which Mormons have viewed the spaces they have encountered and those they have created. As he states, "All maps function as complex texts that convey stories about people's changing relationship to place" (226). In this book, maps serve as a primary source for gleaning this sense of place in ways that cannot be found in more traditional source documents.

The introduction is a "prerequisite," introducing several key concepts of cartography and geography that are used throughout the book but may be unfamiliar to many readers. While such introductory material

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1. Brandon S. Plewe, S. Kent Brown, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard H. Jackson, eds., *Mapping Mormonism: An Atlas of Latter-day Saint History,* 2d ed. (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 2014).

is often presented rather dryly, Francaviglia places it in the context of religious history, so even those who are already well versed in these concepts will gain new insights from his unique perspective.

Each chapter then focuses on a particular time period and/or theme that epitomizes how contemporary maps elucidate the Mormon sense of place and how it evolved over time. Thus, each chapter describes a nexus of history, religion, geography, and cartography.

Chapter 1 generally discusses maps created during Joseph Smith's tenure as prophet (1830–44) but focuses particularly on the urban plans he created or commissioned, starting with the abstract City of Zion Plat and continuing to subsequent variations. The spiritual significance of the City of Zion as the spatial manifestation of a utopian society has been covered before.[2] What Francaviglia adds is an analysis of the plat maps themselves as evidence of that significance and the meaning of changes in subsequent plans. It is important to note that none of the plans he shows were ever fully built—even Kirtland was never completed more than about four blocks, and the extent to which Far West was constructed is unknown but ephemeral at best. It is therefore surprising that Francaviglia never mentions Nauvoo, the only one of Joseph's city plats that was ever fully realized. The Nauvoo plat differs from that of the original City of Zion in a number of significant ways: most notably, the larger lot sizes and the lack of any central square (the temple and commercial center were actually built in a neighboring plat developed by Daniel H. Wells, then non-Mormon but future member of the First Presidency). I had hoped that this book would explore why Joseph departed so radically from his original vision of a Zion city when given the perfect opportunity to implement it, but I am left wanting.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 focus on the use and creation of maps in the settlement of the American West during the second half of the nineteenth century. Francaviglia effectively demonstrates how crucial maps were in finding a new gathering place west of the Rocky Mountains in the Salt Lake Valley, in locating a route to get there, then in finding and establishing additional settlements across the intermountain West. The variety of maps the author references, from rough sketches to commercial-grade prints, illustrates the wide variety of purposes that maps served during the Pioneer Era and reminds us that the quality of

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2. Richard H. Jackson, "Sacred Space and City Planning: The Mormon Example," *Architecture et Comportement/Architecture and Behaviour* 9, no. 2 (1993): 251–59.

a map is not necessarily judged by its aesthetic appeal or its professional craft but by how well it is suited to the task at hand.

In chapter 5, Francaviglia broaches the subject of portraying the geography of the Book of Mormon. While this is not technically part of the history of the Church, it is relevant for a number of reasons. Most importantly, the endeavor of mapping a sacred narrative is another evidence of the Mormon sense of place (or rather, the variety and evolution of Mormon senses of place). In fact, in the mind of many members, "Mormon Geography" is synonymous with "Book of Mormon Geography." I have often had to explain to people that the modern Church has a geography also.

Any scholarly commentary on Book of Mormon research is problematic because the book itself is not a proven fact, but an article of faith. Thus, every statement is colored by whether the original researcher, and the commentator, believes the book to be true or false. This chapter is no exception. While Francaviglia frequently claims to be taking an objective view, with statements such as "I leave to others the task of defending or criticizing the Book of Mormon" (156), he cannot resist raising a number of objections to the book that have nothing to do with geography or mapping, and his discussion of the attempts to map the events described therein has a dismissive tone that is not found in the rest of the book. When talking about detailed theories of the geography of the Book of Mormon, Francaviglia chose to focus on just two of the more than ninety published theories, two that are virtually impossible scientifically and have no support from the community of Mormon scholars. He uses these to imply that Mormon scholars happily disregard science and archaeology to support faith, while he largely ignores the dozens of publications that have far more justification.

While I am someone who believes the Book of Mormon to be factually correct (but who does not espouse any particular theory about Book of Mormon geography, for many of the reasons stated in this chapter), Francaviglia does not. We should be able to have a rational dialogue about the history of this avenue of research (which has largely been undertaken by believers) without worrying about whether the Book of Mormon is actually true or false. This chapter is not that dialogue, although one can find a number of good points amid the negative rhetoric. For example, the chapter effectively illustrates the way in which implausible theories that disregard science, archaeology, geography, and textual analysis give the entire enterprise a poor reputation; it is therefore imperative that theories of Book of Mormon geography be objectively validated by the scholarly community. Francaviglia also demonstrates

the inherent danger in pinning one's testimony on a particular interpretation of scripture that could be disproven by future evidence.

Besides this concern, I was surprised to find that this chapter generally displayed a lower quality of scholarship than the rest of the book. Misquotations and factual misstatements about the text of the Book of Mormon (that have nothing to do with whether it is true or false) are forgivable for someone who has not studied it in depth. However, there are basic lapses in logic, such as the frequent assumptions that because some Mormon somewhere claimed something (such as the Hohokam ruins around Phoenix, Arizona, being constructed by Nephites), Latter-day Saints in general must believe the same. There are also maps and observations that Francaviglia misses that would seem obviously relevant (at least more relevant than some of what was included). For example, on page 184 he discusses the scriptural maps found on the lds.org website but fails to acknowledge the fact that the same maps are published in the printed versions of the Bible and Doctrine and Covenants carried in the hands of every member, with the clear implication this carries about the value that the Church places on geographic understanding. Lastly, in the latter part of the chapter, concerning the contemporary mapping of the Church's own history, Francaviglia misstates several basic historical facts; for example, that the "farm of Josiah Stowell" is one of the "new sites settled by the Mormons" (184). In the rest of the book, he has clearly done better research.

Chapter 6 discusses the creation and use of maps in the global proselytizing efforts of the Church and its members. Missionary work is a crucial nexus of religion, history, and geography that is illuminated by the cartography presented by Francaviglia. While the maps drawn by Walter Murray Gibson came from before his brief and tragic foray into Mormonism and do not reflect the actual missionary focus of the Church at the time, Gibson's story is just as enlightening as any of the other vignettes found in *The Mapmakers of New Zion.*

The telling of Gibson's story is one example of a very useful method Francaviglia employs to portray how maps reflect a mindset: to focus on individual mapmakers for whom we have additional sources to better understand why they made the maps they did. Understanding the personalities and backgrounds of Mormon mapmakers such as Walter M. Gibson, W. W. Phelps, Thomas Bullock, Albert Carrington, John Steele, and especially James H. Martineau gives a special insight into how Mormons have thought about the world around them. Francaviglia recognizes traits in Martineau and others to which cartographers aspire, being "scientifically disciplined, spiritually engaged, and artistically imaginative" (146).

One general problem in *The Mapmakers of New Zion* could be shared with many works of rhetorical critique: in many cases, Francaviglia, in his quest to tie all of these maps into a coherent thesis, imbues a given map with far more significance than it warrants. For example, the design of Lehi, Arizona, portrayed on page 182 took advantage of the existing Hohokam canals, as stated in the caption, but there is no evidence of the mythic meaning of the design described in the text. In the same vein, I agree that the map of Paiutes on page 183 "reveals the Mormons' long-standing interest in native peoples," but this document clearly has a lot more to do with the practical interests of living among the Paiutes than any supposed connection to the Book of Mormon. A third example is the map on page 186, documenting the twentieth-century parcels, build-ings, and roads that were involved in the Church's effort to purchase the Hill Cumorah; there is nothing about the historical narrative of Joseph Smith, as posited in the text (184). In some cases, these over-the-top interpretations are accompanied by much simpler and more likely alter-natives that emphasize how superfluous the former is. For example, on page 227, Francaviglia raises the very relevant question of why almost all Mormon maps were created by men. After a lengthy discussion of the possible geographic ineptitude of women and the literature on feminist critiques of cartography, he arrives at the obvious, and rather prosaic, answer: it was because, unfortunately, the professions related to mapping were traditionally dominated by men, inside and outside of the Church.

That said, I acknowledge that in many cases, it is completely appro-priate to search for subtexts in the superficially mundane. For example, I wholly agree that the bas-relief maps of the world adorning the Church Office Building in Salt Lake City (224) are deeply symbolic of the way in which the Church views its global reach and significance, which is simi-larly demonstrated by the Mapparium at the headquarters of Christian Science in Boston (10).

On a related note, while the vast majority of the maps that Francavi-glia has chosen to highlight clearly fit into the general storyline he is weaving, others seem a stretch. Sometimes I wondered if he had found a random map that was too intriguing to leave out and then had to invent an interpretation to fit it into a given chapter. For example, I thought the maps portrayed on pages 191–95 were interesting, but I could not follow Francaviglia's attempt to tie them into any general thesis.

Francaviglia demonstrates that he has successfully collected a fairly comprehensive set of the maps used by, created by, or created about Mormons since the 1830s. In addition to the hundred or so maps beau-tifully illustrating the book, Francaviglia discusses at least a hundred

more, and I'm sure this is a fraction of what he encountered in his research. This collection is potentially an invaluable resource for future scholars of the history, geography, doctrine, and practice of Mormonism, so *The Mapmakers of New Zion* seems incomplete without an annotated bibliography of these maps. I would encourage the author to make such a bibliographic database available online if possible. This would also have allowed Francaviglia to get around the coherence issue mentioned before by allowing him to include maps without needing to relate them to any broader storyline.

On a technical note, one frequent annoyance was that the figures were often four, five, or more pages away from the text that discusses them. I'm sure this was not the author's fault, but more careful layout would have made the book easier to read.

The book concludes by making a number of profound observations about the relationship between cartography and Mormonism. For example, as a fellow geographer, I too have wondered why maps are not more common in Church history scholarship (229), although I have seen a great increase in the number of historical works that feature maps, such as the Joseph Smith Papers. A second conclusion is that the vast majority of LDS-produced maps are a reflection of some basic traits of Mormons and Mormonism (230–32): our maps have tended to be as conservative, serious, respective of authority, technologically advanced, and zealous as we are.

The Mapmakers of New Zion thus effectively makes the case that maps are an important, and underutilized, source for understanding the history and geography of the Latter-day Saints. More importantly, this work enlightens us as to how the Latter-day Saints have thought about their own history and geography.

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Paula Kelly Harline. *The Polygamous Wives Writing Club:
From the Diaries of Mormon Pioneer Women.*
New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Reviewed by Andrea G. Radke-Moss

In 2014, Paula Harline released *The Polygamous Wives Writing Club* to wide acclaim. Considering the number of past publications on the history of Mormon polygamy, what has made Harline's publication and approach stand out, especially coming from someone who is not a professional historian?

From the outset, the title of *Polygamous Wives Writing Club* is worthy of comment. Harline claims that the idea for the book came from watching her ward Relief Society sisters meet monthly to share their writings, and then she "imagined that nineteenth-century women could have done the same" (4). Perhaps unintentionally, the title appears to be a riff on a popular genre of fictionalized women's associations, book clubs, and literary societies. James Patterson's *Women's Murder Club* series (2001 to 2016) might have started the trend, but it was the best-selling *Jane Austen Book Club* (2005) that really popularized the "book club" framework. Other top sellers followed: *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* (2009), *Miss Dreamsville and the Collier County Literary Society* (2012), *The Book Club* (2013), *The Jane Austen Quilt Club* (2014), and *Book Club* (2016). Taken together, this genre has allowed authors to explore stories against the backdrop of female associations. The plots might be different, but the themes are universal: communities of women meet around a common interest, create space for self-discovery and empowerment, and find group strength in pushing against the personal, social, and professional challenges of their lives.

Harline has adroitly applied this motif to *Polygamous Wives*. By turning the lived experiences of nineteenth-century Mormon wives into a place of sharing between women, she has created an imagined feminine community of mutual sorrow, loneliness, struggle, and triumph. It works as a useful organizational tool, as she has geographically situated

her female subjects into common places and chronologies, and tried to link their experiences across invisible lines of separation.

Whereas other works in this genre are thoroughly fictionalized, Harline draws upon actual histories of real women, producing a work that is catchy and provocative, though it still carries a highly speculative tone. For instance, female subjects are introduced with lines like "If [these] wives had known each other, they probably would have enjoyed spending an afternoon together" (11). Thus, as history is blended with literary, sometimes both are muted, even if the overall effort is meant for dramatic and personalizing effect. And in trying to achieve a smooth narrative style, Harline has omitted the in-text footnotes and placed all references at the end of the book, making it difficult to check any source quotes, author assertions, statistical information, or historical analysis from other scholars. Since Harline has consciously crafted her book around these approaches, readers should be aware that they might be appealing to some but, perhaps, jarring to others. Still, the book is powerful, gripping, and well-written—except for the speculative places throughout.

Harline chose twenty-nine obscure polygamist wives' diaries and autobiographies from the nineteenth-century Mormon diaspora. This publication is a rich trove of polygamous source material, and there is much for researchers to unpack here. In contrast to the usual emphasis on elite wives who functioned in the highest circles of Church leadership, these women represent the average experiences of rural, unknown, and poor women. Harline's purpose is to use these women's personal writings to understand their decisions to live polygamy and then to know how they lived it privately. One "made-up" quote captures the experience of most women in her study, and clarifies Harline's basic thesis: "I believed that the principle of plural marriage was from God, but it was still hard—it nearly killed me" (5).

Harline's three basic premises are: first, that wives struggled to adapt to polygamous life in a culture of monogamous practice. She goes so far as to say that, for some, "there still seemed something adulterous about it" (4). While that may have been the feeling in many cases, it seems that women were more worried about being neglected and lonely within it. A huge takeaway is that even with the best intentions and under the best circumstances, it was impossible for husbands to apply total equality of treatment, attention, financial support, and regard for all their wives. Second, Harline debunks the myth about unified sister-wives, and instead found that most women struggled to find any female

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kinship and bonding within marriage plurality. Third, the hardships of antipolygamy legislation and life on the Underground were devastating for polygamous wives. This is probably the book's strongest contribution, as Harline unpacks the challenges of multiple displacements, long marital separations, housing difficulties, instability, security, and even abandonment.

A few contributions stood out to me for their attention and inclusion: the economic contributions of polygamous wives, the challenges of economic class, sexual intimacy, and the trials of the antipolygamy era. The book, however, sometimes has a spotty approach to historical contextualization and details. For example, a few significant individuals get only offhand mention, as though the author simply might not know who they are. A generic "polygamous wife" who gave a speech in 1870 before five thousand people in the Salt Lake Tabernacle was Eliza R. Snow herself (73). Page 86 includes a discussion of George T. Benson and his daughter Louisa, with no mention that they are the grandfather and aunt of future Church President Ezra Taft Benson. And one passing mention of a "widowed mother," Rebecca Swain Williams, who "never remarried," would have been more meaningful if readers knew that this was none other than the widow of Frederick G. Williams, famous medical doctor and First Presidency counselor to Joseph Smith (69).

Some anachronisms are distracting for their use outside of time and place, like referring to courting practices from the 1850s through the 1880s as "dating" (16, 129). And calling these women "feminists" (177) might have been more nuanced after a discussion of intentional autonomy vs. accidental autonomy. A reference to 1856 federal attempts to "curtail polygamy" shows that the author might be confusing the formation of the Republican Party with the 1862 Morrill Act (125). In a few other cases, the errors are more careless: the order of federal troops to Utah by President Buchanan is dated as 1858, not 1857 (56); Joseph Smith's death is attributed to "Missouri mobs" without mention of Illinois mobs (155); and Susa Young Gates is called a "polygamous wife and businesswoman," when in fact she was married monogamously to her second husband and was mostly a journalist, writer, and editor.

In other places, the analysis is thoughtful and professional. Harline has done her best to read and evaluate these writings carefully and sympathetically. She has included the analysis of prominent historians of polygamy, gender, and culture. She has pulled out nuances and personal elements and has tried to understand these women across their varied experiences. Her narrative is often colorful and humorous, with

lines like "Their dysfunctional threesome limped along" (65), which describes the struggling marriage of one family. She grapples with the difference between the public support of polygamy and the private sorrow in living it, offering great sentences like "Women who wrote from the margins of official discourse could use their diaries as a way to 'talk back' to their culture" (67).

It is impossible to write an objective history of Mormon plural marriage. Harline admits her own preconceived aversion toward polygamy, but she attempted this project to honestly try to understand the women who chose the practice. And in the end, she recognizes that these stories represent overwhelmingly her "negative findings" (200). Indeed, it is hard to get past the fact that Harline has included elements of disappointment, devastating heartache, loneliness, poverty, abandonment, displacement, and even neglect and abuse in almost every account. For those who wonder if these women should *not* be considered a representative sample of Mormon polygamists wives, then what would be? Almost to a woman, these wives also desperately wanted and loved their children and ultimately justified their experiences through the joys of motherhood (34). And so, Harline sees these suffering women as typical but also admits the complexity of pinning down a one-size-fits-all approach. These marriages were "not just one thing but an entire spectrum of north and south, horizontal and vertical, far and near, early and late, old and young, pleasure and pain, substance and poverty, compatibility and disappointment, children and illness, respect and disregard, companionship and loneliness, regret and gratitude" (199).

While *Polygamous Wives* might be interpreted as an indictment of Mormon polygamy, Harline does admire their sacrifices, and she hopes that today "the polygamous wives who lived it will take a more prominent place in the Mormon imagination—after all, they did much to lay a foundation for the modern Church" (215).

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Adam S. Miller. *Future Mormon: Essays in Mormon Theology.*
Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016.

Reviewed by James E. Faulconer

Adam Miller is a professor of philosophy and the director of the honors program at Collin College, McKinney, Texas. He is the author of at least five books in Mormon studies and three in philosophy, as well as serving as editor of a collection of Mormon studies essays.

As one of several young Mormons not only doing theology but also asking *how* it ought to be done, Miller offers us a thoughtful and readable collection of essays. *Future Mormon* approaches theology with ideas and methods that most Latter-day Saints may not be familiar or comfortable. After all, theology is often a different animal than doctrine and devotional religion.

In dialogue with contemporary philosophical thinkers such as Bruno Latour, Alain Badiou, Jacques Lacan, and Giorgio Agamben, as well as the novelist Cormack McCarthy and the LDS thinkers Terryl and Fiona Givens, Miller proposes that we consider a Mormon theology that radically rethinks transcendence, denies the standard atomistic understanding of what it means to be an individual, insists on agency "all the way down" (105), relies heavily on a notion of covenant, asks us to reconsider what we mean by terms like *sin* and *redemption,* and suggests that our experiences with the supernatural are relatively rare in our lives because God intends us to put our attention on "the earth and the sun and the trees at hand" (77). As Miller makes these arguments, he demonstrates that we do theology best via a careful—and in his case, often innovative—reading of scripture.

A brief overview of the book's introduction and thirteen chapters will give readers a taste of Miller's insightful and sometimes restless approach.

The introduction, "A Future Tense Apologetics," explains that these essays are meant "to proactively gather for future Mormons [specifically

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his yet-to-be grandchildren] tools and resources that may be useful for them as they try, in the context of their [hypothetical] world, to work out their own salvation" (xi).

Chapter 1, "A General Theory of Grace," argues that, rather than the *what* of creation, grace is the *how,* and sin is the suppression of undefined and uncontrollable grace in favor of what is defined and controllable.

In chapter 2, "Burnt Offerings: Reading 1 Nephi 1," Miller offers a close reading of scripture that focuses on the prayers and—Miller argues—sacrifices that Lehi makes at Jerusalem and in the wilderness (1 Ne. 1:5–6). His conclusion is that Lehi and Nephi learn that "God's redemption doesn't involve an elimination of all suffering but a transformation of our relationship to that suffering such that the suffering itself becomes a condition of knowledge and favor" (24).

Chapter 3, "Reading Signs or Repeating Symptoms: Reading Jacob 7," is another close reading of scripture, this time using psychoanalytic ideas to think about Jacob's encounter with Sherem and the meaning of the doctrine of Christ, namely that Jacob's brothers are not necessarily lost forever.

In chapter 4, "Early Onset Postmortality," Miller reflects on Agamben's interpretation of Paul's letter to the Romans and Agamben's argument that "God's call to each of us is to accept a messianic vocation, . . . to take up whatever secular predicates already define us (tall, teacher, male, Caucasian, father, Mormon, whatever) *in a new and peculiarly messianic way*" (42; italics in original).

The chapter "*The God Who Weeps*: Notes, Amens, and Disagreements" is, as its title suggests, a review of Terryl and Fiona Givens's book, *The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Ensign Peak, 2012). Miller writes a respectful but critical review of the book. Among other things, he disagrees with their description of faith as a choice, arguing that we ought not understand our relationship to God in terms of satisfying desires. He worries that the Givenses' way of thinking about preexistence may "devalue the present world by anchoring its true meaning and substance in another" (49). He is concerned that, though the authors give credence to evolution, they may not do so strongly enough, and he is concerned that they misunderstand agency.

Chapter 6, "A Radical Mormon Materialism: Reading *Wrestling the Angel*," is a book review of Terryl Givens's *Wrestling the Angel: The Foundations of Mormon Thought—Cosmos, God, and Humanity* (Oxford, 2014). Miller is very much in agreement with Givens's radical materialism, but argues that in spite of himself Givens's thinking is latently an

idealism. Miller's alternative is "a theory of grace that explicates salvation not in terms of the coincidence of a material subject with an ideal law" (63) but in terms of a Pauline understanding of grace and salvation.

In chapter 7, "Reflections on President Uchtdorf's 'The Gift of Grace,'" Miller takes it upon himself to argue that President Dieter F. Uchtdorf's 2015 talk about grace does not go far enough. Miller understands President Uchtdorf to teach that "works only become righteousness when they are the *product* of God's grace as that grace works its way out into the world through our hearts and hands." But, according to Miller, "the problem . . . is that this approach still implicitly frames grace as a response to sin. . . . It leaves intact the impression that God's original plan really was for people to bootstrap themselves into righteousness by way of obedience and that then, *when this fails,* God steps in with his grace as the key to our salvation" (66; italics in original). Miller offers an alternative that intends to leave intact the import of President Uchtdorf's teaching while extending it so that "grace is not God's backup plan," to quote the title of another book by Miller.

For those interested in Miller's understanding of what theology is and can be, chapter 8, "A Manifesto for the Future of Mormon Thinking," may be the most important essay of the book. "Thinking can only be fearless when it is conducted as an act of love," he says. "And thinking can only be conducted as an act of love when it traverses the position occupied by the enemy, transfiguring in the process myself, the truth, and the enemy" (73). If we take secularism as Mormonism's contemporary enemy, this means that we "shouldn't start, as many seem to do, by taking a secular premise—that religions is, essentially, the not-secular—as the key to understanding religion itself" (74). Rejecting secularism's definition of religion, Mormonism must then answer the charge that it "boils down to fuzzy feelings and wishful thinking" (75), that it is just in our heads. If we engage with that charge seriously, we discover quickly that heads are inseparable from bodies, which are inseparable from the physical world. It will turn out "that a fearless investigation of this subjective position, driven as it is by a love for its enemy, may simply coax into the open something that should have already been obvious to those whose hearts and minds are woven into the world by way of Mormonism: the truth that religion is not, fundamentally, about supernatural stuff" but is about reality (77).

Chapter 9, "Network Theology: Is It Possible to be a Christian but Not a Platonist?" is indirectly a response to Nietzsche's charge that Christianity is Platonism for the masses (1885 preface to *Beyond Good and Evil*). Of course, Miller believes that Christianity without Platonism

is possible, and he uses network theory to argue his position. Out of that theory he asks several questions: What if God is not a king but is instead a servant, as Jesus describes himself? What if truth is an ongoing process rather than a static product? What if grace is immanent rather than transcendent? And, what if the soul is a network rather than something like an atom?

Though it is not obvious from the title, the next chapter, "Jesus, Trauma, and Psychoanalytic Technique," continues to deal with themes Miller has already introduced: the necessity of grace, the kenotic nature of Christian life, and the need for something to disrupt our habitual understanding of things. The surprise is that he uses the terms of Lacanian psychoanalysis to do so.

Chapter 11, "Every Truth Is a Work, Every Object Is a Covenant," further fleshes out Miller's earlier claim that truth is a process by insisting that everything is an agent, not necessarily a conscious agent, but an agent—a being that creates effects—nonetheless. On such a view, the Book of Mormon is an agent: "The Book of Mormon is a basin of attraction. . . . We are free to denounce it, discount it, or make truths out of it—but, to the extent that our paths intersect, we are not free from the hazard of its pull" (106). Relying on Doctrine and Covenants 84's description of the Book of Mormon as a covenant (D&C 84:57), Miller says that "the Book of Mormon exemplifies what it means, in general, to be a truth. Every object is an agent, every agent is a coalition, every coalition is a truth, and every truth is a covenant" (107). These admonitions follow: "Don't assume that the Book of Mormon is or isn't historically true. History is not one thing. *Make* the Book of Mormon historically true in as many times and as many places and to whatever degree you're able" and "Can you turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers? Can you use it to keep the children from being cast off forever? Can you adapt and extend and strengthen the promises made to the fathers? Will you allow the book to claim you and counter-claim it in return?" (111).

"The Body of Christ" chapter, barely more than two pages long, argues that rather than asking whether the institutional Church is true, we might ask "Is this the body of Christ? Is Christ manifest here? Does his blood flow in these veins? . . . Is faith strengthened here? Is hope enlivened? Is charity practiced?" (114).

The title of chapter 13, "Silence, Witness, and Absolute Rock: Reading Cormack McCarthy," may suggest that the essay is incongruous with the rest of the collection, an interpretation of a contemporary novelist's work rather than an essay in theology. But the incongruity can be resolved;

Miller analyzes McCarthy's work to show its theological import. Three kinds of persons show up in the novels: "(1) the dreamer who wants to reduce the world to its shadow by *replacing* things with words and maps, (2) the mute who wants to *deny* that the world casts any shadow of meaning, and (3) the witness who, *echoing* the world's heart-silence, allows meaning and joy to peripherally accrue" (118). Though Miller doesn't say so, it is hard not to conclude that the third is the one with which he feels the most kinship.

At first glance, this collection of essays may seem slightly haphazard: a couple of book reviews, an interpretation of a collection of novels, several essays giving close readings of scripture, an essay on Lacanian psychoanalysis, and so on. But a closer look shows that haphazard character to be only apparent. This is a collection of essays from different occasions, not a book with a tightly controlled argument from start to finish. Nevertheless, the same themes run from beginning to end: grace, materialism, kenosis, ... Miller's theses are bold, insightful, and provocative, and they are laid out in clear language and arguments. In almost any text, a turn to the thought of Lacan, Badiou, or Agamben means a turn to nearly impenetrable prose, but that isn't so for Miller. He is judicious in his use of the philosophers and other thinkers to whom he turns, and he explains their ideas clearly and carefully. His prose writing is very good, and it doesn't falter when he explains difficult ideas.

The result of Miller's good writing and insightful thinking is a book full of "refrigerator quotes," messages you'll want to share with others as you read. It is also full of ideas that will make you think beyond mere appreciation. Perhaps you'll reconsider ideas you've long held. Perhaps the book will goad you to argue with its author. Either way, those interested in Mormon theology must read this book, and many others ought to.

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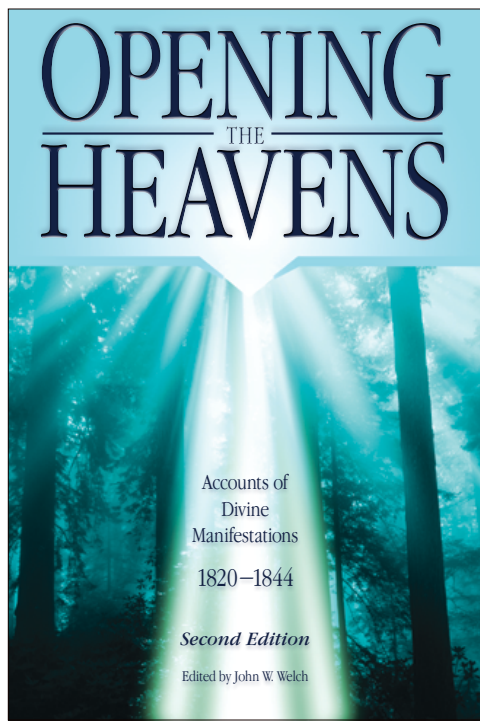
OPENING THE HEAVENS

Accounts of
Divine
Manifestations

1820–1844

Second Edition

Edited by John W. Welch

As you read the accounts of divine manifestations in *Opening the Heavens,* the truth of the Restoration events becomes clearer. The original eyewitness accounts will endure for generations, making this one of the most persuasive and influential Church history books you may ever read or own.

Joseph Smith had only one request of the publisher of the *Chicago Democrat,* to whom he directed his now-famous Wentworth Letter: "All that I shall ask at his hands, is, that he publish the account entire, ungarnished, and without misrepresentation." Since 1959, BYU Studies has been a premier publisher of primary historical documents in LDS Church history. Continuing this tradition, *Opening the Heavens* gathers in one place the key historical collections documenting divine manifestations from 1820 to 1844. Gathered here are the historical documents concerning the First Vision, the translation of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood, the many visions of Joseph Smith, the outpouring of keys at the Kirtland Temple, and the mantle of Joseph Smith passing to Brigham Young.
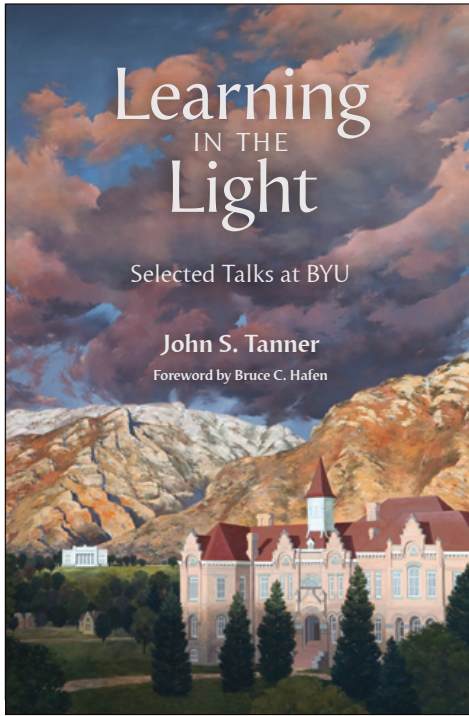
Learning in the Light

Selected Talks at BYU

John S. Tanner

Foreword by Bruce C. Hafen

The talks collected in this volume are drawn from John S. Tanner's later years at Brigham Young University, prior to his appointment as president of BYU–Hawaii. They contain a record of how, as an administrator, he tried to keep the dream of BYU alive. More broadly, they speak to a vision of learning that has been central to Latter-day Saint doctrine and practice from the earliest days of the Church. He calls it learning in the light (see Psalm 36:9).

Bruce C. Hafen observes, "Since I began teaching at BYU forty-five years ago, I have heard many talks and read many essays about BYU's spiritual and intellectual mission. I've not heard that mission described more eloquently or with more insight than in John's work. At his best, he is reminiscent of Elder Neal A. Maxwell, with whom he has much in common—intuitive confidence in gospel premises as the best foundation for sound reasoning; a high degree of awareness about cultural context; equally fluent, even native-tongued, in both the language of the scriptures and the language of liberal education; meek, bright, and empathic."