

**The King Follett Discourse:
A Newly Amalgamated Text**

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Stan Larson

The King Follett Discourse of 7 April 1844, perhaps the most significant sermon delivered by the Prophet Joseph Smith, was preserved in manuscript form by Thomas Bullock, William Clayton, Willard Richards, and Wilford Woodruff.¹

Thomas Bullock's account is the longest, and there are indications that it was written down at the very time that Joseph Smith was speaking. Bullock was able to keep up as well as he did because he used a personal kind of shorthand with many abbreviated words. There are a few places where his pen ran out of ink, and because he had to dip his pen, he lost a few words as Joseph continued speaking, but picked up again a few phrases later. For example, in one place Bullock recorded: "when we find to know how to come to him," with the ink suddenly becoming dark again at the words "to know." An interesting observation of this is that at this very point Clayton's account fills in material missed by Bullock. This segment is recorded by Clayton thus: "when we . . . find out God—what kind a being we have got to worship—when we begin to know how to come to him."

William Clayton provides a very full coverage of the discourse until the last fourth which he merely summarized in two lines.² Evidence seems conclusive that Clayton also wrote his account as he was listening to the discourse. For example, in one place where Clayton left one-half line blank, Bullock's account fills in the information. The correlations between Bullock's and Clayton's accounts support the position that both were written at the time the discourse was given.

Willard Richards left a quite sketchy account, often with disjointed sentence fragments. He seems to have merely taken down various points during the discourse that he felt were particularly important. He often leaves spaces or inserts dashes to indicate he is not taking down every word. His report is "minutes" in the strict sense of the word since the sermon, which lasted a little over two hours, has been reduced to be read in just a few minutes.

Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal a more nearly complete account, but only after a formal introduction in which he described the sermon in terms that could only be known after it was finished. Though Woodruff claimed in 1877 to have recorded the King Follett Discourse "on

the crown of his hat, standing in the congregation,”³ he must have meant no longer extant notes which he later transferred to, and expanded in, his journal since his neatly-printed journal account has no abbreviated words, no gaps in the recording, and no unclearly written words. This transfer could have occurred that same day, or as much as a week or two later. Often the Woodruff account has synonyms and a slightly different word or phrase order when compared to the other accounts, but it is compatible to the other three versions in terms of the basic sense of the message. These considerations seem to indicate the need for a slightly different use of the Woodruff account.

ACCURACY OF THE REPORTS

It may, in all fairness, be wondered just how accurate the reports of the King Follett Discourse are. In an absolute sense, it is impossible to determine since there is no way to recover the words actually spoken that day in April of 1844 and thereby judge the accuracy of the reports. However, it should be noted that the reports have no irreconcilable parts—no contradictory statements—and it is sometimes quite amazing how easily the various accounts combine. A high degree of agreement and harmony exists among them. There is no evidence that any account was made by copying and/or expanding any other account. Every indication points to the Bullock, Clayton, and Richards versions, being written as Joseph spoke; this fact deserves emphasis. Of all the speeches given by Joseph Smith, this one has the greatest contemporary manuscript support, which certainly strengthens claims of its reliability and authenticity.

THE GRIMSHAW AMALGAMATION

Though a version of this sermon was published only four months later in the *Times and Seasons*, the version in general use today is an “amalgamation” made in 1855 by Jonathan Grimshaw.⁴ It has been pointed out that when several reports were made of the Prophet’s discourses “the editors faced the task of dove-tailing differing reports together to make a single, cohesive summary.”⁵ How the Grimshaw amalgamation differs from this newly amalgamated text in both approach and result can best be seen by a specific example, showing how each of the four independent manuscript sources read, how they were combined in 1855, and how they have been combined in the present version.

Thomas Bullock—1844

how does it read in the Heb. that God made man c put intois Adams Spirit c so became a living Spirit—the mind of man—the ~~min~~ mind of man

is as immortal as God himself—hence while I talk to these mourners—they are only separated from their bodies for a short period—their Spirits coexisted with God c now converse one another same as we do—does not this give your satisfact.⁶

William Clayton—1844

(—refers to the bible) don't say so in the old Hebrew—God made man out of the earth and put into him his spirit and then it became a living body. The mind of man—the intelligent part is coequal with God himself I know that my testimony is true. hence when I talk to these mourners what have they lost—they are only separated from their bodies for a short season. but their spirit existed co-equal with God and they now exist in a place where they converse together as much as we do on the earth.⁷

Willard Richards—1844

in hebrew put into him his spirit.—which was created before. Mind of man co-equal with God himself_ friends separated. for a small moment. from their spirits. coequal with God. and hold converse when they are one with another.—⁸

Wilford Woodruff—1844

God made a tabernacle & put a spirit in it and it became a Human soul, man existed in spirit & mind coequal with God himself, you who mourn the loss of friends are onwly seperted for a moment, the spirit is seperated for a little time, they are now conversant with each other as we are on the earth.⁹

Jonathan Grimshaw Amalgamation—1855 (Published in 1857)

God made a tabernacle and put a spirit into it, and it became a living soul. [Refers to the old Bible.] How does it read in the Hebrew? It does not say in the Hebrew that God created the spirit of man; it says, 'God made man out of the earth and put into him Adam's spirit, and so became a living body.'

The mind or the intelligence which man possesses is coequal with God himself. I know that my testimony is true; hence when I talk to these mourners, what have they lost? Their relatives and friends are only separated from their bodies for a short season; their spirits which existed with God have left the tabernacle of clay only for a little moment as it were, and they now exist in a place where they converse together the same as we do on the earth.¹⁰

New Amalgamation—1978

[He refers to the Bible.] How does it read in the Hebrew? It doesn't say so in the old Hebrew. God made the tabernacle of man out of the earth and put into him Adam's spirit (which was created before), and then it became a living body or human soul. Man existed in spirit; the mind of man—the intelligent Part—is as immortal as, and is coequal with, God Himself. I know that my testimony is true.

Hence, when I talk to these mourners, what have they lost? You who mourn the loss of friends are only separated for a small moment from their

spirits, and their spirits are only separated from their bodies for a short season. But their spirits existed coequal with God and they now exist in a place where they hold converse together one with another the same as we do on the earth. Does not this give you satisfaction?

Comparing the Grimshaw amalgamation of this passage against the original reports reveals a number of differences. The words underlined in the Grimshaw amalgamation indicate what was *added* with no manuscript authority; the words underlined in the new amalgamation on the right indicate what the Grimshaw amalgamation *deleted* from the original accounts. Notice also that sentences one and five in Grimshaw are essentially the same in meaning, but were derived from separate accounts; in the present amalgamation these have been combined as a single statement to avoid redundancy. Yet the opposite is true in the second paragraph where Grimshaw ends with a single thought; the present amalgamation has a double one—the mourner is separated from the loved one, and the spirit of the loved one is separated from his own body.

Since the Grimshaw amalgamation was made over eleven years after the discourse was given, there may be some concern about the questionable process of expanding or “fleshing out” the text, as well as the propriety of eliminating material from the original manuscript accounts.¹¹ From a historical point of view, it is preferable to use primary sources and not reminiscences of over a decade later.

THE NEWLY AMALGAMATED TEXT

The following procedure was used in making the present amalgamation. The account of Thomas Bullock was used as the basic running text. William Clayton’s version was then superimposed, adding a number of refinements such as extra clauses and clearer development of ideas. Afterwards, the parts recorded by Willard Richards were compared with what had already been developed; generally the Richards account merely confirmed various parts, though it added a number of new elements also. Finally, the Wilford Woodruff account was considered, and its new material was added, with the understanding that his material may not be as likely to represent the words actually spoken by Joseph Smith, though the basic meaning would likely be preserved.

This amalgamation has been edited in matters of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraph division, foreign language transliterations,¹² plurals, and in the addition of junctions and transitions needed for coherence, but it can be read with the confidence that only the barest minimum has been added. Because the editorial additions do not change the meaning, it has not been thought necessary to indicate where they are added.¹³ While it is true that there are still parts of the sermon that

are inexplicable and “there are some imperfections in the report of this discourse, which one here and there feels, since at some points the matter is not absolutely clear or the thought not completely rounded out”,¹⁴ still it is not deemed justified to go beyond extant manuscript evidence of the four sources. Since these accounts have been meshed together as much as possible, and not just tacked onto each other, the repetition of overlapping parts has been eliminated. When synonyms occur, the best attested is used or sometimes both are used.

The following are included to assist in the reading of this newly amalgamated version: Those words found only in Woodruff are indicated by the use of italics, so there is a ready distinction between these parts and the rest of the discourse as found in the other three accounts. Parenthetical comments spoken by Joseph are indicated by parentheses. Notations made by the scribes as to what Joseph did and the editorial expansion for the quotation from the Hebrew¹⁵ are indicated by brackets.

THE KING FOLLETT DISCOURSE

I *now* call the attention of *this* congregation while I address you on the subject which was contemplated in the fore-part of the conference. As the wind blows very hard it will be hardly possible for me to make you all hear unless there is profound attention. It is a subject of the greatest importance and the most solemn of any that could occupy our attention, and that is the subject of the dead. I have been requested to speak on the subject on the decease of our *beloved* brother, Elder King Follett, who was crushed to death in a well, by the falling of a tub of rock on him. I have been requested to speak by his friends and relatives but inasmuch as there are a great many *others* here in this congregation, who live in this city as well as elsewhere, who have lost friends, *their case will be had in mind this afternoon*, and I feel disposed to speak on the subject in general and offer you my ideas as far as I have ability and as far as I will be inspired by the Holy Spirit to *treat and dwell* upon this subject. I want your prayers, faith, the inspiration of Almighty God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost that I may set forth things that are true and that can easily be comprehended and which shall carry the testimony to your hearts. I pray that the Lord may strengthen my lungs, stay the winds, and let the prayer of the Saints to heaven appear that it may enter into the ear of the Lord of Sabaoth, for the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much. *There is strength here* and I verily believe that your prayers will be heard. I will speak in order to hold out.

Before I enter fully into the investigation of the subject that is lying before us, I wish to pave the way, make a few preliminaries, and bring *up* the subject from the beginning in order that you may understand the subject when

I come to it. I do not calculate to please your ears with superfluity of words, with oratory, or with much learning, but I calculate to edify you with the simple truths of heaven.

In the first place I wish to go back to the beginning of creation. There is the starting point in order to know and be fully acquainted with the mind, purposes, decrees, and ordinations of the great Elohim that sits in the heavens. For us to take up beginning at the creation it is necessary *for us* to understand something of God Himself in the beginning. If we start right, it is very easy for us to go right all the time; but if we start wrong, *we may go wrong, and* it is a hard matter to get right.

There are but very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God. If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend their own character. They cannot comprehend anything that is past or that which is to come; *they do not know—they do not understand* their own relationship *to God*. The world knows and comprehends but little more than the brute beast. If a man knows nothing more than to eat, drink, sleep, arise, and not any more, and does not comprehend what any of the designs of Jehovah are, what better is he than the beast, for it comprehends the same things—it eats, drinks, sleeps, comprehends the present and knows nothing more about *God or His existence*. This is as much as we know, unless we are able to comprehend by the inspiration of Almighty God. And how are we to do it by any other way?

I want to go back, *then*, to the beginning *that you may understand* and so get you to lift your minds into a more lofty sphere and exalted standing than what the human mind generally understands. I want to ask this congregation—every man, woman, and child—to answer this question in their own heart: What kind of a being is God? Ask yourselves! I again repeat the question: What kind of a being is God? Does any man or woman know? *Turn your thoughts in your hearts, and say*, Have any of you seen Him? Or heard Him? Or communed with Him? Here is a question that will, peradventure, from this time henceforth occupy your attention while you live.

The Apostle says that this is eternal life to know *the only wise* God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent—that is eternal life. If any man inquire, What kind of a being is God?—if he will cast his mind to know and search diligently his own heart—if the declaration of the Apostle be true, he will realize that unless he knows God he has not eternal life for there can be eternal life on no other principle.

My first object is to *go back and* find out the character of the only wise and true God *and what kind of a being He is*. If I should be the man so fortunate as to comprehend God and explain to your hearts *what kind of a being God is*, so that the Spirit seals it, *then* let every man and woman henceforth put his hand on his mouth, sit in silence, and never say anything or

lift his voice against the servants of God again. But if I fail to do it, I have no right to revelation and inspiration and it becomes my duty to renounce all of my pretensions to inspiration *or to being a prophet*, etc. If I should do so, should I not be as bad as all the rest *of the false teachers* of the world? They will all be as badly off as I am. They will all say I ought to be damned. There is not a man or a woman who would not breathe out an anathema on my head if they knew I was a false prophet. Some would feel authorized to take away my life, *but you might just as well take the lives of other false teachers as mine, if I were false*. If any man is authorized to take away my life who says I am a false teacher, then, upon the same principle, I should have the same right to take the life of all false teachers and who would not be the sufferer and where would be the end of the blood?

But *meddle not with any man for his religion*, for no man is authorized to take away life in consequence of religion. All laws and government ought to tolerate *and permit every man to enjoy his religion*, whether right or wrong. There is no law in the heart of God that would allow anyone to interfere with the rights of man. Every man has a right to be a false prophet, as well as a true prophet. If I show verily that I have the truth of God, *show the world is wrong by showing what God is*, and show that ninety-nine out of a hundred are false prophets and teachers while they pretend to hold the keys of God, and go to killing them, would it not deluge the whole world with blood?

I am going to inquire after God because I want you all to know God and to be familiar with Him. If I can get you to know Him, I can bring you to Him. And if so, all persecution against me will cease. This will let you know that I am His servant, for I speak as one having authority and not as a scribe.

What kind of a being was God in the beginning, before the world was? *I will go back to the beginning to show you. I will tell you*, so open your ears and eyes, all ye ends of the earth, and hear, for I am going to prove it to you with the Bible. I am going to tell you the designs of God for the human race, the relation the human family sustains with God, and why He interferes with the affairs of man. First, God Himself who sits enthroned in yonder heavens is a Man like unto one of yourselves—that is the great secret! If the veil were rent today and the great God that holds this world in its sphere and the planets in their orbit and who upholds all things by His power—if you were to see Him today, you would see Him in all the person, image, fashion, and very form of a man, *like yourselves*. For Adam was a man formed in His likeness and created in the very fashion and image of God. Adam received instruction, walked, talked, and conversed with Him as one man talks and communicates with another.

In order to understand the subject of the dead and to speak for the consolation of those who mourn for the loss of their friends, it is necessary

to understand the character and being of God. For I am going to tell you how God came to be God and what sort of a being He is. For we have imagined that God was God from the beginning of all eternity. I will refute *that* idea *and take away the veil so you may see*. Truth is the touchstone. These things are incomprehensible to some, but they are simple. The first principle of truth and of the Gospel is to know for a certainty the character of God, and that we may converse with Him the same as one man with another, and that He once was *a man* like one of us and that God Himself, the Father of us all, *once* dwelled on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did in the flesh *and like us*.

I will show it from the Bible. *I wish I were in a suitable place to tell it*. I wish I had the trump of an archangel. If I had the privilege, I could tell the story in such a manner that persecution would cease forever. *The scriptures inform us* (Mark it, Brother Rigdon) *that Jesus Christ* said:—What did Jesus say?—As the Father has power in Himself, even so has the Son power *in himself*. To do what? Why, what the Father did. That answer is obvious; *even* in a manner to lay down His body and take it up again. Jesus, what are you going to do? “To lay down my life as my Father laid down His body that I might take it up again.” *Do you believe it?* If you don’t believe it, you don’t believe the Bible. The Scriptures say it and I defy all hell—all the learned wisdom and records and all the combined powers of earth and hell together to refute it!

Here then is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God. You have got to learn how to make yourselves Gods in order to save yourselves and be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done—by going from a small capacity to a great capacity, from a small degree to another, from grace to grace, until the resurrection *of the dead*, from exaltation to exaltation—till you are able to sit in everlasting burnings and everlasting power and glory as those who have gone before, sit enthroned. I want you to know that God in the last days, while certain individuals are proclaiming His name, is not trifling with you nor me.

I want you to know the first principles of consolation. How consoling to the mourners when they are called to part with a husband, father, wife, mother child, dear relative, or friend, to know, though *they lay down this body* and all earthly tabernacles shall be dissolved, that their very being shall rise in immortal glory to dwell in everlasting burnings and to sorrow, die, and suffer no more. And not only that, but to contemplate the saying that they will be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. What is it? To inherit *and enjoy* the same glory, powers, and exaltation until you ascend a throne of eternal power *and arrive at the station of a God*, the same as those who have gone before. What did *Jesus Christ* do? “Why I do the *same* things that I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into exist-

tence.” *Saw the Father do what?*” I saw the Father work out His kingdom with fear and trembling and I am doing the same, *too*. When I get my kingdom, I will give it to the Father and it will *add to and exalt* His glory. *He will take a higher exaltation and I will take His place and I am also exalted*, so that He obtains kingdom rolling upon kingdom.” So that Jesus treads in His tracks as He had gone before and then inherits what God did before. God is glorified in the salvation and exaltation of His creatures.

It is plain beyond comprehension and you thus learn that these are some of the first principles of the Gospel, about which so much has been said. When you climb a ladder, you must begin at the bottom rung. You have got to find the beginning of the history and go on until you have learned the last principle of the Gospel. It will be a great while *after the grave* before you learn *to understand* the last, for it is a great thing to learn salvation beyond the grave and it is not all to be comprehended in this world.

I suppose I am not allowed to go into an investigation of anything that is not contained in the Bible. *If I should*, you would cry treason, and I think there are so many learned and wise men here who would put me to death for treason. I will, *then*, go to the old Bible and turn commentator today. I will go to the very first Hebrew word—BERESHITH—in the Bible and make a comment on the first sentence of the history of creation: “In the beginning. . . .” I want to analyze the word BERESHITH. BE—in, by, through, and everything else; next, ROSH—the head, ITH. Where did it come from? When the inspired man wrote it, he did not put the first part—the BE—there; but a man—an *old Jew* without any authority—put it there. He thought it too bad to begin to talk about the head of any man. It read in the first: “The Head One of the Gods brought forth the Gods.” This is the true meaning of the words. ROSHITH [BARA ELOHIM] signifies [the Head] to bring forth the Elohim. If you do not believe it, you do not believe the learned man of God. No learned man can tell you any more than what I have told you. Thus, the Head God brought forth the Head Gods in the grand, head council. I want to simplify it in the English language.

O, ye lawyers, ye learned doctors, who have persecuted me, I want to let you know *and learn* that the Holy Ghost knows something as well as you do. The Head One of the Gods called together the Gods and the grand councilors sat in grand council *at the head* in yonder heavens to bring forth the world and contemplated the creation of the worlds that were created at that time. When I say doctors and lawyers, I mean the doctors and lawyers of the Scriptures I have done so hitherto, to let the lawyers flutter and let everybody laugh at them. Some learned doctor might take a notion to say that the Scriptures say thus and so, and we must believe the Scriptures, for they are not to be altered. But I am going to show you an example of an error.

I have an old book (New Testament) in the *four languages*: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and German. I have been reading the German. I find it to be the most correct that I have found and find it corresponds the nearest to the Revelation that I have received and given the last fourteen years. *What does this text say?* It tells about JAKOBUS, the son of Zebedee, which means Jacob. In the English New Testament it says James, the son of Zebedee, *but this says Jacob, the son of Zebedee*. Now, if Jacob had the keys, you might talk about James through all eternity and never get the keys. Matthew 4:21 gives the testimony that it is the word of Jacob, instead of James. *The doctors (I mean doctors of law, not of physic) say, "If you say anything not according to the Bible, we will cry treason."* How can we escape the damnation of hell, unless God be with us and reveal it to us. Men bind us with chains. The Latin says IACOBUS, which means Jacob; the Hebrew says YA'AQOB, which means Jacob; the Greek says IAKOBOS—Jacob; and the German says Jacob. I thank God I have got the oldest book in the world *and the Holy Ghost*. I thank Him *for the old book, but more for having the oldest book in my heart—the gift of the Holy Ghost*. *Here I have all four testimonies: Greek, Hebrew, German, and Latin.*

Come here, ye learned men, and read, if you can. I should not have introduced this testimony, only to show that I am right and to back up the word ROSH—the Head Father of the Gods. In the beginning the Head of the Gods called a council of the Gods. *The Gods came together* and concocted a scheme to create this world *and the inhabitants*. When we begin to learn in this way, we begin to learn the only true God. We find out God and what kind of a being we have got to worship. *Having a knowledge of God, we know how to approach Him and ask so that He will answer*. When we begin to know how to come to Him, He begins to come to us. When we are ready to come to Him, He is ready to receive us. As soon as we begin to understand the character of God, He begins to unfold the heavens to us and tell us all about it before our prayers get to His ears.

Now, I ask all the learned men who hear me, why the learned doctors who are preaching salvation say that God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing. They account it blasphemy to contradict the idea. *If you tell them that God made the world out of something, they will call you a fool*. The reason is that they are unlearned but I *am learned and know more than all the world put together—the Holy Ghost does, anyhow*. If the Holy Ghost in me comprehends more than all the world, I will associate *myself* with it.

You ask them why, and they say, "Doesn't the Bible say He created the world?" And they infer that it must be out of nothing. The word create came from the word BARA, but it doesn't mean so. What does BARA mean? It means to organize; the same as a man would organize and use things to build a ship. Hence, we infer that God Himself had materials to

organize the world out of chaos—chaotic matter—which is element and in which dwells all the glory. Element had an existence from the time He had. The pure principles of element are principles that never can be destroyed. They may be organized and reorganized, but not destroyed. Nothing can be destroyed. They never can have a beginning or an ending; they exist eternally. It is associated with the subject in question, the resurrection of the dead.

I have another subject to dwell on *which is calculated to exalt man*, but it isn't possible for me to say much but to touch upon it. Time will not permit me to say all. So I must come to *what I wish to speak of*—the resurrection of the dead—the soul—the immortal spirit—the mind of man. *Where did it come from?* All doctors of divinity say that God created it in the beginning, *but it is not so*. The very idea lessens the character of man, in my estimation. I don't believe the doctrine. Hear it, all ye ends of the earth: I know better for God has told me so. I will make a man appear a fool before he gets through. If he doesn't believe it, *it won't make the truth without effect*. I am going to tell of things more noble.

We say that God Himself is a self-existent God. Who told you so? It's correct enough, but how did it get into your heads? Who told you that man did not exist in like manner upon the same principle? [He refers to the Bible.] How does it read in the Hebrew? It doesn't say so in the old Hebrew. God made *the tabernacle of man* out of the earth and put into him Adam's spirit (which was created before), and then it became a living body *or human soul*. *Man existed in spirit*; the mind of man—the intelligent part—is as immortal as, and is coequal with, God Himself. I know that my testimony is true.

Hence, when I talk to these mourners, what have they lost? *You who mourn the loss of friends* are *only* separated for a small moment from their *spirits*, and their spirits are only separated from their bodies for a short season. But their spirits existed coequal with God and they now exist in a place where they hold converse together one with another the same as we do on the earth. Does not this give you satisfaction?

I want to reason more on the spirit of man for I am dwelling *on the immutability of the spirit and* on the body of man—on the subject of the dead. Is it logical to say that a spirit is immortal and yet have a beginning? Because if a spirit of man had a beginning, it will have an end, *but it does not have a beginning or end*. This is good logic and is illustrated by my ring. I take my ring from my finger and liken it unto the mind of man—the immortal spirit—because it has no beginning *or end*. Suppose you cut it in two—as the Lord lives there would be *a beginning and* an end. *So it is with man*. All the fools and learned and wise men from the beginning of creation, who come and say that man had a beginning, prove that he must

have an end. If that doctrine be true, then the doctrine of annihilation would be true. But if I am right, then I might with boldness proclaim from the housetop that God never had the power to create the spirit of man at all. God Himself could not create Himself.

Intelligence *is eternal and* exists upon a self-existent principle. It is a spirit from age to age and there is no creation about it. The first principles of man are self-existent with God. All the minds and spirits that God ever sent into the world are susceptible of enlargement *and improvement. The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge.* God Himself found Himself in the midst of spirits and glory. Because He was greater He saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest, who were less in intelligence, could have a privilege to advance like Himself *and be exalted with Him*, so that they might have one glory upon another in all that knowledge, power, and glory. So He took in hand to save the world of spirits.

This is good doctrine. It tastes good. You say honey is sweet and so do I. I can also taste the spirit *and principles* of eternal life, *and so can you.* I know it is good and that when I tell you of these words of eternal life that are given to me by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit *and the revelations of Jesus Christ*, you are bound to receive them as sweet. You taste them and I know you believe them. I rejoice more and more.

I want to talk more of man's relation to God. I will open your eyes in relation to your dead. All things whatsoever God in His infinite reason has seen it and proper to reveal to us, while we are dwelling in our mortal state, in regard to our mortal bodies, are revealed to us in the abstract and independent of affinity of this mortal tabernacle. *His commandments* are revealed to our spirits precisely the same as though we had no bodies at all and those revelations which must of necessity save our spirits will save our bodies. God reveals them to us in the view of no eternal dissolution of our bodily tabernacles. Hence, the responsibility, the awful responsibility, that rests upon us in relation to our dead; for all the spirits who have not obeyed the Gospel in the flesh must either obey the Gospel *and be baptized*, or be damned. Solemn thought! Dreadful thought!

Is there no preparation for—no salvation for—nothing to be done for—our fathers and friends who have gone before us and not obeyed the decrees of the Son of Man? I would to God that I had forty days and nights *to talk, and* to tell you all, to let you know that I am not a fallen prophet. *What promises are made? What can be laid if in the grave?* What kind of characters are those who can be saved, although their bodies are moldering and decaying in the grave? We are looked upon by God, *who dwells in eternity*, as though we were in eternity, and when His commandments touch us it is in view of eternity. *He does not view things as we do.* The

greatest responsibility that God has laid upon us in this world is to seek after our dead.

The Apostle says, "They without us cannot be made perfect." Now I am talking of them. I say to you, Paul, "You can't be *made* perfect without us." I will meet Paul half way. It is necessary that those who have gone before and those who come after us must be made perfect and have salvation in common with us. *For it is necessary that the seals be in our hands, to seal our children and our dead for the dispensation of the fulness of times—a dispensation to meet the promises made by Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world for the salvation of man.* God has made it obligatory to man and thus has He laid it upon the eaves of the world. Hence, the saying of Elijah: God said He shall send Elijah, etc.

I have a declaration to make in relation to the provisions which God made for every creature from before the foundation of the world to suit the conditions of man. What has Jesus said? All sins and all blasphemies—every transgression that man may be guilty of—shall be forgiven in this world or the world to come, except one—the *sin against the Holy Ghost*. There is a provision for salvation for him, either in this world or in the world of spirits which is to me. Hence, God has made a provision that *the spirits of our friends and every spirit* in that eternal world can be ferreted out and saved, unless he has committed that unpardonable sin which can't be remitted to him, whether in this world or in the world of spirits. God has wrought out salvation for all men, unless they have committed a certain sin. Every man who has got a friend in the eternal world can save him, unless he has committed the unpardonable sin. You can save any man who has not committed the unpardonable sin. So you see how far you can be a savior.

A man cannot commit the unpardonable sin after the dissolution of the body. *He cannot be damned through all eternity*; there is a way possible for his escape *in a little time*, so he is not particularly damned. *If a man has knowledge he can be saved*, for knowledge saves a man. There are those that are without wisdom until they get exalted to wisdom, and in the world of spirits there is no way for a man to come to understanding and be exalted but by knowledge. *If he has been guilty of great sins, he is punished for them*. So long as a man will not give consent and heed to the commandments, he must abide without salvation. *When he consents to obey the Gospel, whether alive or dead, he is saved*.

A sinner has his own mind *and his own mind damns him*. He is damned by mortification and is his own condemner and tormenter. Hence the saying: They will go into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. *I have no fear of hell fire, that doesn't exist, but the torment and disappointment of the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone—so is the torment of man.*

I know the Scriptures; I understand them. I said that no man can commit the unpardonable sin after the dissolution of the body. Why? Because they must commit the unpardonable sin in this world *after they receive the Holy Ghost*. All will suffer in the eternal world until they *obey Christ himself and* are exalted. Hence, the salvation of the Savior Jesus Christ was wrought out for all men to triumph over the works of the devil; if the plan did not catch them in one place, it would in another. The devil came to save the world and stood up as a savior. The contention in heaven was that Jesus contended that there would be certain souls that would be condemned and not saved, but the devil said, “*I am a savior,*” and that he could save them all. As the grand council gave in for Jesus Christ, the lot fell on him. So the devil *rose up*, rebelled against God, fell, and was thrust down, with all who put up their heads for him.

All sin shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost, *for Jesus Christ will save all except the sons of perdition*. What must a man do to commit the unpardonable sin? He has got to deny the plan of salvation; he has got to say that the sun does not shine while he sees it with his eyes open; he has got to *receive the Holy Ghost*, deny Jesus Christ when the heavens are open to him, *know God*, and then *sin against Him*. After a man has sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, there is no repentance for him.

Hence, from that time they begin to be enemies, like many of the apostates of Christ—of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They go too far, and the Spirit leaves them. Hence, when a man begins to be an enemy, he hunts me, he seeks to kill me, he thirsts for my blood, he never ceases *to try to hurt me*. For he has got the same spirit *of the devil* that they had who crucified Jesus, the Lord of Life—the same spirit that sins against the Holy Ghost. You can’t renew them to repentance—you *cannot save them*; awful is the consequence, *for they make open war like the devil*.

I advise all to be careful what you do. Stay, *all that hear*. Do not give way; *don’t make any hasty moves*. You may be saved, or you may by and by find out that someone has laid a snare for you and you have been deceived. Be cautious: await. *If a spirit of bitterness is in you, don’t be in haste*. When you find a spirit that wants bloodshed—murder—the same is not of God, but is of the devil. Say you, “*That man is a sinner;*” well, *if he repents, he shall be forgiven*. Out of the abundance of the heart, man speaks. The man that tells you words of life is the man that can save you. The best men bring forth the best works. I warn you against all evil characters who sin against the Holy Ghost; for there is no redemption for them in this world nor in the world to come.

I could go back and trace every subject of interest concerning the relationship of man to God, if I had time. I can enter into the mysteries; I can enter largely into the eternal worlds; for Jesus said, “In my Father’s kingdom there

are many mansions," etc. There is one glory of the moon, sun, and stars, etc. *What have we to console us in relation to our dead?* We have reason to have the greatest hope and consolation for our dead *of any people on earth.* For we have aided them in the first principles. For we have seen them walk *worthily on earth* in our midst, and sink asleep in the arms of Jesus; *and those who have died in the faith are now in the celestial kingdom of God.* Hence, is the glory of the sun.

You mourners have occasion to rejoice, for your friend has gone to wait until the perfection of the reunion and the resurrection *of the dead.* At the resurrection of your friend in felicity, *he will go to the celestial glory,* while *there are many who die in the world who must wait many myriads of years before they can receive the like blessings.* Your expectation and hope is far above what man can conceive. For why has God revealed it to us?

I am authorized to say *to you my friends,* by the authority of the Holy Ghost *and in the name of the Lord,* that you have no occasion to fear; for he is gone to the home of the just. Don't mourn; don't weep. I know it by the testimony of the Holy Ghost that is within me. *You may wait for your friends to come forth to meet you in eternity in the morn of the celestial world.* Rejoice, O Israel! Your friends *who have been murdered in the persecutions* shall triumph gloriously *in the celestial world,* while their murderers shall welter and *dwell in torment* for years, *until they pay the uttermost farthing.* I say this for the benefit of strangers. I leave the subject.

I have a father, brothers, *children,* and friends who are gone *to eternity* to a world of spirits *soon to meet me.* I bless those who have lost friends. They are *only* absent for a few moments *and the time will soon be gone.* They are in the spirit. *The trump will soon be blown, and* then shall we hail our mothers, fathers, friends, and all. There will be no fear of mobs, etc., but all will have an eternity of felicity.

A *question* about parents receiving their children. Will mothers have their children *in eternity?* Yes! *Yes!* Mothers, you will have your children. For they will have it without price; for their debt of redemption is paid. There is no damnation awaiting them for they are in the spirit. But as the child dies, so will it rise from the dead and be living in the burning of God and possessing all the intelligence of a God. *It will never grow,* it will be the child in *its precise form* as it was before it died out of your arms. Children dwell and exercise power, throne upon throne, dominion upon dominion, in the same form just as you laid them down. *Eternity is full of thrones upon which dwell thousands of children, reigning on thrones of glory, with not one cubit added to their stature.*

I will leave this subject here, and make a few remarks upon baptism. The baptism of water with the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost attending it is necessary and inseparably connected. He must be born of water and the

Spirit in order to get into the kingdom of God. Found in the German Bible is a text that bears me out the same as the revelations which I have given and taught for fourteen years about baptism. I have the testimony to put in their teeth that my testimony has been true all the time. You will find it in the declaration of John the Baptist. *I will read a text in German upon baptism.* [He reads from the German.] John says, "I baptize you with water, but when Jesus *Christ* comes, who has the power and keys, He will administer the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost." Great God! Now where is all the sectarian world? If this testimony is true, they are all damned as clearly as any anathema ever was. I know the text is true. I call upon all to say, Aye. [Shouts of "Aye."] Alexander Campbell, how are you going to save them with water? For John said his baptism was good for nothing without the baptism of Jesus Christ. *Many talk of any baptism not being essential to salvation, but this would lay the foundation of their damnation.* Leaving the principles of the doctrine of baptism, etc. There is one God, one Father, one Jesus, one hope of our calling, one baptism; that is, all three baptisms make one.

I have the truth and I am at the defiance of the world to contradict it. I have preached Latin, Hebrew, Greek, and German, and I have fulfilled all. I am not so big a fool as many have taken me for. The Germans know that I read the German correctly.

Hear it, all ye ends of the earth: I call upon all men—priests, sinners, and all. Repent! Repent! Turn to God and obey the gospel. For your religion won't save you, and if you do not, you will be damned, but I do not say how long. *There have also been remarks made concerning all men being redeemed from hell,* but those who sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven in this world or in the world to come. But *I say that* those who commit the unpardonable sin are doomed to GNOLAUM *and must dwell in hell, worlds* without end; they shall die the second death. As they concoct scenes of bloodshed in this world, so they shall rise to that resurrection which is as the lake of fire and brimstone. Some shall rise to the everlasting burning of God, for God dwells in everlasting burnings; and some shall rise to the damnation of their own filthiness, which is the same as the lake of fire and brimstone.

I have intended my remarks to all—to all the rich and poor, bond and free, great and small. I have no enmity against any man. I love all men—I love you all, but hate your deeds. I am their best friend, and if persons miss their mark it is their own fault. If I reprove a man, and he hate me, he is a fool; for I love all men, especially these my brethren and sisters. I rejoice in hearing the testimony of my aged friend.

You don't know me—you never will. You never knew my heart. No man knows my history. I cannot do it. I shall never undertake it. I don't

blame you for not believing my history. If I had not experienced what I have, I could not have believed it myself. I never did harm any man since I have been born in the world. My voice is always for peace. I cannot lie down until my work is finished. I never think evil nor think anything to the harm of my fellowman. When I am called at the trump and weighed in the balance, you will know me then. I add no more. God bless you. Amen.

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1. See Donald Q. Cannon's article in this issue of *BYU Studies* for more information and background on these four individuals.

2. The point at which Clayton no longer kept a detailed record corresponds to Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), p. 358, paragraph 3 (hereafter cited as *Teachings*) and Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 6:315, paragraph 1 (hereafter cited as *HC*).

3. *History of Southern Utah Mission*, 10 June 1877, p. 124, manuscript, Church Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

4. George A. Smith in a letter to Wilford Woodruff, dated 21 April 1856, said that Jonathan Grimshaw had "amalgamated" Joseph Smith's discourses from the reports that had been made. That Grimshaw is the one who compiled this particular discourse is stated in a marginal note in the *Manuscript History of Joseph Smith*, Book E, p. 1978. Actually the first published version of the King Follett Discourse in the *Times and Seasons* was made by "amalgamating" or combining the reports of Bullock and Clayton.

5. Dean C. Jessee, "The Reliability of Joseph Smith's History," *Journal of Mormon History*, 3 (1976):40. He illustrates how this was done in the King Follett discourse by presenting the four separate accounts and the "final edited version" for a particular paragraph. The passage he chose shows a number of differences in the final version.

6. Thomas Bullock, minutes of 7 April 1844 address, manuscript located in the Archives, Church Historical Department.

7. William Clayton, minutes of 7 April 1844 address, manuscript, Church Archives.

8. Willard Richards, 7 April 1844 address reported in the Joseph Smith diary, Church Archives.

9. *Journal of Wilford Woodruff*, 7 April 1844, Church Archives.

10. *Deseret (Weekly) News*, 8 July 1857, p. 1, which is the first printing of the final revised form of Grimshaw's amalgamation, as copied into the *Manuscript History of Joseph Smith*.

11. A marginal note in the *Manuscript History of Joseph Smith*, Book E, p. 1978, states that this version of the King Follett Discourse was "carefully revised and compared by George A. Smith and Thomas Bullock, read in Council Sunday 18th Nov. 1855 and carefully revised by President Brigham Young." However, there would still be the same difficulty of remembering the precise words spoken eleven years earlier.

12. The manuscripts vary on the transliterations of the Hebrew words used by Joseph Smith. For example, what we have as BARA (see *Teachings*, p. 348, par. 2; and *HC*, 6:307, par. 1) is supported only by Bullock, with Clayton and Richards using *barau*

and Woodruff *beaureau*; what is here BERESHITH is spelled in Bullock as *berosheet*, in Clayton *berosheit*, and in Woodruff *barasheet*. What is here YA'AQOB (see *Teachings*, p. 349, par. 2, and *HC*, 6:307, par. 4) is spelled in Clayton as *Yougacoub*. Also, *gnaulom* is the spelling of Richards, but GNOLAUM is used here (see *Teachings*, p. 361, par. 3, and *HC*, 6:317, par. 3), instead of something like 'OLAM, in order to correspond with the spelling found in Abraham 3:18.

13. The following are the words that have been added to the texts of the original manuscript accounts: *a, about, after, and, are, at, be, because, but, for, have, he, him, I, if, in, is, it, one, or, our, so, the, their, then, there, these, things, this, what, which, will, and with.*

14. Note by B. H. Roberts, in a pamphlet he edited and published, *The King Follett Discourse: The Being and Kind of Being God Is; The Immortality of the Intelligence of Man. By Joseph Smith, the Prophet.* (Salt Lake City: Magazine Printing Company, 1926), p. 3.

15. What is given here as "ROSHITH [BARA ELOHIM] signifies [the head] to bring forth the Elohim" (see *Teachings*, p. 348, par. 2, and *HC*, 6:307, par. 1) is found in the Clayton account as "rosheit signifies to bring forth the Eloheim." The scribe has obviously only recorded part of the Hebrew and part of the explanation. The fact that in other places more Hebrew words were spoken by Joseph Smith than are recorded in any of the accounts is hinted by the "Berosheit ~~Barau~~" in the Clayton account, which shows that more was spoken and it was begun to be recorded, but was finally crossed out.