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Fig 1. Katharine Smith Salisbury, sister of the Prophet, ca. 1880. Cabinet card, photographer unknown, presumably shot at Fountain Green, Illinois. Courtesy Community of Christ Archives, Independence, Mo.
Katharine Smith Salisbury was the last surviving member of the Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith family and the only member of that family to witness the dawning of a new century.1 Because she was a member of the first family of the Restoration, Katharine, like her mother, was frequently sought out by converts, missionaries, and reporters for her recollections of these early events.2 Such visitors reported that she was a willing and able conversationalist on matters pertaining to her family and was quick to share her testimony of the truth of the work they helped to establish.3 Her early connection with Mormonism and her willingness to speak and write about her experiences make Katharine’s recollections an important source for the study of early Latter-day Saint history. One such recollection, published by a newspaper in 1895, appears at the end of this article.

1. Katharine died February 2, 1900, in Fountain Green, Hancock County, Illinois. Journal History of the Church, February 2, 1900, 3, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, microfilm copy in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Although there have been variations on the spelling of her name, she consistently spelled her name “Katharine” in her holograph letters (1865–1899), copies of which are in the author’s possession.

2. Mother Smith said, “People are often enquiring of me the particulars of Joseph’s getting the plates, seeing the angels at first and many other things. . . . I have told over many things pertaining to these matters to different persons to gratify their curiosity, indeed [I] have almost destroyed my lungs giving these recitals to those who felt anxious to hear them.” Lucy Mack Smith to William Smith, January 23, 1845, Nauvoo, holograph, Church Archives.

Katharine was born July 28, 1813, in Lebanon, Grafton County, New Hampshire.4 As a younger sister of the emerging prophet, Katharine became an eyewitness of and participant in many incidents connected with the founding of Mormonism during her youth in the Palmyra/Manchester, New York, area. She heard the earliest recitals of her older brother concerning the First Vision and visitations of Moroni. She was present when the Prophet first brought home the Book of Mormon plates, and she hefted the covered plates on several occasions.5 In succeeding years, Katharine experienced the events associated with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the establishment of the Church. Shortly after the Church’s organization, she was baptized and confirmed by two of the three witnesses, and she was present at the earliest conferences of the Church.6

When the call came to gather to Kirtland, Ohio, Katharine migrated with the Fayette Branch of Saints and was privy to the miracles and hardships common to that company.7 A few months after her arrival in Ohio, Katharine married a young lawyer named Wilkins Jenkins Salisbury, an enthusiastic New York convert.8 The couple eventually settled in Chardon, Ohio, several miles southeast of Kirtland.9 Jenkins, as he was called, served a mission for the Church in 1833 and marched with Zion’s Camp the following

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6. Joseph Smith, Manuscript History, A–1, 42; see also William Smith, *William Smith on Mormonism: A True Account of the Origin of the Book of Mormon* (Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Steam Book and Job Office, 1883), 16. William Smith omitted Katharine’s name from his list of those who were baptized June 9, 1830, but he did state that those who were baptized on that day were confirmed by Oliver Cowdery the following day.
7. For a discussion of events associated with the migration of the Fayette Branch, see Larry C. Porter, “‘Ye Shall Go to the Ohio’: Exodus of the New York Saints to Ohio, 1831,” in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: Ohio*, ed. Milton V. Backman Jr. (Provo, Utah: Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University, 1990), 1–25.
year. Because of his service in the camp, Jenkins was called to the first quorum of Seventies, organized in 1835. Although his standing in the Church was erratic, he and Katharine migrated with the Saints to Far West and then on to Illinois.10

Once the Saints established themselves in Nauvoo, the Salisburys settled in the outlying community of Plymouth, Illinois, some forty miles southeast of Nauvoo. Despite the distance, Katharine remained close to her family and made frequent trips to visit her relatives residing in Nauvoo. After several unsuccessful business ventures following the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, the Salisburys went to live with the surviving Smith family members at Nauvoo in 1845. Here the family lived together in the William Marks home on Water Street.11

When the majority of Saints left Nauvoo the following year, Katharine stayed behind with her mother, two sisters, and only surviving brother, William. Although not initially opposed to the doctrines of the migrating Saints led by Brigham Young, the Salisburys felt strongly that Church leadership rightfully belonged to the Smith family.12 Ultimately, Katharine and Jenkins established their family in the communities of Webster and Fountain Green, Illinois, thirty miles east of Nauvoo.13 In 1853, Jenkins died of typhoid fever, leaving Katharine a widow with four children to care for. For the next twenty years, she managed to provide a meager living for her family, until her sons were able to lend financial assistance.

In 1873, thirteen years after the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now called the Community of Christ) was formally established, Katharine was received into the church on her original baptism. She attended the Pilot Grove Branch of the RLDS Church, which her son Solomon presided over.14 Toward the end of her life, Katharine also

13. Webster was known as Ramus and Macedonia during the Saints’ stay in Illinois.
attended the annual RLDS conference held in either Iowa or Missouri each April.¹⁵ She won the respect and admiration of RLDS members and citizens of Hancock County, where she resided until her death on February 2, 1900.

**Significance of the Document**

At an annual conference of the RLDS Church held at Independence, Missouri, April 10, 1895, Katharine shared the recollections of early Mormon history reproduced below. A reporter from the *Kansas City Times* newspaper covering the conference took down Katharine’s discourse “verbatim” and recorded her demeanor during those reminiscences. The document is significant because it recounts some of the earliest events of the Restoration. Its limitation is that it is late reminiscence, so Katharine could have been influenced by written sources that were prevalent during her lifetime, including her mother’s history. Still, Katharine’s account appears to have significant historical value. This conclusion is supported by several statements that are entirely unique to her account: she notes that Moroni wore a girdle about his waist; she recounts that, following the loss of the 116 pages, Joseph fasted for several days in order to have the plates and Urim and Thummim returned to him; and she states that her father and two of her brothers were the first to hear Joseph’s recital of Moroni’s visitations. These unique remembrances verify that Katharine was not just regurgitating what was available in print. In fact, Mrs. Salisbury’s recollections add significant details to existing accounts regarding early events in Latter-day Saint history.

Contained within the narrative there is also evidence regarding the accuracy of Katharine’s remembrances. Most noteworthy is the fact that she rehearses details that parallel other early converts’ written accounts to which she had no access during her lifetime. For example, her identification of Alvin and then Emma Hale Smith as the individuals who were to accompany Joseph to the Hill Cumorah to obtain the Book of Mormon plates harmonizes precisely with Joseph Knight Sr.’s account.¹⁶ Knight’s corresponding description of these events had been unique until the

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¹⁵. For evidence of Katharine’s attendance at RLDS conferences, see “Aunt Katharine Salisbury’s Testimony,” *Saints’ Herald* 40 (May 6, 1893): 275; Katharine Smith Salisbury to the sisters of the RLDS Church in Lamoni, Iowa, cited in *Saints’ Herald* 40 (August 12, 1893): 506; Katharine Smith Salisbury to the sisters of the RLDS Church in Lamoni, Iowa, cited in *Saints’ Herald* 42 (July 24, 1895): 473.

discovery of Katharine’s history. And although Katharine incorrectly reports several specific dates, the sequence of events that she recounts is remarkably correct, further substantiating the accuracy of her memory.

The narrative is also important because it verifies Joseph Smith Jr.’s early recital of the First Vision, something historians have challenged in years past. Katharine remembers that her elder brother had been pondering over his First Vision just before Moroni’s initial visitation, a significant fact that both establishes a timeline and clearly differentiates between the two events—as Joseph Smith related. She also recounts important details of Moroni’s visitations and the impact they had on members of the Smith household.

Besides verifying other accounts written by early members of the Church, Katharine’s testimonial is important because she was one of a very small group of believers before 1830, which makes any of her reminiscences valuable in understanding Mormon origins.

**Context of the Document**

The account below was published on the front page of the Kansas City Times the day after the conference (April 11, 1895) under the title “An Angel Told Him: Joseph Smith’s Aged Sister Tells about Moroni’s Talk.” In keeping with the journalistic style of the time, the headline is followed by several subheadings.

The RLDS membership had gathered at this particular session of conference to pray for Alexander H. Smith (Katharine’s nephew and son of Joseph Smith Jr. and Emma Hale Smith), who was suffering intensely due to illness. Following an hour of prayer, the meeting was then opened up for testimonies. Katharine Smith Salisbury was the first to speak. Following her recital, “prayers of thankfulness were offered by many members to the Divine Being, expressing gratefulness to Him for allowing the conference the privilege and blessing of having Mrs. Salisbury present.”

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18. Leaders of the Reorganized Church often requested that Katharine sit on the platform with them during such conferences, as she was viewed as a living link to the founding days of the church. Warren L. Van Dine, Catharine Smith Salisbury, unpublished manuscript, 1972, 30–31, typescript copy located in Community of Christ Library-Archives.
The story of Joseph Smith’s conversation with the angel Moroni, from which sprung the Mormon church, was the main feature of yesterday’s session of the conference of Latter Day Saints at Independence.

The story was told by Mrs. Catharine Salisbury, Joseph Smith’s sister, and the last survivor of his immediate family.

Mrs. Salisbury is a very old woman now—83 years of age. But she claims to recall the time of the wonderful vision as vividly as though it were but yesterday. She told how the angel had come to her brother in the night and had stood resplendent midway between the floor and ceiling of his room and had talked for hours, telling where the golden record was to be found in the hill of Conoran [Cumorah]. And then she told how the plates
had been found and, after much tribulation on account of mobs of evil men raised up to create trouble, how they were translated and how the Church of Jesus Christ was founded. . . .

. . . Mrs. Catherine Salisbury arose from her seat by the reporters’ table and removed the shawl she has worn about her shoulders since the conference began. Seeing her intention to address the members Elder Terry requested her to step upon the rostrum, which by his assistance she did. Mrs. Salisbury is 83 years of age and, as has already been stated in The Times, is the only surviving member of the family of which Joseph Smith, Sr., the founder of the Saints’ church, was one.

Mrs. Salisbury was several times overcome with emotion during her allusion to former scenes, incidents and characters so dear to her heart and mind. After a few short preliminary and unimportant remarks she began her recital. It was heard with rapt attention. She said:

**Mrs. Salisbury’s Story.**

“I stand before you a remnant of the family that brought forth the sacred record, to bear my testimony.

“I can remember the time that this work commenced, that my brother had the vision, that he saw the angel and talked with him. After he had his first vision, he lay in bed one night studying what he had seen. 19 And his room became light, and it grew lighter and lighter until an angel descended and stood by the side of his bed. He did not touch the floor, but he stood in the air. He was dressed in white raiment, of whiteness beyond anything Joseph had ever seen in his life, and had a girdle about his waist. He saw his hands and wrists, and they were pure and white, and he talked with him. 20 He said that he was Moroni, and that he was sent as a messenger to tell him con-  

19. This is the only record that indicates Joseph was contemplating his First Vision experience just before the appearance of Moroni. However, Joseph stated, “I had full confidence in obtaining a divine manifestation as I had previously had one,” at least connecting the two events. Joseph Smith, Manuscript History, Book A-1, 5.

20. Joseph described his experience as follows: “I discovered a light appearing in the room which continued to increase untill the room was lighter than at noon-day when immediately a personage <appeared> at my bedside standing in the air for his feet did not touch the floor. He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond any<thing> earthly I had ever seen. . . . His hands were naked and his arms also a little above the wrists. . . . Not only was his robe exceedingly white but his whole person was glorious beyond description.” Joseph Smith, Manuscript History, Book A-1, 5.
cerning the record that was hidden in the hill Conoran which was a history of the people that once inhabited this continent, and also that it was the pure gospel of Christ. That the gospel that he had had been adulterated, and this was the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, and would be preached in these last days.

“He also talked with him and told him concerning the prophecies of Isaiah [sic] and told him what was coming upon the earth. And he also opened the vision and showed him the hill Conoran where the records laid, and talked with him a while, and then ascended. And while Joseph was still thinking over what he had seen and what the angel had told him, he descended again and stood by his side, and repeated the same things. He told him the prophecies of Isaiah were being fulfilled and would come true, and that this record must be brought forth to the church established in the last days, for there was no true church on earth. He ascended again, and then he descended the third time; and then my brother said that the chickens crowed for day, showing that he had conversed with the angel all the blessed night.

21. The reporter for the Kansas City Times was likely unfamiliar with the term “Cumorah.”
22. Joseph said that Moroni quoted to him the eleventh chapter of Isaiah and told him that the prophecies contained therein were about to be fulfilled. Joseph Smith, Manuscript History, Book A-1, 6.
23. Joseph alleged that “while he [Moroni] was conversing with me about the plates the vision was opened to my mind that I could see the place where the plates were deposited and that so clearly and distinctly that I knew the place again when I visited it.” Joseph Smith, Manuscript History, Book A-1, 6. Joseph Knight Sr. also remembered that the Prophet was able to ascertain the location of the plates in the Hill Cumorah because it was revealed so plainly “in the vision that he had of the place.” Jessee, “Joseph Knight’s Recollection,” 30–31.
24. Mother Smith recalled that earlier that same evening the family had been discussing the “diversity of churches that had risen up in the world and the many thousand opinions in existence as to the truths contained in scripture.” She said that Moroni then addressed this very topic in his visit with Joseph, telling him, “There is not a true church on Earth No not one <and> has not been since Peter took the Keys <of the Melchisedec priesthood>.” Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., Lucy’s Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s Family Memoir (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 335.
25. Joseph remembered, “When almost immediately after the heavenly messenger had ascended from me the third time, the cock crew, and I found that day was approaching so that our interviews must have occupied the whole of that night.” Joseph Smith Jr., Manuscript History, Book A-1, 7.
“The next morning when my brother got up he went to the field to work, but he could not; the spirit of God was upon him and the angel was with him. Father told him he was not well, and he had better go to the house. Joseph started to the house, but fell by the way, and the angel Moroni appeared to him and said:

“‘Joseph, tell your father what you have seen and what you are commanded to do.’”26

“He said: ‘I am afraid my father won’t believe me.’

“But the angel told him his father would believe him. So he went to the house and sent for father and my two brothers, and they came to the house and sat and talked quite a spell. I wondered at it. I was young, and I didn’t know what they were talking about, because I knew they were so busy with their harvesting.”27

“Father said: ‘Joseph, go and do just as you are bid.’”28

“So he went to the hill Comoran [Cumorah] (this was, I think, the 22d day of September, 1827,) and found it exactly as he had seen it in the vision. The earth was rounding on top, and he got a stick and pried the dirt away from the edges, and got a lever and raised the lid, and there beheld the records that were to be translated, and the Urim and Thummim, and the sword and the breast-plate of Laban, and the brass plates Lehi brought from Jerusalem.

26. The Prophet’s brother William remembered that Moroni “told him [Joseph] to call his father’s house together and communicate to them the visions he had received.” William Smith, William Smith on Mormonism, 9.

27. Alvin was certainly one of the two brothers mentioned, as Mother Smith said that Joseph had been working with his father and Alvin. Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors for Many Generations (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), 81. The other brother was William, who stated that on the morning of September 22, 1823, “I was at work in the field together with Joseph and my eldest brother Alvin.” William Smith, William Smith on Mormonism, 9.

28. Joseph said that he was “commanded . . . to go to [his] father and tell him of the vision.” Joseph Sr. responded “that it was of God, and to go and do as commanded by the messenger.” Joseph Smith, Manuscript History, Book A-1, 7. Mother Smith also recalled Joseph’s reluctance to tell his father, recounting that Moroni questioned Joseph as to why he did not tell his father, to which Joseph replied, “‘I was afraid my father would not believe me.’ The angel rejoined, ‘He will believe every word you say to him.’” Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches, 82.

29. Katharine is mistaken on this date, as it was actually September 22, 1823.
“Moroni told him the time had not yet come for them to be brought forth, but that in due time he should bring them forth and translate them. Joseph said: ‘I am not learned,’ and the angel said: ‘There is the Urim and Thummim, and they will show you how to interpret them.’

“The next year at the same time Joseph visited the same place again, and the third year he went expecting to get the records. So he raised up the lid and took them out. And he thought that somebody might come along and see these things (not thinking that the Lord had watched them 1,400 years), and laid the record down and covered up the box. When he turned to take his record it was gone. The angel told him he must persevere and must not give up.

“He raised the lid again, and there was the record, just as it laid before. He reached forth his hands to take it and he felt a pressure pushing him away. He tried the second time, and the third time he fell to the earth with the pressure, and he cried in the bitterness of his soul:

“‘Lord, what have I done, that I can not get these records?’

“Moroni said: ‘You have not obeyed the commandments as you were commanded to; you must obey His commandments in every particular. You were not to lay them out of your hands until you had them in safe keeping.’

“Joseph said: ‘What shall I do?’

“He said: ‘Come here the next year at this time and bring your oldest brother with you, and you can receive the records.’

“In November my brother [Alvin] took sick, and through the ministering of medicine by the doctors he passed away.

“Joseph went to the place and inquired of the angel what he should no [do] now. The angel said: ‘you must bring some person with you.’

“And Joseph said: ‘Who shall I bring? My oldest brother is gone.’

“The angel said: ‘You will know her when you see her.’

30. Joseph specified that during Moroni’s initial visitation (September 21, 1823) Moroni said that the Urim and Thummim had been prepared for the translation of the plates. Joseph Smith, Manuscript History, Book A-1, 5. However, Katharine’s account agrees with Joseph Knight’s, who reported that initially Joseph Smith did not know how to translate the characters on the plates but afterwards learned that he could transcribe them “by the means he found with the plates.” Jessie, “Joseph Knight’s Recollection,” 35.

31. Katharine’s account concurs with Joseph Knight, who also remembered that Moroni instructed Joseph to bring his eldest brother, Alvin, with him to the hill. Jessie, “Joseph Knight’s Recollection,” 31.

32. Alvin died on November 19, 1823.
“That fall he went down to Pennsylvania and became acquainted with his wife, Miss Hale, and he knew when he saw her that she was the one to go with him to get the records.33

“In March they were married and he brought her home, and on September 22 she went with him to the place.34 She didn’t see the records, but she went with him. He took them up and brought them part way home and hid them in a hollow log. My father in a few days heard that they had got a conjurer, who they said would come and find the plates, and he came home. Emma was weaving, and he said to her:

“‘You will have to go after Joseph (Joseph was away at work), for they are determined to find them records.’

“She said: ‘If I had a horse I could go.’

“A few days before a stray horse (we had nothing but oxen then) had come to our place, and father said: ‘I will get you a saddle and bridle and you can ride that horse.’

“She went to where Joseph was at work and told him that the records were in danger and that father was anxious for him to come and take care of them. He came right home and went to the place where the records were and wrapped them up in his frock and started home. He stepped on a log, and a man raised up and struck at him. Joseph knocked him down. He stepped on the second and third logs, and three different men struck at him, but he made his escape and came home. When he got to the door he said:

“‘Father, I have been followed; look and see if you can see any one.’

“He then threw himself on the bed and fainted, and when he came to he told us the circumstances; he had his thumb put out of place and his arm was very lame.35 We got a chest and locked the records up in the house. From that time on our house was searched all around; and our field and our wheat stacks were searched. The mob was around our house nearly

33. Once again, Katharine’s reminiscences parallel Joseph Knight’s, who described the same sequence of events. However, Knight indicated that Joseph Smith was able to identify Emma Hale as the “right person” by looking “in his glass.” Jessee, “Joseph Knight’s Recollection,” 31.

34. Joseph and Emma’s marriage date was actually January 18, 1827.

35. Katharine’s grandson, Herbert Salisbury, remembered his grandmother relating, “When he [Joseph] came in the house . . . he was completely out of breath. She [Katharine] took the plates from him and laid them on the table temporarily, and helped revive him until he got breathing properly, and also examined his hand, and treated it for the bruises on his knuckles.” “The Prophet’s Sister Testifies She Lifted The B of M Plates,” 1. 6. Mother Smith, also present, failed to mention that Joseph fainted but noted that when he arrived at the house “he
every night, and one night they went into father’s cooper shop and tore up his floor and dug the earth up. And from that time until we went to Pennsylvania we had to keep watch for the enemy.36

“And when he went to Pennsylvania he commenced translating the book of Mormon, and translated some one hundred and sixteen pages that Martin Harris took home and lost, and when my brother found they were lost, he was very much troubled and said:

“‘I am afraid I have broken the commandments and will not be allowed to translate the record.’37

“The angel came and took the Urim and Thummim from him.38 He fasted and prayed several days, and the angel returned them again, and told him that his sins were forgiven, and for him to go ahead and translate, but not to translate that that was lost, but to begin where he had left off.39 He commenced, and when he had got the record partly translated, persecution rose there, and he wrote for David Whitmer to come and take him to his house. David came, and he asked how he should carry the plates and he was told that they would be there when he got there, in the garden.

“When he got to Father Whitmer’s he found the records, as he had been told he would,40 and there he finished translating the Book of Mormon,

was . . . altogether speechless from fright and the fatigue of running.” Additionally, Mother Smith commented on Joseph’s dislocated thumb but did not mention his lame arm or bruised knuckles. Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches, 105–6.

36. For more information on the Smith family’s efforts to protect the plates, see Andrew Hedges, “‘Take Heed Continually’: Protecting the Gold Plates,” Ensign 31 (January 2001): 37–43. See also Kyle R. Walker, “The Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith Family: A Family Process Analysis of a Nineteenth Century Household” (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 2001), 45–50.

37. Mother Smith reported that Joseph had said, “Oh, my God! . . . All is lost! all is lost! What shall I do? I have sinned—it is I who tempted the wrath of God. I should have been satisfied with the first answer which I received from the Lord.” She then stated that Joseph “wept and groaned, and walked the floor continually.” Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches, 121.

38. Joseph said that the Urim and Thummim and the plates were taken “in consequence of my having wearied the Lord in asking for the privilege of letting Martin Harris take the writings [116 pages].” Smith, History of the Church, 1:21; See also Joseph Smith, Letterbook 1, 6, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

39. See Doctrine and Covenants 3 and 10.

40. Lucy Mack Smith related, “When Joseph commenced making preparations for the journey, he inquired of the Lord to know in what manner he should carry the plates. The answer was, that he should commit them into the hands of an angel, for safety, and after arriving at Mr. Whitmer’s, the angel would meet him in
and there is where the three witnesses were showed the plates by the angel, that turned the leaves over one by one. And the angels told them that when the church became pure and the rest of the record (some of the plates were sealed) would be translated and brought to the church. After that the eight witnesses saw the book, and turned it over leaf by leaf and saw the characters that were on them. From that time on they commenced printing the Book of Mormon, and soon after the book was printed there were six that met together and organized the Church of Jesus Christ as it now exists in these last days.”

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The Featured Nativity Artists

Raised in the woodlands of northern Sweden, Gerd Sjökvist joined the Church at age thirty-six. She earned a degree in fine arts at Brigham Young University and now lives in Mockfjärd, Dalarna, the center of Sweden’s most distinctive type of folk painting. One tradition is handed down from eighteenth-century farmers and miners of northern Sweden. To brighten long winter days, they decorated the inside walls of their houses with scenes depicting their daily lives. People are shown in traditional, formal Swedish costume, and the figures are highly stylized and somewhat stiff but very bright and colorful.

Sjökvist chose to sculpt her nativity figures in the style of those painted figures. To maintain fidelity, she matched the colors of her nativity sculptures to the traditional colors of the paintings. In pottery work, colored glazes are applied to the clay before the piece is fired, but during the firing, the colors change. This trait renders creating a glaze for a very specific shade rather difficult. Drawing upon her undergraduate training in chemical engineering, Sjökvist spent three years experimenting with chemical mixes in the glazes before succeeding in obtaining the traditional colors.

Lapita Keith Frewin, a Navajo, grew up in a northern Arizona village just south of Kayenta and near Monument Valley. The Navajos are among the most eclectic of all of the American Indian tribes. They borrowed silversmithing from the Mexicans, basket making from the Piute, and weaving from the Pueblos. In reaching out and embracing other cultures’ ideas and incorporating them into her own work and life, Frewin continues that wonderful tradition in Navajo art.

Frewin became fascinated with buckskin and beadwork—art that traditionally was practiced by the Plains Indian people. Her interest in Plains Indian arts led her to that people’s tradition of making buckskin dolls. These small figurative pieces, done with buckskin, are quite simplified anatomically, but the beadwork on them is meticulously done in the style of indigenous Great Plains tribes. Someone with a trained eye can look at the style of the beadwork and of the costume and tell exactly which tribe each doll is from.

Many Native Americans of what some call the Navajo tribe prefer to call themselves the Dinee. Harrison Begay Jr., a Dinee, was raised in Arizona. The custom of his people is for a man to live with his wife’s family in her village, so when he married a woman from the Pueblo of Santa Clara, New Mexico, he moved and also adopted Pueblo culture. He became a potter.

The Pueblo people were agricultural and needed the means to store grains and carry water. Because their lifestyle did not require portability, they developed pottery, which became a distinct Pueblo art form. Clay pottery is a natural medium for an agricultural people since both their sustenance and their art materials come from the earth.
In the midst of the Christmas season’s commercialization, frenzied preparations, and parties, families worldwide set aside time to arrange a nativity scene on a mantelpiece or table. More than any other traditional Christmas object, these nativity sets bid us heed the message of Christ’s birth. What the nativities specifically say differs with the endless variations played out by their creators and those who arrange the scenes, but certain scriptural themes are common. To show how some of these themes are presented by nativity scenes, this article will analyze three world-class nativities created by Latter-day Saints Gerd Sjökvist, Harrison Begay Jr., and Lapita K. Frewin (see facing page for information on the artists).¹

“Behold the condescension of God” (1 Ne. 11:26)

Long before the event, Nephi saw in vision what we celebrate annually: the great Jehovah descended to earth as a lowly baby. “Look,” an angel commanded. And Nephi beheld the “condescension of God”: “a virgin, most beautiful and fair, ... bearing a child in her arms” (from 1 Ne. 11:15–26). We are unlikely to receive a vision similar to Nephi’s. Nonetheless, we experience something of what he saw, for each time we view a traditional nativity scene, we behold the condescension of God. “Here is something more than a babe in a manger,” Gordon B. Hinckley emphasizes. He continues, “I think ... of the words of John: ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men’ (John 1:1–4).”²

Doris R. Dant and Richard G. Oman

“Behold the Condescension of God”
A Scriptural Perspective on Three Nativity Scenes
Nephi’s vision reminds us that the virgin and her child are the fundamental elements in the Christmas nativity. While a seemingly obvious point, it is one to remember in an age when nativities are under attack from several fronts. At the least, critics claim inauthenticity, dismissing the stable setting and complaining that nativities often collapse time to show the wise men and shepherds arriving simultaneously. But those are not elements essential to the condescension of God. Other critics adamantly state that Jesus was an ordinary man who certainly did not have an immortal father. In that view, reminding us of the condescension of God is not a legitimate function of nativities, as such condescension did not take place.

But the Begay and Frewin nativities (as do most traditional nativity scenes) have it right: our focal point is a child, the King of Kings, upon whom we, with Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the wise men, and even animals, reverently gaze (figs. 1, 2). In the Sjökvist nativity (fig. 3), the child is the physical center, as Christ and his Atonement should be the center of our lives. Here the shepherds and wise men have not joined the holy family, but we know they will be there soon. In the meantime, we are invited to share a quiet moment with just Mary and Joseph. This is a time when we, too, can reverence the baby, our Lord, marveling that Jesus condescended to be “slain for the sins of the world” and to submit to all the indignities and suffering that preceded his crucifixion (1 Ne. 11:32–33).

Fig. 1. Harrison Begay Jr. (1961–), Dinee Nativity. Redware pottery, 9", 2000. This nativity maintains the rounded nature of Pueblo pottery and is a beautiful example of a modern artistic sensitivity expressed through a folk medium.
Fig. 2. Lapita Keith Frewin, Crèche. Buckskin, bead, fabric, ca. 12”, 1999. Nativity scenes bid us to “behold the condescension of God.” This nativity follows the tradition of the buckskin dolls created by the Plains Indians. In this tradition, the focus is on membership rather than individualism. Thus the costumes are accurate re-creations of tribal dress while the faces are stylized.

Fig. 3. Gerd Sjökvist, Swedish Crèche. Painted wood and ceramic, 36” x 58½”, 2001. Sjökvist has applied the two-dimensional decorative tradition of Sweden’s Dalarna district to her nativity scene. True to the Dalarna tradition, the figures are rather stiff and stylized, they are dressed in formal eighteenth-century costumes, and the scene is very colorful. The more generalized faces encourage us to share the joy of seeing our salvation.
In both the Sjökvist and Begay nativities, each figure’s posture and gestures are significant. In worshipful awe, her hands crossed, Sjökvist’s Mary looks gently and quietly down at the baby. Joseph also appears awed, and perhaps he is still trying to process the meaning of the event. The wise men are formal and proper, symbolizing the dignity required for the occasion. In the Begay nativity, Mary kneels beside the child, one arm gesturing toward the baby, perhaps to say, “This is the promised child” (the motion is sufficiently ambiguous to allow viewers their own interpretations). Joseph is the most humbly engaged of all the participants; with his whole body, he both offers himself to and reaches for the child. The wise men, dressed in long robes, are examples of gentleness, reverence, and humility; their poses and gestures impart nothing of pride or arrogance. Their attitude conveys the fact that they worship a heavenly king, not an earthly one.

The varied responses portrayed by all these nativity figures underscore the richness of the nativity experience while also emphasizing the divinity of the Savior. That range of response makes the nativity story universal, allowing each of us to behold the condescension of God in our own way.

“For mine eyes have seen thy salvation” (Luke 2:30)

The faces in the Frewin and Begay nativities are not the focus of the scene. Begay gives only hints of features while Frewin’s faces are simplified and stereotyped. Nor are Sjökvist’s shepherds and wise men individualized. When faces are generalized, the characters become more inclusive. They are not just Mary and Joseph and wise men; they are people of other races, cultures, and times who also worship the Christ who was once a child. We are encouraged to imagine ourselves using the words of Simeon: “Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel” (Luke 2:30–32).

In ironic contrast to the shepherds and wise men, who see with their spiritual eyes, are the absent villagers of Sjökvist’s nativity. The buildings in the village cluster behind the stable, but no citizens are coming through the passage leading toward the child, nor are they even looking out the windows, which are blank and dark. The villagers are living in a separate world, unaware of what is happening right at their own doorstep and blind to the way leading to Christ. The village serves as a metaphor for those who do not have eyes to see the salvation of the Lord.

“He inviteth them all . . . , black and white, bond and free, male and female” (2 Ne. 26:33)

Begay, Sjökvist, and Frewin relocate the nativity scene geographically, chronologically, and culturally (as do many other artists—one reason for
the popularity of crèche fests). When the scene is placed within the artists’ own cultures, if not their time, the shift is a way of likening the scriptures unto ourselves (1 Ne. 19:23). On a deeper level, the practice of locating the scene in many cultures, countries, and eras reminds us of Christ’s universal invitation to come unto him, for “he inviteth them all” (2 Ne. 26:33).

Sjökvist relocates the nativity to eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Sweden. The participants (except Joseph) are dressed in clothing from that period with the shepherds looking like Swedish peasants straight off the farm. The three wise men wear formal suits and top hats, the appropriate dress for Swedish men of wealth and prominence. The wise men ride horses; camels would be quite out of place in Sweden. One carries his gift of gold in a leather money bag, as proper men would. The frankincense and myrrh are obviously not common in Sweden, so these gifts are symbolized by small generic containers. Bethlehem has the architectural design of an old Swedish village.

Begay, who is a Navajo, or Dinee, also draws upon an older form of his culture. Mary appears as a traditional Dinee woman, with her hair in a bun; Joseph also has a very traditional Dinee hairstyle, and the shepherd’s costume is complete with breechcloth and high-topped moccasins. Begay could have placed his infant Jesus in the type of manger that the Dinee would use to feed their sheep, but instead the child is placed on a sheep pelt. Sheepskin is used on beds and on floors; it is soft and warm and comforting. In a traditional Dinee hogan, there is not much furniture: one sits on the ground or on a mattress or a sheep pelt or a rug. The posture of the figures follows that style of sitting. The Dinee keep sheep and horses, not cattle and donkeys, so neither of the latter two is included.

Frewin’s nativity dolls (figs. 4–8) are dressed in meticulously accurate costumes from various Native American tribes. The wise men are three medicine men, the most respected men of their tribes. Because the wise men in the biblical story came from afar and tradition holds that they came from a variety of places, Frewin sets the wise men in the context of three far-flung tribes: Iroquois, Cheyenne, and Navajo. These men will carry the news of the birth back to their own peoples, spreading the gospel. The Iroquois shaman wears a black velvet cap with feathers—identifying him as Iroquois (fig. 4). The Cheyenne shaman’s clothing is buckskin dyed with earth pigments. He carries the shield of a Cheyenne warrior, and his braids are traditional with his people (fig. 5). The Navajo medicine man wears a necklace with turquoise. His hair is in a bun, a distinctive Navajo style (fig. 6). Frewin represents her own people in the Navajo wise man; her father was a Navajo medicine man for many years before he became a member of the Church.
**Fig. 4 (below).** The Iroquois shaman–wise man in Frewin’s nativity scene. To represent the nations of the world and remind us that all are invited to come to Christ, Frewin’s three wise men are from widely separated Native American tribes (often called nations). This wise man presents a valuable pair of beaded moccasins to the Christ child.

**Fig. 5 (top right).** Frewin’s Cheyenne shaman–wise man. He offers the baby a blanket representing tribal prestige.

**Fig. 6 (bottom right).** The Navajo medicine man–wise man. In recognition of Christ as the “Chief” of the world, he proffers a third-phase chief’s blanket.
Fig. 7 (above). Frewin’s angels. Dressed in buckskin and beads, they carry a native drum and flute with which to create songs of praise and joy at the time of Christ’s birth.

Fig. 8 (below). Mary, baby Jesus, and Joseph. Identified by their costumes as members of the Lakota tribe, they take refuge in a teepee and strap the newborn child onto a cradleboard.
Fig. 9. The angel and the heavenly host appearing to the shepherds. Springtime, flowers, and color abound in this celebration of the joy of new birth. The message of the heavenly host is depicted as flowers cascading to earth. This arrangement follows the artist’s guidelines in placing the sheep; contrast it with figure 3 to see how the difference in arrangement affects the import of the scene. If the background is altered as well, as it is in figure 14, other emotions become the focus.
The holy family is Lakota. They wear beaded buckskin clothing, and the cradleboard is completely covered with beads, the decoration being of the highest quality to reflect the sublime nature of the baby (fig. 8). They live in a teepee and are joined by animals true to the environment: a buffalo, an eagle, and a deer. The angels are also dressed in buckskin and beads; they carry a drum and a flute, instruments of the people with whom they rejoice (fig. 7). Flying high above the nativity is a fully beaded American bald eagle, symbolic of the Holy Ghost. The eagle symbolizes a connection of heaven to earth and also power, majesty, and courage, hence the use of eagle feathers for chiefs. In this sense, the eagle is also a symbol for Christ as the Chief of this world.

The meticulous care taken for costumes rather than facial features emphasizes community rather than the individual, a common folk-art trait. By following this tradition, Frewin highlights the worshipful presence of representatives of four tribes. Her nativity scene becomes a type of the Millennium, when nations will respond to Christ’s invitation, the time when, as the Psalmist wrote, “all nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name” (Psalm 86:9).

“I will be glad and rejoice in thee” (Psalm 9:2)

In Sjökvist’s image, Christ’s nativity is a time for joyful celebration and thankfulness. It is springtime—the season of birth and new beginnings—and flowers are everywhere. Since flowers in folk art represent celebration and thankfulness, it is appropriate that flowers abound in this scene. Flowers grace the stable and background and ornament the bases holding up the angel, the shepherds, and the wise men on their horses. The manger is decorated with flowers to symbolically convey that this event is a special occasion. Flowers even cascade down from the heavenly host as if their words have turned to flowers and their praises are visible. The joyous message of the angel is printed on a banner she holds, where the words “I bring you good tidings of great joy” are written in Old Swedish calligraphy and grammar (fig. 9).

The people are dressed in their festive clothing. The shepherds and Mary are clothed in peasant holiday best to celebrate and honor the babe. Although ordinary peasant clothing tended to be monochromatic, for festivals people chose lots of color and ornamentation, so the mother’s dress is beautified with color and embroidery (fig. 10). In addition to signifying status, the formal suits and top hats of the wise men fit the nativity’s celebratory air.

The whole scene is filled with light, and bright yellows are everywhere, most significantly in the back of the stable, where they radiate horizontally...
Fig. 10. Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus in the stable. The holiday-best dress and the decorated stable and manger honor the baby. The scene reminds us to give thanks for the condescension of God.
from the holy family. The light and the flowers springing up on every side seem to reflect the artist’s experience of learning that Jesus is “the life and the light of the world” (D&C 11:28): upon finding the gospel, Sjökvist writes, she felt she was “being moved from a room in darkness to a place with light.” Joy and gratitude accompany those who walk in light rather than in darkness (see John 8:12).

“What doth the Lord require of thee?” (Micah 6:8)

The wise men, of course, offer gifts to the Christ child, gifts central to the cultures they represent. The well-to-do Swedish wise men bring representations of the gifts mentioned in the scriptures of their Bible-believing society (fig. 11). The gifts brought by the Dinee wise men are gifts of great value in their culture: a blanket, a rug, baby moccasins, and pottery. The Iroquois shaman also offers a pair of small beaded moccasins. The Cheyenne shaman brings a blanket with an ornately beaded strip that covers the seam; such a blanket is an item of prestige in the tribe. The Navajo medicine man presents a special Navajo rug—a third-phase chief’s blanket, again a recognition of Christ’s role as Chief of this world.

All these nativity gifts signify bringing our best, most-valued possessions to Christ. Aside from temporal tithes and offerings, these nativity

**Fig. 11.** The three wise men. These dignified Swedish men carry frankincense, myrrh, and gold, symbolic of the spiritual offerings we should bring to Christ.
scenes can inspire us to present to the Lord many other gifts, such as justice, mercy, and humble obedience (Micah 6:8); “a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Ne. 9:20); and service to our fellow beings since we then are also serving Christ (Matt. 25:35–36).

James E. Faust’s description of the Savior’s message sums up the gifts that the wise among us will offer:

At the heart of the message of the Savior of the world is a single, glorious, wonderful, still largely untried concept. In its simplest terms the message is that we should seek to overcome the selfishness we all seem to be born with, that we should overcome human nature and think of others before self. We should think of God and serve Him, and think of others and serve them.¹¹

“What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?” (Matt. 27:22)

Because creating a nativity formed of multiple pieces is incomplete until someone arranges it, such scenes require their owners to literally consider “What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?”¹² In deciding where to place the figures in relationship to each other and what background, if any, to use, devout arrangers seem to convey, perhaps subconsciously, their own beliefs about the Savior and his birth.

For example, what might one communicate in placing the sheep in the Sjökvist nativity? While setting up the scene to be photographed, a volunteer at the Museum of Church History and Art made the choices pictured in figure 3. If we remember that sheep symbolize Christ’s human flock, it is significant that one sheep stays close to its mortal shepherd and turns away from the Shepherd of all. The bodies of the other sheep are turned toward the Christ child, the sheep in the foreground on a path leading directly to the manger. But several of the sheep seem ambivalent, torn in two directions. The black sheep, the scriptural symbol for the sinner, is one of those still torn but is nonetheless in the group closest to the Savior. In the arrangement that follows a placement guide provided by Sjökvist (see fig. 9), the black sheep is almost lost to our view,¹³ and the other sheep seem to mill around, oblivious to either angel or child.

A comparison of two arrangements of the Begay nativity¹⁴ reveals obvious differences in the relationships of the figures to each other and to us, differences that impart very different messages. Forming a slight curve, the men and animals in figure 12 function more as an honor guard to Mary and her baby than as active participants, particularly the men who are standing. The kneeling Mary in turn is secondary to the baby lying before her on a sheepskin and seems to beckon the viewer to him. The gazes of all
Fig. 12. A rather formal arrangement of Begay’s nativity set. As co-creators of the nativity scene, those who arrange the pieces often communicate their own beliefs about the Savior. This arrangement highlights the paradox of the lowliest being the mightiest.

Fig. 13. A different response to “What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?” With this intimate grouping emphasizing quiet, wholehearted worship, the viewer is invited to complete the circle.
Fig. 14. Sjökvist’s nativity with a black background. When compared to figure 9, this version conveys a more dramatic awe of the wonders of the advent.
converge on the Christ. This arrangement symbolizes two paradoxes: the smallest is the greatest and the lowliest is the mightiest—the one to whom we all must look for our salvation (see Luke 9:48; Matt. 11:29).

In contrast, the arrangement in figure 13 is an intimate, protective circle. Far less formal, the parents and visitors are directly engaged in quiet worship of the Christ child. They all bend humbly toward the Savior, even those who are standing. A gap in the arrangement invites the viewer to join the fellowship and finish the circle. “O come,” the arranger seems to say, “let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker” (Psalm 95:6).

The choice of background also changes the nativity message. A black background was used in one arrangement of Sjökvist’s nativity scene (fig. 14). Although flowers are still abundant (in the bases of the figures), the black is the more dominant element, heightening the drama but subduing and almost eliminating the joyous, celebratory air of the scene as shown earlier (see fig. 9). The feeling is of awe at the miracle of Christ’s advent and of its herald. The “great joy” is yet to be realized, for the shepherds must first act upon the message—as we must move beyond hearing to faith and action (James 1:22) for us to be reborn as joyous “new creature[s]” (2 Cor. 5:17).

Conclusion

By allowing us to feel their faith and see through their eyes, the creators of these and other nativity scenes convey many implications of the Savior’s birth and the salvation it portends. Through our own annual ritual of setting up a nativity—of partaking in the creation of an image of Christ’s birth—we can communicate our own vision of the wonder, joy, and love of this evidence of God’s condescension. Nativity scenes help center us in a season of many distractions, reminding us that “he whose birth we commemorate this season is more than the symbol of a holiday. He is the Son of God, the Creator of the earth, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the fulfillment of the Law of Moses, the Redeemer of mankind, the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace.”

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1. All three are owned by the Museum of Church History and Art. Each Christmas season, the museum displays nativity scenes from its collection.


3. Some critics also say other elements are fictional. See for example, <http://www.geocities.com/paulntobin/jesus.html#nativity>, a page which claims the nativity story “is almost surely 100% mythological” (italics in original).


5. Joseph’s clothing represents the eighteenth-century folk perception of what a middle-eastern person would wear.

6. One reason the Museum of Church History and Art commissions and collects and displays folk nativities is that the nativity scene by its nature amplifies and communicates the universality of the gospel and the Savior’s message. The gospel is not restricted by geography or culture or time; it transcends all of those things. Folk art is the perfect medium to express that community and continuity because folk art celebrates those values. As we become an increasingly worldwide church, we can use folk art to communicate with other cultures. Cultures we cannot understand linguistically can be understood visually. We can feel of their faith and see through their eyes. Their spiritual insight is a gift to be shared. By understanding more pieces of the world’s cultural puzzle, we come to an understanding of the whole.

7. The flower patterns are based on a very traditional motif used in the Dalarna district of Sweden. The actual translation of the name of the motif is “cucumber.”

8. Across the top of the nativity setting is written an explanation of the scene. Translated, the text reads, “About the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, the shepherds and their herd, and also the wise men from the land in the East.” According to Sjökvist, the traditional folk painters, whose style she duplicates in her nativity set, “often had an accompanying text of explanation to the pictures.” Gerd Sjökvist, email to Richard G. Oman, November 5, 2002.

9. Color is sometimes the only luxury that exists in peasant cultures.


12. In applying Pilot’s question to ourselves, we are following President Gordon B. Hinckley’s lead. See note 2.


14. These nativity scenes were arranged by museum volunteers and staff months before the ideas in this section were developed. The scenes were not staged specifically to make our point.

The very abundance of books in our days—a stupefying and terrifying abundance—has made it more important to know how to choose,” observed historian James Bryce. “The first piece of advice I will venture to give you is this,” he added. “Read only the best books. . . . Let not an hour . . . be wasted on third-rate or second-rate stuff if first-rate stuff can be had.”¹ This wise counsel is in harmony with the scriptural injunction “seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom” (D&C 88:118). This marvelous passage of scripture is exhilarating but leaves one to wonder, which are the best books? Or, as Bryce might say, “What is the first-rate stuff?” Certainly the scriptures are most important by far, but next to them, which titles should be given highest priority? How would you answer if a serious but novice student were to ask you, “Which Mormon books should I be sure to read?”

Through the years, secular scholars have produced various lists to help guide readers. Most people appreciate such lists because modern men and women are extremely busy; these recommendations help give preference to certain books one might hope to read someday. Such lists include The Harvard Classics, C. Lewis Hind’s One Hundred Best Books, and Clifton Fadiman’s Lifetime Reading Plan. Jasper Lee Company has published a work entitled Have You Read One Hundred Great Books? which compiles several different lists produced by others.

Some Latter-day Saints have produced lists of the best Mormon titles. Curt Bench published a work in 1990 entitled “Fifty Important Mormon Books.”² His contribution was valuable, but it considered only titles published through 1980. Bench received input from twenty-one scholars, and

Which Are the Most Important Mormon Books?

Arnold K. Garr

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he divided the books into categories but chose not to rank them in importance.\textsuperscript{3} Obviously, any survey or list of such a kind, including the present one, will be colored by a high degree of subjectivity.

At the turn of the new millennium, the time seemed right for another attempt to identify the books that currently appear to be the most prominent among Mormon titles. I desired to conduct a formal survey of a large group of believing, mainstream Latter-day Saint scholars to determine which titles they thought were the most important books of Mormonism. Vaughn Call, chair of the Sociology Department at Brigham Young University, kindly gave helpful advice on how to make such a survey a legitimate scholarly enterprise. His counsel was to survey at least 350 scholars and strive for at least a 70\% response rate. In fact, with support from John W. Welch and the staff of \textit{BYU Studies}, 412 scholars were invited to participate, and 73\% of them responded (303 out of 412). See the survey results on pages 42 to 47.

This survey was limited to scholars who teach, research, and write in the field of Mormonism. Under the guidance of independent professional designers of surveys, the \textit{BYU Studies} staff and I sent questionnaires to randomly selected members of these groups:

1. \textbf{BYU Rel Ed}: Full-time faculty of Religious Education at BYU–Provo. (This group made up 9.9\% of the respondents.)

2. \textbf{BYU Non-Rel Ed}: Scholars at BYU–Provo in areas related to Mormon studies: the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History and the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS). The group also includes scholars in other BYU departments who have demonstrated interest in and publish in Mormon studies (17.2\% of the respondents).

3. \textbf{BYU-I Rel Ed}: Professors of religion at BYU–Idaho (6.6\% of the respondents)

4. \textbf{BYU-H Rel Ed}: Professors of religion at BYU–Hawaii (0.7\% of the respondents)

5. \textbf{Other Univ}: Professors of various departments at universities who are interested in and publish in Mormon studies (1.3\% of the respondents)

6. \textbf{CES Inst}: Full-time Church Educational System (CES) Institute of Religion instructors and CES administrators who subscribe to \textit{BYU Studies} (32.7\% of the respondents)

7. \textbf{CES Coor}: Full-time CES coordinators who subscribe to \textit{BYU Studies} (10.9\% of the respondents)
8. CES Sem: Full-time seminary teachers who subscribe to BYU Studies (4.6% of the respondents)

9. Other Ch Employee: Scholars at the Family and Church History Department and various other departments of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City (11.6% of the respondents)

10. Others: Scholars of Mormon studies not currently associated with any university or CES (4.6% of the respondents)

The demographics of our 303 respondents were as follows: 94% had at least a master’s degree; 52% had a doctor’s degree; 94% worked for the Church or BYU; 65% taught religion for the Church either in the Church Educational System or at one of the three BYU campuses; 61% were over fifty years old, and 60% had read five or more Latter-day Saint books during the past year. We were satisfied that this group qualifies as a well-educated, well-read, mature, faithful group of Latter-day Saints. Naturally, this group also has its own inclinations and proclivities, but readers or teachers interested in knowing which books might be recommended by a large group of scholars who fit within this profile should find the following results to be of distinct interest.

The survey contained only two brief questions: first, “Excluding the scriptures, which would you consider the three most important books written by Latter-day Saint authors about Mormonism in each of the following categories?” The five categories were “Fiction,” “Inspirational/Devotional,” “Biography,” “History,” and “Doctrine.” Respondents were asked to list the most important book first and the other two in descending order. The second question simply inquired, “Which one book would you consider the most important book overall?” We then explained: “The purpose of the survey is to identify which are the most important books in the minds of Latter-day Saint scholars, not necessarily the most popular or best selling ones among the general readers of the Church.” Multivolume works under the same title and written by the same author were considered as one book. Choosing to leave respondents as free as possible to answer however they wished, the survey made no attempt to define “most important” any further. The open-ended nature of this question was frustrating to some respondents, and it is impossible to determine how they ultimately defined this term in their own minds. Readers may puzzle over how they would have responded under similar circumstances.

In tabulating the results of all the categories (except the one entitled “Overall”), the first book listed by a respondent received three points, the second two points, and the third one point. The question concerning
the one most important book overall asked for only one response; therefore, one point was given for each answer. As a result, the total points in that category are much smaller.

No claim is made that this survey has produced anything close to a perfect list: it is neither definitive nor final. Readers’ personal preferences will sometimes agree with the survey results and sometimes not. Indeed, we were surprised at a few books that appeared, especially near the bottom of the twenty listed for each category. Perhaps similar surveys can be conducted in ten, twenty, or thirty years to update this list and see which books have withstood the test of time.

If we were to conduct this survey over again, we would add another category entitled “Scripture Studies.” Another possible classification might be “Books by Sympathetic non-Mormon Authors.” We certainly acknowledge that members of other faiths such as Jan Shipps, Hubert H. Bancroft, Richard F. Burton, Thomas L. Kane, Thomas F. O’Dea, and Wallace Stegner have made important contributions to the field of Mormon studies.

Nevertheless, we believe that this modest survey was worthwhile. Members of the Church can benefit from the collective wisdom of 303 Latter-day Saint scholars. BYU students often ask their professors which Latter-day Saint books they should buy and read. This is an excellent list to help them start their personal libraries. We also believe the survey can help new seminary instructors and Gospel Doctrine teachers throughout the Church. Even well-read scholars will probably find a few titles here that they have overlooked.

I am grateful to the staff of BYU Studies, especially Glenda Egbert, who efficiently helped administer the survey. The questionnaires were numbered so that she could receive the mail, check off those who had responded, and mail out a follow-up to those who had not yet responded. She then cut the tracking number off of the returned questionnaires before they were sent to other assistants who tabulated the results. In this way the survey was kept as anonymous and confidential as possible. We also express our sincere thanks to the Religious Studies Center at BYU for providing a grant for the project.

**Results of the Survey**

**Fiction.** We discovered that a significant portion of Latter-day Saint scholars apparently do not read Mormon fiction. In fact, 40 percent of the respondents left the “Fiction” part of the survey blank, and many others listed only one book. We therefore included on this table the last name of the author, for the benefit of those who have had little contact with this
genre. Nevertheless, those who voted left little doubt as to what they thought was the most important book of fiction. It should surprise no one that Gerald Lund’s *The Work and the Glory* came out on top. This series is so highly regarded that it received seven times more points (371 to 54) than the book in second place, Maurine Whipple’s *The Giant Joshua*. Another indication of Gerald Lund’s tremendous current prominence is that he authored three others in the top eleven books of fiction: *Fishers of Men* (fifth); *Fire and the Covenant* (sixth); and *The Alliance* (eleventh). Another important contemporary novelist is Dean Hughes, whose *Children of the Promise* finished third. The nineteenth century classic *Added Upon: A Story*, by Nephi Anderson, finished fourth. An amusing side note: Fawn Brodie’s controversial biography of Joseph Smith, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*, received four points as a work of fiction.

**Inspirational/Devotional.** The voting on “Inspirational/Devotional” books was much closer. *Believing Christ*, by Stephen E. Robinson, took first place. This book received a great deal of support from BYU Religious Education. Next on the list was *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, by Spencer W. Kimball. BYU non-Religious Education and CES Institute instructors gave this title its greatest support. This book actually would have been in first place had all the points it received under “Inspirational/Devotional” and “ Doctrine” been combined. Finishing third, fourth, and fifth were *Standing for Something*, by Gordon B. Hinckley; *Jesus the Christ*, by James E. Talmage; and *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, by LeGrand Richards. *Jesus the Christ* is the ubiquitous title: respondents listed it under all the nonfiction categories and ranked it fourth in “Inspirational/Devotional,” sixth in “Biography,” seventeenth in “History,” third in “Doctrine,” and second “Overall.”

**Biography.** The top five biographies are an interesting mix of old and new. *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley*, by Sheri Dew, finished first. It received over half of its support from the Church Educational System. Two time-honored, nineteenth-century titles finished in the top five: *The History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* (second) and *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (fifth). *Spencer W. Kimball*, by his son and grandson, Edward Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball Jr., finished third, and *Brigham Young: American Moses*, by Leonard Arrington, finished fourth.

**History.** Perhaps the two most influential historians in the long life of the Church appear prominently at the top of our “History” category—B. H. Roberts and Leonard Arrington. The first title on the list is the multivolume treasure *History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, introduced and
edited by B. H. Roberts. All but one of the ten groups of scholars voted this series number one on their list. A Comprehensive History of the Church, the multivolume narrative by B. H. Roberts, finished a distant but strong second on the list. Leonard Arrington’s Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900, finished third, followed just six points behind by The Story of the Latter-day Saints, which was co-authored by James Allen and Glen Leonard. Joseph Smith and the Restoration, by Ivan Barrett, finished fifth, receiving the majority of its support from employees in the Church Educational System. Richard Bushman’s Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism finished seventh, but it would have been in third place in “History” had all the points it received under “Biography” and “History” been combined.

**Doctrine.** The number one book in the category of “Doctrine” is appropriately Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, edited by Joseph Fielding Smith. Five books or series written or edited by Bruce R. McConkie appear in the top fourteen titles—an indication of the high esteem scholars hold for him: Mormon Doctrine (second), Doctrines of Salvation (fourth), the Messiah series (ninth), Doctrinal New Testament Commentary (tenth), and A New Witness for the Articles of Faith (fourteenth). Finishing third on this list is Jesus the Christ, and fifth is The Encyclopedia of Mormonism, edited by Daniel H. Ludlow.

**Overall.** Adam S. Bennion was known to sometimes ask his students, “If you were going to be a prisoner in a concentration camp for the next four years and could take with you the works of any ten authors, which would you take?”4 The respondents to the “Overall” section of our survey can help answer that question. By an overwhelming margin they selected Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith as the most important nonscriptural volume. Perhaps the reason this book is held in such high regard can be found in its introduction: “The members of the Church quite generally desire to know what the Prophet Joseph Smith may have said on important subjects, for they look upon his utterances as coming through divine inspiration.”5 Number two on the “Overall” list is Jesus the Christ. As noted above, our respondents loved this book, even though they did not agree how it should be categorized. It received most of its points as a book of doctrine. The next two titles found in the top five overall were number three, History of the Church, which was followed closely by The Encyclopedia of Mormonism. Some have wondered whether the Encyclopedia, published in 1992, has taken its rightful place as a prominent reference book in the Church. Our respondents say it certainly has, especially in the field of doctrine. Finishing fifth overall is Mormon Doctrine, one of the more widely quoted books in the Church.
Some Observations

A total of 94 books made it on the “top 20” lists. (In some categories there were more than 20 because of ties.) Thirteen books received points in more than one category (other than “Overall”): Jesus the Christ (4 categories), Encyclopedia of Mormonism (3), Journal of Discourses (3), and ten others (2). Fourteen of the 24 titles on the “Overall” list are books of doctrine.

Only 8 of the 94 books were published in the nineteenth century, and 4 of those 8 were biographies. Five titles written since 1990 have had especially wide appeal: The Work and the Glory (Fiction), Believing Christ (Inspirational/Devotional), Standing for Something (Inspirational/Devotional), Go Forward with Faith (Biography), and Encyclopedia of Mormonism—the only newly published title to make the top five list in the “Overall” category.

Stirling W. Sill once declared, “The influence of great books upon us is miraculous. They can make us into their own image, and you may judge a man more truly by the books . . . he reads than the company that he keeps.”

We hope this survey will help many people in their quest to find the “best books” or, in other words, “the first rate stuff.”

Arnold K. Garr (arnold_garr@byu.edu) is Associate Professor and Associate Department Chair of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University. He received a B.A. in history from Weber State College, an M.A. in history at Utah State University, and a Ph.D. in American history from Brigham Young University.

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1. The Miracle of Forgiveness also received 61 points in the “Doctrine” category.
2. A Marvelous Work and a Wonder also received 16 points in the “Doctrine” category.
3. Christ and the New Covenant also received 18 points in the “Doctrine” category.
4. Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley also received 15 points in the “Doctrine” category.
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1. Authors' names are given only where needed for clarification.
2. Wilford Woodruff's Journal also received 14 points in the “History” category.
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² The Papers of Joseph Smith also received 9 points in the “Biography” category.
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1 *Jesus the Christ* also received 66 points in “Biography,” 44 in “Inspirational,” and 14 in “History.”
2 *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* also received 30 points in “History,” and 25 in “Inspirational” categories.
3 *Journal of Discourses* also received 12 points in “Inspirational” and 10 in “History” categories.
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Fig. 1. Brigham Young and an unidentified wife. Copy print of photograph of a daguerreotype, ca. 1850–54, attributed to Marsena Cannon. Although a 1965 artifact record in the Museum of Church History and Art clearly describes this image, the image itself had disappeared until this year, when this copy was found in the collections of the Deseret News.
A Mysterious Image
Brigham Young with an Unknown Wife

Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Robert F. Schwartz

Of the hundreds of images of Brigham Young, until recently only two were known that show Brigham posing with one of his wives. While rumors of a third such image have existed for some time, no one could find a copy of it until this year. What we found was a photograph of the original daguerreotype (fig. 1); the original itself, printed on a small copper plate, is still missing. This rumored image was mysterious not only because it had disappeared but also because the wife’s face on the daguerreotype had been completely obliterated. Unanswered questions regarding its damage make this image intrinsically interesting. In addition, finding the copy, determining the daguerreotype’s creation date, and trying to identify the wife have presented investigative challenges almost as intriguing as the image itself.

General Context of the Image

From 1994 to 1999, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and R. Q. Shupe gathered all the known images of Brigham Young produced during his lifetime. Published in Brigham Young: Images of a Mormon Prophet (2000), the collection came to include hundreds of images, including daguerreotypes, tintypes, ambrotypes, paintings, woodcuts, engravings, and pencil sketches. In addition to publishing these images of the Prophet Brigham, Holzapfel and Shupe attempted to provide dates, background information, and detailed descriptions for each image. However, determining the correct information was often difficult and sometimes impossible. In the introduction to their book, the authors note that “virtually all publications reproducing visual images of Brigham Young contain flaws in date iden-
Dating photographs and identifying photographers can be challenging, particularly when the only surviving image is a copy of a copy.\textsuperscript{1}

While researching their book, Holzapfel and Shupe came across only two photographs of Brigham posing with individual wives. The first is a 6 cm x 7 cm daguerreotype of Brigham and Margaret Peirce Young\textsuperscript{2} (fig. 2). The second is a portrait of Brigham and Amelia Folsom Young, taken in 1863—the year they were married.\textsuperscript{3} However, Holzapfel and Shupe heard from a number of Young family members, image collectors, and archivists about a third image of Brigham with a wife, an unidentified woman whose face on the daguerreotype had been completely smeared or scratched away. Unfortunately, Holzapfel and Shupe were unable to locate the image in time for their volume. However, a copy of the picture, owned by the Deseret News Company, was rediscovered just this year. Following a lead from Joseph M. Bauman, a collector and writer at the Deseret News,
Holzapfel’s student research assistant Marc Bohn spent two days in the newspaper’s library before he found this copy of the image. Librarians there had not been aware that they had a copy of this rare print.

**Image History**

The daguerreotype belonged to a collection that today is housed in the Museum of Church History and Art of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Although a record of this image has existed in the Church’s artifact catalog since July 7, 1965, the image itself is missing from the museum’s collection. The Church’s artifact record H2623 contains the following description:

One photograph of Brigham Young and a wife encased in a leather case. The case has red velvet cushion with design and glass with gold trim to keep picture clean. Face of wife has been smeared away. Finishing on photograph in gold and pink. The case has a design and two hooks to hold together when closed; dark brown in color.⁴

The only other information the catalog entry gives that would help to identify the image is the date 1849; no donor is named.⁵

Before it arrived at the museum, during the latter 1960s and through the 1970s, the collection containing the picture of Brigham and his mystery wife was stored in various places on Temple Square, including the basements of the North Visitors’ Center and the Tabernacle. This situation continued until May 1984, when the Church dedicated its new Museum of Church History and Art and relocated the collection to the museum. However, when they tried to match all objects with their record numbers in 1992, the curators never located item H2623 and declared it “unavailable,” its position “unknown.”⁶ Thus, all that can be said of the daguerreotype’s disappearance is that it occurred sometime between July 7, 1965, and 1992.

Some witnesses claim to have seen the original daguerreotype after 1965. For instance, Nyal Anderson, manager of Beehive Collector’s Gallery in Salt Lake City, says that sometime in the early to mid-1980s, a collector approached him seeking a price appraisal of a daguerreotype showing Brigham Young with a wife whose face had been scratched out. Although interested in the daguerreotype’s worth, the collector remained unwilling to sell the image.⁷

More concrete evidence of the missing daguerreotype appeared on February 24, 1971, when the Deseret News ran an article regarding a diary of Brigham Young.⁸ The article included a small photograph showing only Brigham Young’s face and neckerchief; however, the article’s view of Brigham was merely part of a larger photograph that the Deseret News Company
had in its possession (fig. 1). The newly found complete photograph shows a nail-mounted daguerreotype of Brigham with his arm around a wife whose face is smeared away. Apparently the photograph shows H2623 removed from the leather and velvet casing described in the museum record. The photograph was evidently taken before the daguerreotype entered the Church collection.

Although this photograph of the daguerreotype clearly matches the museum’s description of their missing artifact, the newspaper’s information conflicts with the museum’s record. The Deseret News article claims that the image shows Brigham “at about the time [the] diary was written.” President Young dictated the diary from May 27, 1857, to September 21 of the same year, while the museum archive record dates the daguerreotype to 1849. Adding to the confusion about dates, pencil handwriting on the back of the Deseret News Company’s copy reads simply, “Brigham Young in the early 60’s,” and the Deseret News library contains no documentation of its acquisition of the photograph. In view of such confusing or incomplete documentation, we turn to the image itself, which reveals that it was probably taken in the early 1850s.

Details That Help Determine the Date

Even in frontier Utah, fashions in dress and grooming changed frequently, following trends elsewhere. Thus details of styles shown in the photograph present clues to the time of its creation. By comparing the photograph with fashion trends and with other photographs of Brigham, we can place the image in the early 1850s.

H2623 cannot have been taken later than 1860 because it shows President Young before he wore a beard, which appears in other photographs beginning in 1861. Moreover, the Brigham we see in H2623 looks significantly younger than the Brigham who appears in two photographs from the 1857 period suggested by the diary.11

In H2623, Brigham is wearing a silk neckerchief with a floral pattern (fig. 3). This is significant because the same neckerchief appears in several images from the early 1850s. We first see the neckerchief in

![Fig. 3. Detailed view of Brigham Young from figure 1. The lack of a beard and the youthfulness of his appearance suggest that the daguerreotype could have been taken as early as 1850. His neckerchief also provides clues to the daguerreotype’s date.](image-url)
a daguerreotype taken December 12, 1850, by Marsena Cannon\(^{12}\) (fig. 4). It shows up again in two daguerreotypes also taken by Cannon sometime in 1851 or 1852\(^{13}\) (fig. 5). The neckerchief appears a fourth time in the 1852/53 daguerreotype of Brigham with Margaret Peirce (fig. 2) and then finally in two images thought to have been taken sometime in 1853 or 1854\(^{14}\) (see fig. 6 for one of the images from this pair). The neckerchief appears in all but one of the known photographs taken in the 1850–54 period, but it never appears again in any known photograph after 1854. This evidence suggests that H2623 was taken sometime before 1854, perhaps as early as 1850.

Further evidence of the daguerreotype’s time period can be seen in other articles of clothing that appear in H2623, including Brigham’s trousers, his vest, and his jacket. Brigham’s plaid trousers and vest (fig. 1) indicate the late 1840s, when plaid was popular:

By 1845, the reign of Queen Victoria, which reflected her preference for all things Scottish, created a rush of fabrics on the market and plaid
designs of all kinds. There was a massive increase in... woolen plaids and checkers for cloaks and trousers seen all over the English world.¹⁵

This “English world” definitely included Mormon pioneers of the 1840s, many of whom were English and Scottish immigrants. We have evidence of plaid and Scots traditions in Utah in 1848: “On the twenty-fourth of July, 1848, there were some Scots in Salt Lake City who did have plaids, and... dancing Scottish reels became standard for celebrations.”¹⁶

The preponderance of plaid in this image suggests that the daguerreotype was probably taken in the late 1840s or early 1850s¹⁷ (fig. 1).

The jacket that Brigham is wearing in H2623 also indicates the early 1850s because it matches the jacket in another photograph whose date we know. The jacket in H2623 bears a striking resemblance to, and is probably the same as, the jacket that appears in the 1852–53 daguerreotype taken with Margaret Peirce (figs. 2, 3). Both jackets have double-breasted, “M-cut” lapels, and both were tailored without the fullness at the top of the sleeves that was characteristic of jackets in the early to mid-1840s.¹⁸

The similar jackets, coupled with the neckerchief in both images, the rarity of photographs showing Brigham with a wife, and the fact that both daguerreotypes appear to have been taken near the same time, make it valuable to compare H2623 more closely with the photograph of Margaret Peirce Young. In H2623, the wife wears a striped dress that was most likely made from a fine wool (fig. 7). Above the shirring at the waist, we see a gathered point in the bodice, a detail popular from 1838 into the 1840s. The dress’s snugly fitting sleeves with white cuffs also mark it as being of 1840s vintage.¹⁹ These features do not match the dress worn by Margaret Peirce Young in the Marsena Cannon image of 1852–53 (fig. 2). Margaret’s dress is

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**Fig. 6.** Brigham Young. Detail from copy print of a daguerreotype, ca. 1853–54, 4½” x 3½” (11 cm x 9 cm), attributed to Marsena Cannon. In this later photo, Brigham again wears his floral neckerchief. Courtesy Museum of Church History and Art.
somewhat looser in the bodice, and it has pagoda sleeves, which became popular in the 1850s:

There were many styles of sleeves during the [eighteen] fifties from flared to straight. One of the most notable and characteristic was the pagoda sleeve. This sleeve retained the shape of the upper arm and then flared into a wide open sleeve in the area of the elbow. Often a full or bloused undersleeve, usually gathered into a wristband, was worn beneath the pagoda sleeve.

Such undersleeves visibly extend from under Margaret’s pagoda sleeves, reaching down to her wrists.

The fact that Margaret Peirce appears in her daguerreotype in a dress that can clearly be dated to the 1850s while the wife of H2623 appears in an 1840s dress suggests that H2623 was taken before the image of Margaret and Brigham. If this were so, H2623 would stand as the earliest known image of Brigham posing with a wife. Still, the evidence is sketchy. Comparing Brigham’s appearance in the two images reveals only that his hair is shorter in the Margaret Peirce image and seems thinner there than in H2623. While somewhat compelling, these differences might be merely the result of a haircut and the impression of a recently removed hat in the Peirce image. Brigham’s face appears almost identical in the two images.

In summary, our examination of details points to a conclusion that the daguerreotype was made sometime in the early 1850s, the neckerchief placing it possibly as late as 1854. Still, although the date is important, perhaps the most important missing fact is the identity of the wife. By 1854, President Young had already been plurally married to forty-eight different women, making the task of identifying the wife in H2623 very difficult. However, what remains of the wife’s image can help us guess who she might be. Particularly remarkable are her beaded bracelets (fig. 7), which appear by their distinctive patterns to be Native American in origin.
Native American design is notable because a few of Brigham’s wives had considerable contact with Native Americans indigenous to the western United States. Lucy Ann Decker Young, Brigham’s first plural wife, adopted a Native American girl named Sally in 1847. We also know that Mary Ann Angell Young and Augusta Adams Cobb Young took an active role in the Indian Relief Societies of the 1850s. While the bracelets constitute evidence that is circumstantial at best, they might point toward Angell, Decker, or Cobb as the wife in H2623.

Conclusion

While we have narrowed the possibilities for the date of this image and for the identity of the wife shown in it, we may never identify her with certainty because it was the original image that was damaged. Daguerreotypes were never produced in multiple copies as we often print photographs now, so no undamaged copy exists. Nor is the identity of the wife the only question about this image we may never answer. For example, where is the original daguerreotype? Who damaged the daguerreotype, and why? Was this damage an accident or a deliberate attempt to obliterate the face?

Despite these mysteries, H2623 provides a significant view of Brigham posing with one of his wives. Although his expression there is very similar to the one we see in the daguerreotype of him and Margaret Peirce, his smile in H2623 is a little broader, his demeanor marginally more self-content and worry free. If H2623 was indeed taken as early as 1850, then it shows us a valuable picture of President Young before he began to shoulder the tremendous burden of being the territorial governor in 1851. Moreover, as mentioned previously, H2623 might be the earliest known picture of Brigham with one of his wives. The possibility that H2623 was taken as early as 1850 is consistent with the visual information that we can glean from the available copy of it, especially when the information is compared to other images from the same time period. Unfortunately, the daguerreotype’s origin, including its photographer and original owner, can only be guessed at. H2623 serves as a reminder of the difficulties involved in providing accurate information for any antique image and of the fact that pictures of Brigham are still lost.
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The authors would like to express special thanks to Carma de Jong Anderson and Jeffery O. Johnson for their insight into the subjects of this article.


2. Holzapfel and Shupe, Images of a Mormon Prophet, 118–19, 121. The image is thought to have been taken sometime in 1852 or 1853, and it is attributed to Marsena Cannon. Although Margaret Peirce’s name is often spelled “Pierce” in historical commentary, she and her family members spelled their last name “ei,” not “ie.” Margaret’s immigrant grandfather, George Peirce from England, originally spelled his name “Pearce” but eventually changed the spelling to “Peirce” for reasons not known. For more on this subject, see Earl Harvey Peirce, Robert and Hannah Harvey Peirce: 1847 Utah Pioneers, 4th ed. (Provo, Utah: n.p., 1996), particularly page 167.

3. Holzapfel and Shupe, Images of a Mormon Prophet, 162–63. The existing photograph of Brigham and Amelia is a copy print from an unknown source that was taken by C. R. Savage. There is a possibility that this copy is a composite, two separate images joined later; see Images of a Mormon Prophet, 163.


5. “Brigham Young and Wife.”

6. “Brigham Young and Wife.”


9. The marks that appear in fig. 1 above Brigham’s head on both sides are crop marks used by photo editors at the Deseret News; they are a feature of the copy, not of the original daguerreotype.


11. Holzapfel and Shupe, Images of a Mormon Prophet, 136–37. The image on page 136 shows Brigham in 1857; the image on page 137 dates back to 1858. Holzapfel and Shupe note that “[the 1857 ambrotype] reveals the strain and burden that President Young, governor of the territory of Utah, experienced when the federal government ‘invaded’ Utah,” Images of a Mormon Prophet, 136. This strained, burdened President Young is a far cry from the smiling, vibrant Brigham we see in the photograph of H2623.


19. Anderson, interview.


Some time ago, I and other faculty members of the BYU Dance Department discussed our concern about the future of our students, particularly those in music dance theatre. These are highly skilled young people who can and should, by virtue of their technical and spiritual training, be lights unto the world. Many succeed professionally or semiprofessionally. We are excited for them. Many, however, far too many, do not fare as well spiritually. They are seduced—drawn away from things that are essential—not only by the world, but by the very gifts that take them into the world, the artistic gifts that God endowed them with.

Opposition and Gifts

Seduction! I realize this is not a word that would usually surface in a gospel forum about gifts. Ordinarily, when I think about seduction, I see Gwen Verdon in Bob Fosse’s Damn Yankee as the female devil incarnate Lola tempting Joe Hardy, singing, “Whatever Lola wants, Lola gets.” With her long legs and corseted body, she is definitely beguiling and thoroughly seductive. In this scene, Lola fulfills the most common definition of what it means to seduce, that is, to lead astray by persuasion of false promises. What she offers to Joe is not in reality what he will actually get, nor will it fulfill his most important desires.

You may be saying, “I understand seduction by the Lolas of life. But as a Latter-day Saint pursuing my art to edify the children of men, how could I be seduced by my gift?” The answer lies in the fact that there is “opposition in all things” (2 Ne. 2:11), including those things that are meant for our good, such as artistic gifts. Opposition in this instance has less to do with
being tempted by the evil things of the world and more to do with the atti-
tudes and choices we make regarding the gifts we have been given; when
our gifts are misunderstood and misused, they will take us away from that
which is precious beyond our understanding.

The reasons for this possibility were clarified for me by Neal A.
Maxwell. Two of his statements about Satan’s tactics during Christ’s forty-
day fast are particularly enlightening: “The evil one . . . avoids that which is
most apt to be deflected by us.”¹ And “the points of our personal vulnera-
bility . . . will be exploited.”² Satan will not tempt us with the things in
which we have no interest, but he can hold us hostage by that which we
want most, that in which we have an investment, that which we care for and
nurture. Satan knows that if he can get the gift, he can get the person.

In this regard, our gifts themselves can become instruments of seduction
and can lead us away from the eternal work that we have been given to do.
The forces of our cultural landscape and the perceptions that we hold
about our gifts make us vulnerable in ways we may not even realize. In far
too many instances and even without our knowing it, Lola does get her way.

Patterns of Obvious Seduction

Our gifts make us open to ways of being, attending, thinking, and act-
ing that can be positive forces in developing a discipline grounded in etern-
al values. But when these ways of being go unchecked, obvious seduction
takes place—we are lured into situations, places, and attitudes that com-
promise our relationship to the gospel. Meaning becomes transitory, and
there is no centering agent or hierarchy for making choices. We lose our
orientation and eventually find ourselves struggling with who we are.
Family and institutional voices become muffled, and we guiltily distance
ourselves, hoping to silence the disapproval of our disobedience. Ulti-
mately, this journey moves us away from Christ.

Our most potentially seductive characteristics relate to our focus, our
perspectives and values, and our boundaries. Some of the possible ways
these characteristics route us to destructive paths are listed below.

Seductive Focus

• As an artist, each of us seeks for a personal, unique voice. In
  the process, we are encouraged to improve by focusing on
  ourselves and on our technique. Our quest can lead to pro-
moting the self rather than the message.

• The arts move us toward expression. When unchecked,
  expression becomes self-expression only—an engrossment in
the ego and in our own art. We are then not available to the guidance of the Spirit, neither in the creative process nor in our personal lives; the joys experienced when our souls are negotiated by the Spirit are lost.

- We enjoy mobility, freedom, and independence, but we can end up focusing on our own journey to the exclusion of serving others.

- Being part of an artistic community is important to us. Community is satisfying because we are in contact with like-minded people; similarity is comforting. But this community is an elite and often privileged population. This separateness moves us away from consideration for the general populace.

- We take pride in our work and often have a high need for recognition. We enjoy the fame, power, persuasive ability, money, and acceptance that often come with achievement. But assuming the role of an artist can lead us away from humility.

Seductive Perspectives and Values

- We have an ability as creative people to see several possibilities for solution. Our regard for alternatives can diffuse into our overall lives and become an acceptance of others’ moral codes. By valuing moral alternatives even when in some ways they go against our own original beliefs, we become susceptible to joining the adherents of those alternatives.

- We are often painfully aware of injustices in the world. Our sensitivity to social wrongs may cause us to align ourselves with individuals, groups, or causes that ultimately are at odds with the Church.

- We have an ability to live with disconcerting ambiguities. In other words, we can understand, see, feel, and possibly embrace that which may be inharmonious with the gospel.

- We entertain the “ifs” on many levels. When we entertain the “ifs” through “protracted consideration,” Elder Maxwell suggests, we will succumb to temptation.³

Seductive Boundaries

- Restrictions can become confining; rules are broken to achieve an effect. Although a disregard for constancy can feed creativity, it can also result in a disregard for the boundaries set by God.
• Being an artist often brings about a desire to be on or at the edge of our discipline or at least a desire to stay current with what is “happening.” To be at the edge, we may drop the core gospel principles that ground us.

• Being an artist encourages each of us to explore with a sense of immediacy. We may abandon past practices for new ones that, although they seem to serve us better in the moment, will not prepare us for the eternities.

If you are anything like me, there are many of these ways of being that you hold dear. Whether they move us toward or away from the gospel often becomes an issue of the incremental choices we make. A web page entitled “Tips on How to Flirt” caused me to see more clearly the cunning with which we are led away from goodness without even realizing it. For a person to be successful at flirting—and I think the Master Seducer has perfected these techniques—it is important to have repeated contact. Whispering is essential—“it always gets their attention.” Sitting alone is effective. You must treat the object of the flirtation gently. It is important to look over your shoulder and smile as well as look over the object from head to toe.⁴

Through gentle persuasion, we accept advances. Then with time, our sense of appropriateness changes. Our flirtations beguile us ever so subtly into making choices that our more refined, spiritually sensitive natures would not have made. What at one point would have been undesirable becomes acceptable behavior. Nephi describes the process with these telling phrases: “the devil . . . leadeth them away carefully,” “others he flatteth away,” and “he whispereth in their ears, until he graspeth them with his awful chains” (2 Ne. 28:21, 22).⁵

Flirting produces heat, not light. Heat consumes you and leaves nothing but dross; light moves through space and time to reveal and brighten the way. The following example of an artist’s flirtation points out the difference. One of our students took her mother to see Rent. The mother, though uncomfortable, sat through the whole show but could not understand how her daughter could support such a production, especially knowing its content beforehand. (If I am not mistaken, this was the second or third time the young woman had seen the show.) When questioned about the lack of values in the show, the student outlined how the production values were high and the music singable. Yes, she agreed, there may have been some objectionable parts, and the morals of the characters portrayed weren’t what we profess, but the ultimate message was one of love and acceptance, which more than made up for the lack of moral content.
By flirting with others’ standards, this student had been seduced into confusing heat with light.

We could discuss in greater detail where and how obvious seduction through our gifts takes place, but I think those circumstances are apparent and need no further consideration. It is the subtle seduction that most concerns me.

**Patterns of Subtle Seduction**

Patterns of subtle seduction manifest themselves as thought, attitudes, and actions that on the surface seem innocent enough but when more thoroughly examined reveal attitudes and practices where allegiance to the art, the gift, and the self are more apparent than allegiance to the gospel, others, and Christ. This allegiance ultimately underlies movement away from spiritually informed practice toward activity that is counterproductive to spiritual growth. For me, this allegiance to the art rather than the gospel is perhaps the most challenging aspect of being an artist and a dedicated Saint because Satan’s seduction happens within the context of our gospel practice.

Subtle seduction begins when words, phrases, and concepts from the scriptures and the words of the prophets are unwittingly modified, exaggerated, and taken out of context to support a righteous desire to magnify and ennoble the gift. Doing so, however, expands the gift beyond its original function. When we amplify the gift beyond its intended purpose or role, we have in essence violated the first of the Ten Commandments: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3).

I have identified three misconceptions that, when magnified, eventually shift us away from the restored gospel of Christ. These beliefs are (1) artists are particularly blessed, (2) artistic gifts are callings, and (3) strong, positive emotional responses to artworks or performances housed in a gospel-related context are always manifestations of the Spirit.

**Misconception 1: As artists we are particularly blessed to be in possession of our gifts.** Artists, like shamans, are awarded special consideration in society. Artists are seen as different, set apart. Through our gifts, we persuade, attract, entice, and move people beyond themselves. This ability is perceived as making us special and focuses an inordinate amount of attention on the individual.

As an artistic community, we often relish our uniqueness and even foster it. But the resulting self-centeredness can be destructive. I call this effect the Myth of Speciality. In the “world,” the myth of speciality often manifests itself both in abhorrent behavior and in art that runs the gamut from
absurd to perverse. Within the context of the gospel, this myth causes us to see ourselves in subtly skewed ways, and if unchecked or unexamined, it creates an atmosphere where the other two misconceptions flourish.

For example, this feeling of specialness manifests itself in an odd, troubling way in the prayers that I hear BYU performers offer before rehearsals or performances. On these occasions, the students (and I find myself saying the same words) thank Heavenly Father for our gift, for our light. We thank him for the positive things we perceive we can accomplish with the gift. We ask, “Help us to bless the audience tonight, to bring light to them through what we have to share.” Though such prayers voice care for others and concern for God’s work, they also seem self-directed and congratulatory. Too often the word we occurs in conjunction with our special position in manifesting the gift, making our gift and ourselves—rather than God and others—the center of our prayers.

This sense of special “blessedness” also appears under the guise of what I call the Myth of Creative Power, which suggests that artists, by virtue of their creative power, are more Godlike than others. We like to assume that God, the First Creator, the creator of worlds without end, is also the first artist. As artists involved in the creative process, we believe we are thus more like him or at least more connected, more familiar with him, than others. We support that reasoning with questions that on the surface are righteous but again uniquely link artists with God: What, we ask ourselves, can be for us as Latter-day Saints more important than to be like God, who is the source of all light and truth? Aren’t light and truth what art provides the world? And shouldn’t we aspire to be vehicles of light, truth, beauty, love, and pure intelligence? Both the Myth of Speciality and the Myth of Creative Power are based in prideful attitudes that potentially separate us from others as well as from the gospel.

**Misconception 2: Artistic gifts are callings.** As meaningful as this concept is and as committed as it can make us to our art, we must be careful about this belief. This perception can, as mentioned earlier, be traced to our own interpretations of the scriptures and of the words of the Brethren regarding gifts. We have all read scriptural passages or heard addresses that “confirm” for us the importance of our gift in relation to the grand scheme of life. In many cases, we are impressed enough by the words and possibly by a personal spiritual prompting to consider our gift a calling. But callings in the Church are priesthood-appointed positions. We must be careful not to infer that our artistic gift, though divinely given, is a divine appointment. When we suggest that we are “called” or in some way appointed to use our gift, we precariously position ourselves as official representatives of God. In so doing, we are presumptuous, I believe, and in danger of
blasphemy. Of course, we feel a responsibility to magnify our gift, but to represent it to either the public or ourselves as a calling possibly perverts the original intent and certainly distorts the source of the gift. A Church calling is directly from God as an appointment with all the pertinent rights and blessings bestowed upon us. But viewing our gift as a calling is a self-appointment.

Now for what I consider to be the heart of my concern: just as we can be seduced into believing that our gift is our calling, we can also be lured into thinking that our proclivities are equivalent to gifts given to us by the Holy Ghost or by the Spirit of God. When we interpret scriptural and prophetic references about gifts to mean our God-given proclivities, we confuse our talent with the actual gifts that God enumerates in the scriptures. Even by simply using the word gift to identify our proclivities (as I have in this article), we can be seduced not only by our talents but also by the very label attached to them. Although the talents we call gifts are not in actuality the gifts referred to in the scriptures, we all too often equate them.

In making this association, we step onto slippery ground. We are in effect seduced into thinking our talents are more than they are, for we are claiming that our talent has a similar, if not the same, function that spiritual gifts have and, therefore, that our discipline is equal in weight and magnitude to the gifts that are named. We endow our talent with privileges and rights that may not be intended for it. I realize that this line of thinking is not, on the surface, how we perceive ourselves in relation to our talent or how we perceive the talent itself, but if we listen carefully to our language as we speak about our talents, we will find this perception lurking under our words.

Three major discussions of gifts occur in the scriptures: Moroni 10:8–17, 1 Corinthians 12:1–11, and Doctrine and Covenants 46:8–29. By examining these passages to clarify the nature of the scriptural gifts and their relationship to our talents, perhaps we will more faithfully honor and fulfill the nature of both. As we will see, one is ultimately in the service of the other. Without this foundational concept, we are, as I have suggested, open to seduction.

During his last opportunity to record words “of worth” (Moro. 1:4), Moroni outlined the spiritual gifts and spent a good deal of time exhorting us to “deny not the gifts of God, for they are many” (Moro. 10:8). He tells us that they are for the profit of men. The Apostle Paul also listed these gifts and states they are important enough that he would not have us be ignorant of them (1 Cor. 12:1). Clearly our understanding of them is vital.
In the three scriptural passages about spiritual gifts, those gifts are clearly identified: to teach the word of wisdom, to teach the word of knowledge “that all may be taught to be wise” (D&C 46:18), to have “exceedingly great faith” (Moro. 10:11), to heal and be healed, to “work mighty miracles” (Moro. 10:12), to prophesy, to behold angels and receive the ministering of spirits, and to speak and interpret languages and tongues. “These gifts come by the Spirit of Christ,” Moroni reminds us (Moro. 10:17), and are given by the Holy Ghost in support of our progression. These are the gifts that God presents to us as important.

Nowhere do these passages mention the gift of dance, song, music, or painting. Nor do these scriptures mention the gift for building or troubleshooting machines, the gift of public speaking, the gift of medicine, or the myriad of other gifts that we often refer to. I believe that herein lies part of the problem: what we label this proclivity that Heavenly Father has bestowed upon us can produce an exaggerated sense of what our abilities are for.

David Tinney, one of our music dance theatre faculty, has a unique perspective on our gifts and talents that helps to place our art making within a larger context. His feeling is that we need to consider our professional involvement in the arts as a job. Pure, simple, and pointed. It is a job. Our work in our art form is a vehicle that allows us to accomplish other things in life. It is not (and these are my words, not his) a “calling.” As much as I, the artist, the choreographer, the dancer-performer, have in the past reveled in—perhaps even been self-congratulatory for—my status in life, Dave’s awareness helps me to understand that my discipline-related talents are not the spiritual gifts that God bestows upon us to assist in the redemption of mankind.

Misconception 3: Strong, positive emotional responses to artworks or performances housed in a gospel-related context are always manifestations of the Spirit. During an encounter with a work of art or a performance, strong emotion is often confused with manifestations of the Spirit. Physical sensation, emotion, and artistic conventions can indeed be pathways to spiritual experiences. But in many instances, what is experienced as a spiritual manifestation is merely heightened sensation. Emotion, tears, and physical stirrings, not the Spirit, are “witnessing” to the individual. In other words, the experience is not a response to the still small voice but is a response to theatrical trappings and a dynamic that rides on a flow of manufactured heat rather than eternal light. This problem leads to my concern that creators and audiences alike sometimes participate in a phenomenon I call performed spirituality.
Performed spirituality appears when craft and art are used in such a way that physical and emotional responses are mistakenly experienced or represented as spiritual enlightenment. The spirituality is feigned and false. We have all experienced performances that in some way impressed us but left us unfulfilled. This response occurs when spirituality is manufactured. The experience is about artifice rather than what is actual. It is practiced. The performers and creators are skillful at knowing what techniques to use to obtain a desired emotional effect. They can move others and themselves by sheer technique. For example, pianists by the skilled use of crescendos, diminuendos, and ritardandos alone can heighten emotional response without the presence of the Spirit. Although the performers or audience may label such a technique-based response as a spiritual manifestation, the spirituality is manufactured rather than real.

In performed spirituality, emotion and passion become a vehicle for heat—a simulation of light and spirituality. The form, in a postmodern sense, becomes the substance, which makes distinguishing heat from light difficult. The form is enactment rather than embodiment and uses skill to impress rather than bless. It lacks the spiritual depth that ultimately connects on a level beyond the veneer of craft.

This performed spirituality appears when a performance or a creation is grounded in talent and not in eternal principles sustained by light and truth. When a work is grounded in the art itself, we will be impressed, whether we know it or not, by the technique and skill of the artists, not by the spirit that should accompany the work. It seems to me that spirituality just is. As with humility, you cannot try to be humble. Either you are humble, or you are not. When an individual tries to be humble, the “humility” feels hollow. The same is true of spirituality.

In 2 Timothy 3:1–7, Paul cautions us about “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” When the passage is applied to creators and performers, I find it a chilling indictment of art that is more about form than eternal substance:

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . Without natural affection, . . . heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away, For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (Italics added)

Performed spirituality can lead us away so that we are ever experiencing the heat of a work of art but are never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. Performed spirituality is thus suspect, even dangerous. It is a
misuse of our gifts, and in many instances, it is manipulative, though not always intentionally so. When feeling the powerful stirrings that art can produce, the inexperienced may not sense when outward form is not attended by the Spirit. They become confused about the way manifestations of the Spirit are dispensed. Passion and technique then become substitutes for spiritual sensation; outward form becomes a substitute for inner spiritual peace. Because the emotional high manufactured by the craft is not self-sustaining, occasional substitution is followed by increasing dependence on artistic experiences to provide “spiritual” sensations. A transient counterfeit replaces the enduring peace of the Spirit, leaving the person anchorless in times of seduction. And thus some of our dance and theatre students and some of the rest of us are lured away.

Protection from the Seduction of Our Talents

Obvious and subtle challenges attend the work we do as Latter-day Saint artists. The Master Seducer knows that the artistic gifts we hold most precious have the potential to entice us away from eternal life. How then can we protect ourselves from the seduction that accompanies our talent?

As a defense against performed spirituality, partakers of art have a personal challenge to discern between the Spirit and the elements of emotion and physicality used to support artistic intent. Through awareness and experience, art audiences will come to know whether a work of art is a result of well-designed artistic conventions and/or dynamic eternal principles.

Makers of art need to be sensitive to and skilled at creating art that enlightens, not only through heightened emotional and physical feelings, but also through the transforming power of the Spirit. We should take responsibility for the potential of our craft to simulate spirituality and must distinguish between the emotional or physical effects of our art and the stirrings that come only from the Spirit. Furthermore, we cannot leave our art at the level of form only, of performed ritual. Our art needs to amplify eternal principles, generate gospel truths, and change understanding. But note that religious content alone—whether explicit or implicit—is not the answer. If unshaped by powerful technique, it also substitutes sentiment for substance. We must engage all our talent and training plus go underneath the form to get at the underlying spiritual elements. By such means, we can invite the Spirit to lead our audience, and us, to a more refined spiritual sensibility.

For me, the primary insights on protecting ourselves from seduction are offered by Doctrine and Covenants 46. Verses seven and eight provide a
context for the section’s list of spiritual gifts. The passage admonishes us to ask God in all things

who giveth liberally; and that which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils. Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given.

How do we protect ourselves? First, we ask God for awareness. He will give us answers liberally—not just a few answers, but many. He tells us that the Spirit will confirm what we should be about and that, whatever we do, we should do it with “all holiness of heart,” with prayer and thanksgiving, considering the end of our salvation. (I do not know about you, but I am not yet reconciled between my art and the end of my salvation.) He tells us to ask, to listen, and to act so that we will not be seduced by either men or devils. (Oh, but Lola is so attractive!) In addition, so that we will not be seduced, he offers us his “best gifts.” Obviously, the gifts have eternal significance and protective power, or they would not keep us from seduction.

And what are the “best gifts?” They are the spiritual gifts listed in the scriptures. They are eternal gifts. They are gifts bestowed upon us by the power of the Holy Ghost. They are not our discipline-specific talents. These talents are to be used in service of the spiritual gifts. As the spiritual gifts become the focus of our attention, we will be able to fulfill the measure of our talents and use them in tangible ways as aids to move others and ourselves on to eternal life.

Through awareness we can identify and label our personal challenges, guarding against desire, putting our passion for our discipline in perspective. When we secure our practice in the light of the scriptures, our talents can be used in tandem with gifts of the Spirit. Then, when Lola appears—in whatever form—we will be able to say, “I have no need of thee.”

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5. The full text reads, “And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell. And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance.” For a sense of how “I am no devil” applies to flirting, read that phrase as “there is no harm intended” or “the good outweighs the bad.”
Law libraries are generally boring places to outsiders (and to many insiders). Row upon row of identically bound books containing the arguments of long-dead judges hardly make the blood boil or excite the imagination of most. Yet Latter-day Saints venturing into the volumes of United States Supreme Court decisions from the closing decades of the nineteenth century may well be surprised by what they find. For example, in 1890 the Court suggested that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was not entitled to constitutional protection because Mormonism was not really a religion.¹ In another case, the Court held that states could (and they did) pass laws denying the vote to anyone who believed in “the doctrine of celestial marriage.”² Such cases are the dusty remains of the massive legal war waged by the federal government against the Church over the practice of plural marriage.

When I first read these cases in college, as a Latter-day Saint I had a visceral, tribal reaction. Notwithstanding the passage of time and the change of practice,³ I felt betrayed by America and the Constitution. And I was disappointed at the scholarly treatment of the Church’s early legal struggles. Despite the evocative power of these decisions, Mormon historians have written comparatively little on polygamy and antipolygamy from a legal perspective.⁴ Law, it seems, has remained a relatively neglected field within Mormon studies. This omission is unfortunate, because the legal history of the Church is a fascinating story that touches on many of the most fundamental questions in American jurisprudence. In particular, the legal war waged over polygamy was one of the titanic—and largely unstudied—struggles of American legal history.


Reviewed by Nathan B. Oman
In *The Mormon Question*, Susan Barringer Gordon tackles this particular story. Currently on the history and law faculties of the University of Pennsylvania, she specializes in the history of church-state relations in nineteenth-century America. Although she has published articles related to Mormon history,5 *The Mormon Question* is her first book. It has three main strengths: it offers a much more nuanced and sympathetic portrayal of the ideology of antipolygamist activists than one generally finds in Mormon history; it offers insights culled from the vast records of the Utah Territorial courts; and it places the Supreme Court’s polygamy cases in their legal and historical contexts.

Mormon writers have often described nineteenth-century antipolygamists in harsh terms, painting them as hypocrites more interested in scoring cheap political points than in earnestly protecting hearth and home. B. H. Roberts summed up this view, writing:

> Honorable individual exceptions to this arraignment of the anti-“Mormon” “crusaders” are cheerfully and gladly conceded; but they are exceptions. For the rest, the indictment for hypocrisy, sex immorality, indifference to the purity of the home, on the part of the “crusaders,” stands. Their concern about the alleged evils of polygamy was mere pretense. The real cause of this anti-“Mormon” crusade was a fight for the political control of Utah on the part of the “crusaders.”6

Modern Mormon historians may lack Roberts’s stridency, but they often agree in substance with his views.7 Gordon, in contrast, argues that concern with polygamy was actually central to the federal government’s crusade and formed an important part of the “cosmology” of the GOP politicians who dominated post–Civil War politics.

According to Gordon, the roots of the crusade lie in the sentimental antipolygamy novels of the 1850s and 1860s. Written by middle-class women, these novels appealed to a middle-class audience, portraying polygamy as a barbaric and soul-destroying despotism. Often sensationalistic and having “little basis in fact” (30), the novels served an explicit political function. They were meant to excite their readers to action. Accordingly, they belong to the same genre as antislavery novels such as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which were meant to encourage participation in abolitionist politics. In this sense, whatever their limitations as literature or history, the antipolygamy novels were wildly successful, as were the antislavery novels (32).

The sentimental and reformist calls of the antipolygamy novels combined with a Republican ideology dominated by ideas of human progress and the social preconditions of democracy to form a powerful and coherent attack on Mormons’ peculiar institution. In this “cosmology,” it was Progress
that had brought man to the point where he was fit for self-government. According to the antipolygamy theorists of the 1860s and 1870s, man had passed from a primordial sexual promiscuity, to an ancient polygamy, and finally to modern monogamy. It went without saying, of course, that the movement was from bad to good, from barbarism to civilization. Thus polygamy represented a form of sexual regression against the evolutionary progress of history. However, this was not all. It also rendered its practitioners unfit for the task of self-government. Like slavery, polygamy produced a stagnant despotism inconsistent with the dynamism of a free and democratic society. Accordingly, in the minds of antipolygamy activists, Mormons could not be allowed to govern themselves until they had abandoned their “relic of barbarism” and progressed to the point already reached by the rest of the country.

Gordon chronicles the increasingly harsh measures that this ideology justified against Mormons. Beginning in the 1860s, successive Republican Congresses passed laws punishing polygamy in the territories. The pace and severity of these laws increased after the Civil War as penalties were ratcheted up and procedures to facilitate conviction were devised, culminating in a massive wave of prosecutions in the 1880s and the financial and corporate dismemberment of the Church. Gordon records that during the territorial period, the federal government prosecuted over two thousand criminal cases in Utah, and fully 95 percent of these were for sexual crimes—polygamy, unlawful cohabitation, and fornication. The sheer volume of prosecutions for sexual offenses, she notes, “is, literally, unique in American legal history” (156). Virtually all of the prosecutions for sex crimes were tied to plural marriage.

The massive scale of prosecutions resulted from two factors: the success of the Church leaders in evading arrest and the success of Mormon lawyers in defeating overreaching prosecutorial legal theories. Initially, federal officials hoped to crush plural marriage by imposing very long sentences on a few prominent leaders such as the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. In order to accomplish that aim, prosecutors first needed to catch the leaders and next persuade the courts to “segregate” offenses. Because of the difficulty of proving multiple marriage ceremonies, federal officials relied on the offense of unlawful cohabitation, the crime of actually living with more than one woman as a wife. Ingenious prosecutors piled on the punishment by segregating the offense temporarily. Thus, Lorenzo Snow was prosecuted for three counts of unlawful cohabitation—one count for each of three successive years. In theory, the offenses could be infinitely segregated. For example, one year of plural marriage could be divided in 365 separate counts of unlawful cohabitation,
one count for each day. This allowed prosecutors to pile very large fines and long prison sentences on targeted defendants. In effect, segregation transformed unlawful cohabitation, which was technically only a misdemeanor, into a major criminal offense. However, the Mormons successfully stymied the initial federal strategy. First, Mormon leaders went on the “underground,” an elaborate system of safe houses and hiding places that allowed them to avoid arrest. Second, the Church’s lawyers succeeded in persuading the U.S. Supreme Court to strike down the practice of segregation.\(^8\) The federal prosecutors responded by shifting to a strategy of wider, but less dramatic, convictions. The result was an all-out effort to prosecute and jail every polygamist that federal marshals could arrest, regardless of prominence.

The Mormons responded by resisting. While most of the fighting involved “the bloodless tournay of lawyers” (156), Gordon notes that “some players descended into violence, as in 1885 when Sarah Nelson beat two deputies with a broomstick as they attempted to serve process on her husband’s other wives” (156). Most Mormons, however, resisted through perjury and concealment: many—especially women—were sent to prison for contempt of court when they refused to answer questions implicating family members and fellow Saints.

Gordon also documents how this Mormon resistance frustrated antipolygamists, who responded with harsher legislation. In addition, the legalization of the antipolygamy movement in the late 1870s and especially in the 1880s marked a masculinization of the process. While the chief figures in antipolygamy politics during the 1850s and 1860s had been female novelists and lecturers, in the 1870s and 1880s these women were increasingly marginalized, as male legislators, lawyers, and judges emerged as the key players. Also, as it became apparent that Latter-day Saint women were partners in resistance—rather than the imagined passive victims of domineering and lascivious Mormon patriarchs—sympathy for them among eastern antipolygamists faded, reinforcing a harsher, more punitive attitude. Thus, the political support for the Edmunds-Tucker Act—which dismembered the institutional Church, confiscating its property—was generated in part by the fortitude of the Mormon response to federal prosecutions. Yet despite the ultimately self-defeating logic of Mormon resistance, Gordon praises the political and legal sophistication of the polygamist resisters. Indeed, despite continual legislative defeats from 1882 on, Mormon lawyers were able to score some notable victories in court and at the very least forced federal attorneys to fight for each conviction.

Gordon’s book shines brightest in its treatment of the cases that the Church fought all the way to the Supreme Court. Her discussion of
the landmark decision in *Reynolds v. United States*\(^9\) provides an example of her analysis. The *Reynolds* decision, handed down in 1878, is generally acknowledged as a seminal case because for the first time the Supreme Court positively interpreted the content of the First Amendment’s religion clauses. The traditional account of *Reynolds* goes something like this: In the mid-1870s, Mormon leaders decided to test the constitutional validity of antipolygamy laws. George Reynolds provided the information necessary to convict himself, appealed to the Supreme Court, and argued that the law violated his right to the free exercise of his religion. The Court responded by ruling that the term “free exercise” in the First Amendment referred only to religious belief and did not cover religious action.

According to Gordon, this account is overly simplistic and largely misses the main issues in the case. She argues that *Reynolds* was not simply a “test-case” in which the Mormons turned to the courts for protection. Rather, it was part of a broader political strategy aimed primarily at Congress. President George Q. Cannon, who was Utah’s delegate to the House of Representatives, instigated the suit as part of a “costly strategy . . . to turn to law in the hope of tying up Republicans in the tangles of Supreme Court doctrine” (149). In fact, prior to *Reynolds* there had been no polygamy convictions for the simple reason that proving polygamous marriages was nearly impossible. It was only after the Court’s decision that Congress responded with unlawful cohabitation statutes that allowed, for the first time, wholesale prosecution of polygamists. Thus, *Reynolds* was aimed not at halting federal law enforcement but at providing Cannon with constitutional arguments that he could use with political fence-sitters in Congress. Ultimately, Cannon’s strategy backfired, not only because it cleared the constitutional road for convictions, but also because it provided the political impetus to pass laws facilitating them.

Gordon also attacks the simple jurisprudential account of the traditional *Reynolds* story. She notes that Reynolds’s attorneys actually directed most of their attention not to the First Amendment but to the continuing vitality of the *Dred Scott*\(^{10,11}\) decision. In *Dred Scott*, the Supreme Court overturned the Missouri Compromise (and by implication the Compromise of 1850) and held that the federal government could not forbid slavery in the territories. Most modern lawyers assume that the Civil War Amendments, which outlawed slavery and granted constitutional protection to freed slaves, overturned *Dred Scott*, eviscerating any precedential value it might have. However, as Gordon demonstrates, in the years following the Civil War, many lawyers assumed that while the Thirteenth Amendment banned slavery, *Dred Scott* continued to be good law to the extent that it limited the power of the federal government to regulate “domestic” issues in the
territories. The traditional account of Reynolds thus assumes—mistakenly—that the federal government had an unquestioned right to legislate for the territories and that the only issue was whether or not the First Amendment protected polygamy. In reality, the power of the federal government over the territories was still an open question in 1878, and notwithstanding the Court’s silent rejection of his arguments, Reynolds had good reasons for believing that Congress did not have the power to legislate on “domestic” issues such as marriage.

Gordon also points out that Reynolds presented an argument that was as much an Establishment Clause argument as a Free Exercise Clause argument. Today, at least in part because of the Reynolds decision, lawyers tend to think of the First Amendment’s religion clauses as two parts of a single national law of religion. The Free Exercise Clause protects private religious conduct from the government, while the Establishment Clause forbids religious activity by the state. Gordon, however, shows that imposing such an understanding on the Reynolds decision is anachronistic. The Supreme Court did not apply the religion clauses of the First Amendment to the states until well into the twentieth century. Even then, the religion clauses were not applied directly but rather were applied as part of the Supreme Court’s evolving interpretation of the concept of “due process” under the Fourteenth Amendment. In contrast, during the nineteenth century, lawyers conceptualized the religion clauses in terms of jurisdiction. The First Amendment allocated power over religion by forbidding any federal action on the issue. Reynolds argued that these limitations protected local autonomy in matters of faith. Because Mormonism was, in a sense, the “established” church in Utah, the federal government was forbidden from intervening with it through antipolygamy legislation.

The Court brushed all of these issues aside through a simple move: it used state law to interpret the federal constitution. Thus, rather than viewing the First Amendment as allocating power over religion to various levels of government, the Court analogized it to early legislation in Virginia sponsored by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. This legislation had provided for some measure of local religious toleration and had weakened the established Episcopal Church in Virginia. The Court then applied this analysis to the First Amendment, arguing that it too was a general mandate of religious toleration. Having created a substantive rather than jurisdictional law of religion using the First Amendment, the Court ruled that this national law provided no protection for the practice of (as opposed to belief in) plural marriage. “This jurisprudential sleight of hand,” Gordon notes, “substituted the democratic experience of one jurisdiction—Virginia—for
a process that would have allowed each jurisdiction to determine for itself the meaning and scope of the law of religion within its boundaries. This substitution was profoundly nationalizing” (134).

Gordon also, almost grudgingly, acknowledges that “prejudice against Mormons and their alternative faith played a role in the decision” (142). She notes that the Court used racist arguments to support its conclusion, placing the Mormons outside of its nationally homogenous sphere of protection in part by analogizing them to “the Asiatic and . . . African peoples” (142). Both of these groups, in turn, were identified in the nineteenth-century white American imagination with sexual immorality and anti-democratic indolence. The Court thus implied that Mormons shared what one nineteenth-century writer called the “[Negroes’] ungovernable propensity to miscellaneous sexual indulgence” and the supposed Asiatic predilection for despotism.

On the whole, this is an excellent book. I would have enjoyed a more detailed, blow-by-blow account of the Raid and more of Gordon’s detailed analysis of judicial decisions. Others may wish that the discussion of antipolygamy fiction were longer. This tension between the discussion of legal issues and the discussion of social context, however, is inherent to contemporary legal history. For many years, Anglo-American legal historians wrote about the law as though it were a self-contained social phenomenon. Their work tended to focus almost exclusively on the development of legal doctrine, with occasional side notes on the life of the bench and bar. In response to this insularity, modern legal historians have focused on the ways in which the law reflects and interacts with its social context. On this spectrum, Gordon has put more weight on the social side and less on the legal side.

Reflection on the legal storm recorded by Gordon gives Latter-day Saint scholars two valuable opportunities. First, the tenacity and commitment of nineteenth-century Mormons, which Gordon details, provides a powerful reminder of the importance of this period for modern Latter-day Saints. As Orson Scott Card has written:

Mormons still treasure the myth of persecution: abuse a Mormon because of his beliefs, and he is almost grateful for the chance to bravely resist you, for it proves that he is worthy of the sacrifices of his ancestors. Polygamy named us as a people, and though polygamy is gratefully behind us now, we still live on the strength of its legacy.

To her credit, Gordon has the sensitivity to understand this connection to the past, writing that the “loss of the battle for polygamy was bitter and still resonates in Mormons’ historical scholarship. The authority of the
Constitution . . . reflected the interest of the enemies of Zion” (222). Thus, despite the oft-repeated identification of Mormonism as the quintessentially “American religion,” the relationship of the Saints to the legal ideology of the United States is ambiguous. It is worth remembering that, at the supreme moment of confrontation between Mormonism and the state, the Constitution and its institutions failed the Saints. Ironically, this failure is something that most American Latter-day Saints, who take an unabashedly celebratory attitude towards the Constitution, seem to have forgotten.

Second, the ultimate failure of the Constitution to protect Zion from her attackers gives Latter-day Saints a unique position from which to critically understand the current legal system, even while Mormon scripture forecloses a complete break with constituted legal authority. Mormons today tend to place almost exclusive emphasis on “being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law” (A of F 12). Gordon’s work, however, provides a powerful reminder that there are other possibilities within Mormon theology and experience. Confronting the tenacious, powerful, and at times radical arguments offered by Mormonism’s legal defenders in the nineteenth century contains a promise for Latter-day Saints who care about jurisprudence in the twenty-first century. Law requires that we work out the limits of collective, government authority and the strength of the claims of faith to individual and communal self-definition. This constant negotiation and confrontation between God and Caesar is a central question of legal theory. Gordon’s book illustrates Mormonism’s past ability to provide valuable perspectives on that question, perspectives that powerfully question the law’s claims to authority. More generally, her work suggests that Mormon thought and experience contain rich opportunities for Latter-day Saints who have the luxury of thinking about such problems in less troubled times.

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1. United States v. Late Corporation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 136 U.S. 1 (1890) (upholding the disincorporation of the Church under the Edmunds-Tucker Act).

3. See *Doctrine and Covenants, Official Declaration 1* (the “Manifesto” by the Church renouncing plural marriage).

4. There are, of course, important exceptions to this claim. See, for example, Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).


7. See, for example, Firmage and Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts*, chapter 8, “The War against Mormon Society.” Firmage and Mangrum argue that eradicating polygamy was secondary to the goal of dismantling the unique social and economic institutions of the Mormon commonwealth.

8. See *Ex Parte Snow*, 120 U.S. 274 (1887).

9. 98 U.S. 145 (1878).


12. See *Cantwell v. Connecticut*, 310 U.S. 296 (1939) (applying the Free Exercise Clause to the states under the Fourteenth Amendment) and *Everso n v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947) (applying the Establishment Clause to the states under the Fourteenth Amendment). However, as late as 1963, the application of the Establishment Clause to the states remained controversial enough on the Supreme Court that Justice Brennan felt called upon to write a concurrence defending the idea. See *Abington School District v. Schemp*, 374 U.S. 203, 230 (1963) (Brennan, J., concurring).


14. Lawrence Friedman of Stanford Law School has graphically characterized the early stages of American legal historiography:

Legal scholars and lawyers were interested in precedents, but not in history; they twisted and used the past, but rarely treated it with the rigor that history demands. Historians, for their part, were not aware of the richness and importance of legal history; the lawyers, jealous of their
area, showed them only a dreary battlefield of concepts; historians were unwelcome there; the landscape was technical and strewn with corpses and mines. (Lawrence M. Friedman, *A History of American Law*, 2d ed. [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985], 11–12)


18. But see R. Collin Mangrum, “Mormonism, Philosophical Liberalism, and the Constitution,” *BYU Studies* 27, no. 3 (1987): 119–37. Writing during the celebration of the Constitution’s bicentennial, Mangrum, after noting the historically shabby treatment of Mormons and their values by the Constitution, posed the question: “Why then Mormon hoopla over what could be characterized as political degeneracy?” Mangrum, “Mormonism, Philosophical Liberalism, and the Constitution,” 119. Mangrum goes on to argue that the answer to this question can be found in the congruence of Mormon theology with the classical liberal political ideas embodied in the Constitution.

19. See, especially, Doctrine and Covenants 134 and Article of Faith 12.

20. Fortunately, there seems to be a recent increase in interest in discussions of law and Mormonism. The J. Reuben Clark Society (at the J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University) hosted a conference in October 2001 entitled “LDS Perspectives on the Law.” Articles from this conference are being printed in *Brigham Young University Law Review*. In addition, Latter-day Saint legal scholars interested in using their religion as a lens for the study of the law can look to recent examples by traditional Christian scholars. See, for example, Michael W. McConnell, Robert F. Cochran Jr., and Angela C. Camella, eds., *Christian Perspectives on Legal Thought* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001) and Harold J. Berman, *Faith and Order: The Reconciliation of Law and Religion* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993).
Polygamy makes for fascinating social history and for best-selling pot-boilers as well. This study by Sarah Barringer Gordon, who teaches both law and history at the University of Pennsylvania, is the first attempt to write a full-length legal history of “the Principle.” It turns out that even in this dry-as-dust genre, polygamy fuels a very dynamic story indeed, one that reveals the rich malleability of the Constitution, the endless resourcefulness of determined guardians of public morality, and the resilience of a peculiar people committed to the practice of plural marriage.

In this story, Gordon traces how views and methods changed over the decades of conflict. The antipolygamist view of Mormon women was gradually transformed by the rhetorical arsenal of zealous crusaders: at first Mormon women are objects of pity and paternalistic federal intervention, then deluded collaborators, and finally indicted fornicators. Antipolygamist politicians and prosecutors changed their methods from righteous indignation to legal prohibition, adopted the strategies of criminal indictment and imprisonment, and eventually resorted to disfranchisement and confiscation of Church assets to destroy the “twin relic.” Mormon leaders evolved from belligerent and defiant Saints into constitutionally astute apologists before ending up as underground renegades living in basements and hidden rooms. And in one of many twists and turns, Thomas Jefferson was transformed in court opinions from an apostle of localism and individual rights into an apologist for federal action “against local deviance” (132–33; italics in original).

The history of the “Mormon Question” is largely the history of how the second-most contentious political issue of the nineteenth century found a tortuous path to resolution, passing along the way, as Gordon writes, through moral argument, coercion, and inhumanity (225), but also through paradox, contradiction, and irony. Where this study transcends mere legal history is in emphasizing the profound role of rhetorical representation.
in shaping and controlling both public and legal opinion. As Gordon writes in one representative instance, “If liberty included the right to differ on moral questions of vital importance such as polygamy, then morality itself was subject to diverse interpretations in the name of ‘liberty’” (40). But it was not only “liberty” that became a contested term: “Christianity,” “religion,” “democracy,” “morality,” and “marriage” all came in for their share of semantic negotiation—and Gordon does a beautiful job of tracing these rhetorical struggles. Ultimately, the war over polygamy would be won by those who defined the terms of the debate, in the courts of public opinion as well as of justice. As Gordon demonstrates in another example, the concept that man and woman become “one flesh” lost legal authority in the realm of marriage law (laws of “couverte” in particular) as the metaphor’s literal power dissipated, but its “cultural currency” and power to found spiritual and romantic meanings increased as its poetic appeal grew in the popular literature of love (67–68). Time and again, novelists, crusaders, Mormon leaders, and judges vied to give more compelling cultural currency to their competing definitions of constitutional rights and religious aspiration.

One of the central constitutional dilemmas of the Mormon Question, of course, involved the public’s desire to suppress polygamous practice as a blatantly unchristian practice within the context of a legal system increasingly committed to disestablishment. In other words, the challenge was to outlaw polygamy in the name of Christian morality without outlawing polygamy in the name of religion. In part, the challenge was met by rhetorical strategies operating at the level of popular culture as well as by sitting judges. So we have it that, at one and the same time, antipolygamists could protest that Mormon theocrats were “undermining the distinctions between church and state, and between church and home” (35), even while the novelists Harriet and Catherine Beecher successfully “blended family, church, and home in the person of the [ideal American/Christian] housewife” (40). Monogamy, Protestant morality, and the nuclear family were not seen as so many selections on a cultural smorgasbord. Their ineluctable amalgamation by culturally attuned writers was American culture. Or as jurists such as Justice Field put it more bluntly, “general Christianity” could hardly be equated as a religion with “‘the cultus or form of worship of a particular sect’” (227). Or as state courts of the era routinely ruled, “the incorporation of Christian principles was entirely distinct from an establishment of religion, which necessarily entailed denominational particularity” (138).

On occasion Gordon might have done more to explore the ways in which rhetorical practice worked to avoid this thorny distinction altogether.
Given the vexing imperative to honor both religious freedom and “general” Christian morality, it would make sense to accord some attention to ways in which the power of rhetorical representation was employed to minimize Mormonism’s association (in the public mind at least) with genuine American status (and therefore constitutional protections) and thereby avoid the whole problem of protecting “general Christianity” while allowing an American minority its rights to religious freedom. The government’s strategy of linking polygamy to images of “‘Hindu widows [hurling] themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands, East Islanders . . . [exposing] their newborn babes, [Indian] Thugs . . . [committing] gruesome murders’” is notable in Gordon’s analysis because it “focused on the potentially gory consequences of allowing polygamists to escape criminal punishment” (126). But surely this rhetoric and the caption on a cartoon she reproduces a little later in the text are notable instances of another strategy as well. In that image, a depiction of the Catholic Church as an alligator and the Mormon Church as a turtle, both sprawled across a famous American dome, is captioned, “Religious liberty is guaranteed—but can we allow foreign reptiles to crawl all over the U.S.?” (143; italics added).

A more blatant instance of superimposing the red herring of ethnicity or foreignness into the debate over Mormon claims to free exercise of religion is impossible to imagine. The strategy is repeated in the cartoon that labels three irksome children clambering on Mother Columbia the “China Question,” the “Indian Question,” and the “Mormon Question” (205), and in the language of the Reynolds decision that links polygamy to “Asiatic and African peoples” (142). Certainly such a grouping had racist overtones, as Gordon states. But like the prior three examples, this strategy also did the cultural work of suggestively recasting an American religious group as an ethnically alien one. Therefore, though she is right that the Supreme Court in Reynolds explicitly differentiated Mormonism from “other religious separatists” on the basis of polygamy’s impact on “political stability” (143), the rhetorical associations had already implicitly erected a much more powerful distinction.

In addition to Gordon’s commanding examination of the legal history of the antipolygamy crusade, she performs two other useful services. First, she convincingly situates the Reynolds case as the foundation of current law on First Amendment issues. Most readers will be surprised to learn that previous cases dismissed the claim that the Bill of Rights afforded any protection to individuals against state governments. Second, she provides her readers an apt overview of the legal background necessary to better understand and evaluate the current debates swirling around First Amendment issues. Polygamy was not just a fascinating and traumatic episode in the social
history of a peculiar people. It also provided the forge in which legal definitions and constitutional interpretations would be hammered out, with implications that are with us even now. It is to the author’s credit that we are left desiring an ampler discussion in more contemporary terms of the heritage of this painful rite of passage, a fuller exploration, in the contemporary context, of how “the constitutional conflict over polygamy remade American legal consciousness” (231). Today, for instance, a host of political issues are as hopelessly interfused with inherited Christian values as ever polygamy was (or is). Debates over modern polygamy, abortion, gay marriage, public prayer, and most recently the Pledge of Allegiance all involve, to greater or lesser degrees, and either explicitly or implicitly, a vaguely familiar pairing of antagonists asserting constitutional support for their versions of constitutionally sanctioned values: personal freedom, biblically derived morality, and a place for religion in public life that is compatible with a “wall of separation” (133). Perhaps the relevance of the Mormon Question to these controversies is part of an unfolding story that it is too early to narrate. Even so, Professor Gordon has written a history that is at once erudite, compelling, and remarkably timely.

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Week’s First Day

This virgin chamber
like rock-hollowed stable
is a briefly borrowed room.
The table chisled
to lay linen-wrapped dead
today becomes a birthing bed.
Earth travails. A shudder
breaks sealed silence
of womb-dark tomb.
Like lightning attending angels
split death’s gloom
to witness this Resurrection morn—
the cavern’s mouth is opened.
The triumphant King is born!

—Sharon Price Anderson
The Tower of Antonia. The Herodian Antonia Fortress is thought to be near the place where Christ stood before Pontius Pilate. Mark records that Pilate “delivered Jesus when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium, . . . and clothed him in purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head” (Mark 15:15–17). This fortress is probably the “castle” spoken of in Acts 21 and 22, where Paul was held under arrest.
In the longstanding tradition of bibliographic publications generated by BYU Studies, the following bibliography lists the books and articles on the New Testament and early Christianity published by Latter-day Saint authors or in Latter-day Saint publications, mainly from 1994 to 2002. This compilation was assembled by Nicolas W. Thompson and Victoria F. Johnson under the mentoring of John W. Welch, assisted by Anastasia M. Sutherland, Aaron C. Cummings, Maurianne Dunn, and Kelli Skinner. This 2002 supplement follows guidelines similar to those set forth in the preface of the previous New Testament bibliography published by Welch and Daniel B. McKinlay in BYU Studies in 1994 under the title “We Rejoice in Christ,” which this publication now updates and enlarges.

As in the previous bibliography, the current collection is divided into two lists: one arranged by subject and the other by author. Every entry in the author listing appears at least once in the subject section. The subject section includes a short abstract about each publication; many of these abstracts list a scripture reference. On the BYU Studies website (byustudies.byu.edu), this supplement has been merged with the former publication for combined reference and convenient searching.

The etchings reproduced as illustrations throughout this bibliography were made available by the generosity of the late Hugh W. Pinnock. They come from William M. Thompson’s The Land and the Book; or, Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery, of the Holy Land, Southern Palestine and Jerusalem (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1881).

Readers may be surprised at the number of publications by Latter-day Saints on the New Testament. In 1994, the number of entries in the
bibliography totaled 851. In this supplement, 420 further titles appear, and others have undoubtedly been inadvertently overlooked. Additions to these bibliographies are always welcome. Please send bibliographic information about any missing items to BYU Studies for inclusion in the consolidated list on the web.

This research and publishing activity itself speaks volumes about the Christian essence of Latter-day Saint scholarship and faith. We hope that these books and articles will inspire and inform as readers continue to “talk of Christ” and “rejoice in Christ” (2 Ne. 25:26).

**Abbreviations**

The following is an abbreviation list for sources commonly cited in this bibliography.

Bibliography by Category

Acts


Acts through Revelation in General


Welch, John W. *An Epistle from the New Testament Apostles*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999. Reorganizes the epistolary books of the New Testament into a single epistle according to primary and secondary topics. [Also in Epistle of James, Epistle of Jude, Epistles of John, Epistles of Paul and Hebrews, Epistles of Peter]

———. “Doctrines and Practice.” CNT, section 12. Displays New Testament beliefs, including the nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the offices of the Priesthood; and the duties of an early Christian bishop. [Also in Teachings in General]


———. “Paul.” CNT, section 15. Organizes the life and teachings of Paul. [Also in Paul’s Life, Paul’s Teachings]


Apocrypha


Apostasy


between early Christian rites and their counterparts in the restored gospel.

[Also in Ordinances]


Nibley, Hugh W. “Baptism for the Dead in Ancient Times.” MEC, 100–167. Proposes that the primitive church taught salvation for the dead, a concept that was lost in later years, and identifies “the gates of hell” from Matthew 16:18 with the detention of spirits in the spirit world, and the keys of the kingdom with “the restoration of all things” on the Mount of Transfiguration. [Also in Baptism]

———. “Conflict in the Churches between the God of the Bible and the God of the Philosophers.” Provo, Utah: FARMS paper, 1979. Includes a collection of statements from Christian Fathers and modern scholars that acknowledge that views concerning God changed. The early church was based on the Hebrew Bible but churchmen were later influenced by the arguments of different philosophers.

———. “What Is a Temple?” MEC, 355–90. Suggests reasons for the loss of knowledge of the interrelated facets of the temple in the Christian tradition and demonstrates how LDS temples fit into the ancient pattern. [Also in Ordinances]


Apostles’ Lives


Baptism


Hales, Robert D. “The Covenant of Baptism: To Be in the Kingdom and of the Kingdom.” Ensign 30 (Nov. 2000): 6–9. Explains how the baptismal covenant allows us to be in the world, yet not of it, as spoken of by the Savior in John 17:11, 14–17; 18:36.

Harris, Victor W. “Jesus’ Youth and Baptism.” WBC, 29–42. Discusses the few accounts of Jesus’ boyhood and explains the doctrine of baptism. Luke 2:41–51. [Also in Childhood]

Nibley, Hugh W. “Baptism for the Dead in Ancient Times.” MEC, 100–167. Proposes that the primitive church taught salvation for the dead, a concept that was lost in later years, and identifies “the gates of hell” from Matthew 16:18 with the detention of spirits in the spirit world, and the keys of the kingdom with “the restoration of all things” on the Mount of Transfiguration. [Also in Apostasy]


Tvedtnes, John A. “Baptism for the Dead in Early Christianity.” TTE, 55–78. Draws primarily on Ethiopic and Coptic documents to shed light on baptism for the dead in the early Church.

Birth of Jesus


Johnson, Sherrie. “Tasting the Bread of Life.” Ensign 28 (Dec. 1998): 47–48. Draws on personal experience from a visit to Bethlehem to testify that Jesus is the bread that can forever satisfy our spiritual hunger. Also explains the symbolism of the shepherds, sheep, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. John 6:35, 58. [Also in Christology, Symbols]

Marsh, W. Jeffrey. *Unto Us a Child Is Born.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1994. Expounds on the prophecies concerning Jesus’ birth and details the Annunciation to Mary, the birth of John the Baptist, and the birth of the Messiah. [Also in Foreordination]


**Book of Revelation**


Parry, Jay A., and Donald W. Parry. “The Temple in Heaven: Its Description and Significance.” *TAWRS*, 515–32. Discusses the temple as an earthly counterpart to heaven. Heb. 9; Rev. 4:1–11; 5:1–14; 8:1–5; 11:16–19; and more. [Also in Epistles of Paul and Hebrews]


Interior of the Golden Gate. This eastern gate of the Temple Mount, whose exterior opens toward the Mount of Olives, faces the east, from which direction Christ will return at his Second Coming. The book of Acts affirms that “this same Jesus,” who ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, “shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11), thus commencing the glorious millennial reign of the Messiah described in the twentieth chapter of John’s book of Revelation.


**Childhood of Jesus**


Harris, Victor W. “Jesus’ Youth and Baptism.” *WBC*, 29–42. Discusses the few accounts of Jesus’ boyhood and explains the doctrine of baptism. Luke 2:41–51. [Also in Baptism]

**Christology**


Bateman, Merrill J. “And He Did Invite Them One by One.” *JCSGS*, 1–17. Discusses the meaning of an “infinite” and “eternal” Atonement as well as the concept that all people have an individual relationship with Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father.


Benson, Ezra Taft. “Five Marks of the Divinity of Jesus Christ.” *Ensign* 31 (Dec. 2001): 8–15. Focuses on five parts of Christ’s ministry that testify of his divinity, ranging from his miraculous birth to his glorious Second Coming. [Also in Ministry]

Callister, Tad R. *The Infinite Atonement*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000. Expounds on the infinite nature of the Atonement in God’s plan and on Christ’s unique ability to accomplish it. [Also in Passion Week—Gethsemane]


Compton, Todd. “Was Jesus a Feminist?” *Dialogue* 32 (winter 1999): 1–17. Uses examples from the Gospels to argue that Jesus was a feminist. [Also in Women]


Fronk, Camille. “The Great Exemplar.” *RRLTJC*, 123–76. Draws on episodes from the Gospels and from 3 Nephi to explain how Jesus set the perfect example for all mankind to follow in any situation. [Also in Exemplary Life]

Hinckley, Gordon B. “He Is Not Here, but Is Risen.” *Ensign* 29 (May 1999): 70–72. Highlights events from the Savior’s mortal ministry and testifies of the surety of the Resurrection. [Also in Resurrection]


Huntington, Ray L., and Camille Fronk. “Latter-Day Clarity on Christ’s Life and Teachings.” *Ensign* 29 (Jan. 1999): 22–29. Comments on the contributions of latter-day revelation to our understanding of Christ’s mortal ministry. Includes a list of latter-day scriptures that provide insight into numerous events and doctrines covered by the Gospels. [Also in Gospels in General]


Johnson, Sherrie. “Tasting the Bread of Life.” *Ensign* 28 (Dec. 1998): 47–48. Draws on personal experience from a visit to Bethlehem to testify that Jesus is the bread that can forever satisfy our spiritual hunger. Also explains the symbolism of the shepherds, sheep, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. John 6:35, 58. [Also in Birth, Symbols]

Johnson, Sherrie Mills. “‘Think It Not Strange concerning the Fiery Trial.’” *SBSS* 2002, 230–43. Relates Jesus’ wilderness trial of forty days to Peter’s wilderness experiences, as well as our own “wilderness trials.” [Also in Peter’s Life]

Judd, Daniel K. “A Scriptural Comparison concerning Anger: 3 Nephi 12:22 and Matthew 5:22.” *BMMFG*, 57–76. Examines the morality of anger by focusing on alternative translations of KJV Matthew 5:22 and on Christ’s cleansing of the temple. [Also in Teachings in General]

Keller, Roger R. “Jesus Is Jehovah (YHWH): A Study in the Gospels.” *JCSGS*, 122–53. Identifies Jesus as the Old Testament Jehovah, contrary to traditional Christian thought that Jehovah is God the Father. Matt. 25:37; Mark 2:5–12; 5:22–43; Luke 1; 2; John 1; 2; 8:5. [Also in Gospels in General]


———. “The Savior and Modern Revelation.” *RRLTJC*, 293–330. Discusses ways in which latter-day revelation expands our understanding of the events of Christ’s life, mission, and death as described in the Gospels.


———. *Jesus Christ: The Only Sure Foundation*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999. Expounds on the nature of God’s grace offered to us through Christ. [Also in Salvation, Teachings in General]

———. “The Son of Man.” *RRLTJC*, 1–38. Explores the meaning of the phrase “Son of Man” as it is found in the New Testament and other scripture.


Morrison, Alexander B. *His Name Be Praised: Understanding Christ’s Ministry and Mission*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002. Provides insight on the mortal ministry and mission of the Savior, highlighting several events recorded in the Gospels. [Also in Ministry]


Oaks, Dallin H. His Holy Name. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1998. Explores the meaning of scriptural references to the name of Jesus Christ, including those from the New Testament and throughout the scriptures.


———. “Redeemer of Israel.” Ensign 25 (Nov. 1995): 15–16. Testifies that each of us is a prodigal son or daughter in need of Jesus’ Atonement to permit us to come home. Parallels the elder son in the parable with Jesus. Luke 15:11–32. [Also in Parables—Prodigal Son]

Richardson, Matthew O. “Jesus: The Unorthodox Teacher.” JCSGS, 227–50. Describes Jesus as a teacher and shows how he was different from other teachers at this time. Matthew 4:23, 7:29; John 3. [Also in Teaching Techniques]


Satterfield, Bruce K. “John and the Feast of Tabernacles.” SBSS 1998, 249–65. Comments on the Feast of Tabernacles and on Jesus’ activities and teachings during this feast, as recorded in John 7–9. [Also in Festivals]


———. “Jesus Christ, Our Redeemer.” Ensign 27 (May 1997): 53–54, 59. Testifies of the Atonement and encourages us to do our part by repenting and completing the ordinances necessary to receive the full blessings of it.


Sherry, Thomas E. “The Savior’s Rejection: Insights from the Joseph Smith Translation.” JCSGS, 274–88. Focuses on the JST to explain the reasons that some people rejected Christ’s teachings. [Also in Gospels in General]

Skinner, Andrew C. “The Premortal Godhood of Christ: A Restoration Perspective.” JCSGS, 51–79. Talks about the LDS perspective of Christ as the First-born, as Creator, as God of Ancient Israel (Jehovah), as spokesman for God the Father, and as chosen Redeemer.

“Special Witnesses of Christ.” Ensign 31 (Apr. 2001): 2–21. Includes apostolic testimony from each member of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve of the reality of the events of the Savior’s premortal, mortal, and postmortal ministries. Outlines the role of the Savior throughout time, as described in the Bible and in latter-day scripture.


Wayment, Thomas A. “Jesus’ Use of Psalms in Matthew.” SBSS 2001, 275–89. Provides commentary on Jesus’ use of Psalms to teach the gospel to his disciples.


**Church Organization—the Apostles in General**


**Church Organization—John the Apostle**


———. “What the Latter-day Scriptures Teach about John the Beloved.” SBSS 1998, 16–35. Discusses specific contributions of modern revelation and scripture to our knowledge of the Apostle John and his writings.

Judd, Daniel K., Craig J. Ostler, and Richard D. Draper, eds. The Testimony of John the Beloved, Twenty-Seventh Annual Sydney B. Sperry Symposium. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998. Includes the writings of scholars who participated in the 1998 Sidney B. Sperry Symposium at BYU. The focus of the symposium was the writings and life of the John the Beloved.

Marsh, David B. “Give unto Me Power over Death.” SBSS 1998, 141–54. Discusses the doctrine of translated beings to provide insight on the current condition of John the Beloved.

**Church Organization—Peter**


Church Organization—the Seventy


Cultural Setting


Fronk, Camille. “Submit Yourselves as unto the Lord.” SBSS 2002, 98–113. Focuses on the place of women in Paul’s day, cultural background, submissiveness in women, Jesus as the perfect leader, men as leaders, and honoring men’s and women’s specific responsibilities. [Also in Teachings in General, Women]


Huntsman, Eric D. “And They Cast Lots: Divination, Democracy, and Josephus.” *MWNT*, 365–77. Discusses divination and the casting of lots in the ancient world and in Roman times.


Peek, Cecelia M. “Alexander the Great Comes to Jerusalem: The Jewish Response to Hellenism.” *MWNT*, 99–112. Evaluates the degree of Jewish receptivity to Greek culture during the second and third centuries B.C.


———. “Demographics of the Roman Empire.” *CNT*, section 6. Depicts the temple, major cities, and the distribution of citizenship.


———. “Roman Administration.” *CNT*, section 4. Presents Roman leaders and Roman legal procedures.

———. “Roman Military.” *CNT*, section 5. Gives information about Roman armies, campaigns, and legions.

**Epistle of James**

Hauglid, Brian M. “‘As the Body without the Spirit’: James’s Epistle on Faith and Works.” *SBSS* 2002, 276–89. Argues for the authenticity of James’s epistle on faith, works, perfection, wisdom, and pride.


**Epistle of Jude**


**Epistles of John**


Marsh, W. Jeffrey. “Twilight in the Early Church.” SBSS 2002, 319–34. Focuses on the epistles of John, which were the last letters written by the last leader of the church before the Apostasy. Also discusses John’s witness of the truth.


Epistles of Paul and Hebrews


Faulconer, James E. Romans 1: Notes and Reflections. Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999. Uses the JST, the KJV, and the author’s translation from the original Greek manuscripts to analyze the full meaning of Paul’s writings in Romans 1.


Leigh, Allen W. “A Look at Ephesians 2:8–9.” Dialogue 27 (winter 1994): 163–64. Draws on the Greek translation of Ephesians 2:8–9 to propose a replacement of the word “gift” in the KJV text with the word “sacrifice.”


Richardson, Matthew O. “Ephesians: Unfolding the Mysteries through Revelation.” SBSS 2002, 130–44. Looks at Paul’s teachings concerning mysteries and enlightenment that comes through the Spirit. [Also in Paul’s Teachings]


Epistles of Peter


Doxey, Roy W. “Calling and Election.” EM 1:248. Discusses having one’s calling and election made sure as taught in Peter’s writings. 2 Pet. 1:3–10. [Also in Salvation]


Eschatology (Latter Days and the Destruction of Jerusalem)


Skillen, Andrew C., and W. Jeffrey Marsh. Scriptural Parables for the Latter Days. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002. Commentates on the historical setting and application of the parables recorded in Matthew 13; 24; and 25. [Also in Parables]

Exemplary Life

Summer Threshing-Floor. In the New Testament, threshing—the process of beating seeds out of grain—symbolizes the great sifting of the wicked from the righteous in the judgment at the Second Coming of Christ. The Thresher separates the “good seed” from the tares during the harvest, which “harvest is the end of the world” (Matt. 13:38–39).


Fronk, Camille. “The Great Exemplar.” RRLTJC, 123–76. Draws on episodes from the Gospels and from 3 Nephi to explain how Jesus set the perfect example for all mankind to follow in any situation. [Also in Christology]

Holland, Jeffrey R. “The Hands of the Fathers.” Ensign 29 (May 1999): 14–16. Extols Heavenly Father’s relationship with Jesus during Christ’s mortal ministry as the perfect pattern for all fathers to follow with their children.
Maxwell, Neal A. “Jesus, the Perfect Mentor.” *Ensign* 31 (Feb. 2001): 8–17. Describes how Jesus emulated the Father and how we are to emulate the Savior as his disciples.


**Festivals**


Satterfield, Bruce K. “John and the Feast of Tabernacles.” *SBSS* 1998, 249–65. Comments on the Feast of Tabernacles and on Jesus’ activities and teachings during this feast, as recorded in John 7–9. [Also in Christology]


**Foreordination**


Marsh, W. Jeffrey. *Unto Us a Child Is Born*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1994. Expounds on the prophecies concerning Jesus’ birth and details the Annunciation to Mary, the birth of John the Baptist, and the birth of the Messiah. [Also in Birth]

Morrison, Alexander B. “‘For This Cause Came I into the World.’” *Ensign* 29 (Nov. 1999): 25–27. Explores the meaning of Christ’s words to Pilate when he said, “To this end was I born, for this cause came I into the world.” John 18:37.


**Genealogy**

Welch, John W., “Lineages of Joseph.” CNT, chart 8-6. Details the genealogy of Joseph, the legal father of Jesus. Shows Joseph’s Abrahamic descent and shows that Jesus is the heir of David.

———. “The Maccabean Dynasty.” CNT, chart 2-1. Charts the dynasty starting with Mattathias and ending with Mariamme.

**Gospels in General**


Heap, Norman L. *The Redeemer of Israel*. Walnut Creek, Calif.: Excel Books, 1995. Arranges the KJV text of the Gospels chronologically and inserts clarifying corrections from the JST.


Huntington, Ray L., and Camille Fronk. “Latter-Day Clarity on Christ’s Life and Teachings.” *Ensign* 29 (Jan. 1999): 22–29. Comments on the contributions of latter-day revelation to our understanding of Christ’s mortal ministry. Includes a list of latter-day scriptures that provide insight into numerous events and doctrines covered by the Gospels. [Also in Christology]

a collection of articles that draw from the Book of Mormon to clarify doctrines found in the Gospels.

Keller, Roger R. “Jesus Is Jehovah (YHWH): A Study in the Gospels.” JCSGS, 122–53. Identifies Jesus as the Old Testament Jehovah, contrary to traditional Christian thought that Jehovah is God the Father. Matt. 25:37; Mark 2:5–12; 5:22–43; Luke 1; 2; John 1; 2; 8:5. [Also in Christology]


Mumford, Thomas M. Horizontal Harmony of the Four Gospels in Parallel Columns. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976. Arranges the Gospels chronologically in parallel columns to allow the reader to compare the four accounts of Christ’s mortal ministry.


Sherry, Thomas E. “The Savior’s Rejection: Insights from the Joseph Smith Translation.” JCSGS, 274–88. Focuses on the JST to explain the reasons that some people rejected Christ’s teachings. [Also in Christology]


Todd, Jay M. “Our New Light on Jesus’ Mortal Life and Teachings.” Ensign 25 (Jan. 1995): 31–49. Lists several key insights provided by the JST on the mortal ministry of the Savior in addition to the traditional account given in the KJV of the Gospels.

Welch, John W., and John F. Hall. “The Divine Redeemer.” CNT, section 8. Discusses how the birth, baptism, lineage, titles, and names of Jesus Christ all point to the divinity of Christ.

———. “The Four Gospels.” CNT, section 7. Features different aspects of the Gospels, such as miracles and parables. Also illuminates purposes and approaches of the Gospels.


———. “The Trial and Resurrection of Jesus.” CNT, section 10. Details the main parts of Christ’s trial and Resurrection. Compares the unique features of each of the Gospels. [Also in Passion Week—Trial and Crucifixion]

**Herod**

Holzapfel, Richard Neitzel. “King Herod.” MWNT, 35–73. Details the life of King Herod, including his background, his rise to power, and his reign in Judea.


Welch, John W. “Herod’s Wealth.” MWNT, 74–83. Examines the sources and political uses of King Herod’s wealth. Also provides information on monetary amounts mentioned in the New Testament.

**Holy Ghost**


**Holy Land Travels**

The Mount of Olives and the City of Jerusalem. View of Jerusalem looking southwest from the Mount of Olives. The travelers in the foreground are near the road that wound from Jerusalem over to Bethany and down to Jericho. This is the road that the good Samaritan would have traveled. It is likely the road that Christ, he who binds our wounds and carries us to safety, took as he made his way from Bethany to Jerusalem to finish his mortal ministry.
from 2000 B.C. to the present and includes several chapters detailing the major events in Jerusalem during New Testament times. [Also in Cultural Setting, Religious Setting, Setting of Scenes]


**Jewish Backgrounds—Old Testament—Culture**


Draper, Richard D. “Judah between the Testaments.” *Ensign* 12 (Oct. 1982): 36–41. Tells what occurred in the Kingdom of Judah in the period between the Old and New Testaments. Includes a history of the emergence of several religious and political factions, including the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians, the Zealots, and the Publicans. [Also in Jewish Sectarians]


pressing for oil, domestication, economics, and the olive’s uses, including its contribution to ritual, light, and medicine.


Tvedtnes, John A. “Temple Prayer in Ancient Times.” TTE, 79–98. Explains how various aspects of the Israelite temple prayer were symbols of Jesus Christ. [Also in Symbols, Worship]


Welch, John W., and John F. Hall. “Jewish Cultural and Literary Backgrounds.” CNT, section 2. Details the culture and lifestyle in New Testament times.

———. “Jewish Social and Religious Institutions.” CNT, section 3. Explains different sects and Jewish social institutions, such as Pharisees, Sadducees, and temple priests.

**Jewish Sectarians (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots)**

Draper, Richard D. “Judah between the Testaments.” Ensign 12 (Oct. 1982): 36–41. Tells what occurred in the Kingdom of Judah in the period between the Old and New Testaments. Includes a history of the emergence of several religious and political factions, including the Pharisees, the Sadducees,
the Herodians, the Zealots, and the Publicans. [Also in Jewish Backgrounds—Old Testament—Culture]

**John the Baptist**


Perkins, Keith W. “I Have a Question.” *Ensign* 29 (July 1999): 64–65. Explains the meanings of “Elias” and the application of this term to John the Baptist and his role as a forerunner. Mark 9:3.


**Mary, Mother of Jesus**


**Ministry**


Miracles


Oaks, Dallin H. “Miracles.” Ensign 31 (June 2001): 6–17. Examines some of the Savior’s miracles and several miracles of our dispensation to discuss the purpose, nature, and timing of miracles in general.

Top, Brent L. “Man of Miracles.” RRLTJC, 177–221. Discusses the nature, purpose, and source of Jesus’ miracles.


New Testament Scholarship


Nibley, Hugh W. “New Testament.” Provo, Utah: FARMS paper, 1985. Presents quotations from scholars responding to notions that there are no infallible books after the Bible and that man needs no more revelation. Also addresses the language and textual problems of the New Testament, the status of the book of John, and possible reasons why the historical Jesus has been rejected.
**Pool of Siloam.** Situated south of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, the Pool of Siloam was the site of Christ’s Sabbath-day restoration of the sight of a blind man. Christ told him to “go, wash in the pool of Siloam.” The man “washed, and came seeing” (John 9:7). On this occasion, Jesus was seen as “the light of the world” both in word and deed (John 9:5).


Ordinances

Compton, Todd M. “The Handclasp and Embrace as Tokens of Recognition.” In By Study and Also by Faith, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, 1:611–42. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990. Explains the ritual meaning of tokens and symbols and shows how they were used in Greek drama as modes of identification or recognition. Also shows how these two gestures are used in early Christian art and texts.


Nibley, Hugh W. “Christian Envy of the Temple.” MEC, 391–434. Discusses the historical misgivings Christian scholars have had about the significance of the Jerusalem temple and the possibility of rebuilding it.


Nibley, Hugh W. “What Is a Temple?” MEC, 355–90. Suggests reasons for the loss of knowledge of the interrelated facets of the temple in the Christian tradition and demonstrates how LDS temples fit into the ancient pattern. [Also in Apostasy]


Parables


Burgess, Allan K. Be of Good Cheer. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997. Focuses on Jesus’ teachings about happiness and joy. [Also in Teachings in General]


Hart, Richard K. “The Marriage Metaphor.” Ensign 25 (Jan. 1995): 22–27. Comments on the so-called marriage metaphor found in both the Old and New Testaments, focusing on the meaning of symbols such as the betrothal, the bridegroom, the bride, the wedding, and the reconciliation. Explains how this metaphor testifies of the Lord’s love for us. Matt. 22:1–14; 25:13. [Also in Symbols]


Millet, Robert L. When a Child Wanders. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996. Counsel for parents with children who stray from the gospel. Talks about the parable of the prodigal son, the parable of the lost sheep, and the parable of the lost coin(151,19),(330,38). [Also in Parable of the Prodigal Son]

Oaks, Dallin H. “The Challenge to Become.” Ensign 30 (Nov. 2000): 32–34. Touches on the parable of the laborers in the vineyard to teach that we are rewarded by the Lord not for the time we spend serving him, but for what we become during that time. Matt. 20:1–16. Also explains the meaning of the Savior’s commandment to his disciples to become converted. Matt. 18:2–4; Luke 22:32. [Also in Teachings in General]

Ogletree, Mark. “Parables of Jesus.” WBC, 111–27. Expounds on the purpose and meaning of the “parables of the lost” in Luke 15, namely, the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. [Also in Parables—Prodigal Son]


Top, Brent L. Living Waters: Messages for Latter-Day Disciples from the Life and Teachings of Christ. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002. Provides commentary on several events and teachings from the Gospels to help the modern disciple partake of the living waters offered by Christ. [Also in Teachings in General]

Parables—Good Samaritan


Parables—Prodigal Son


McClellan, Richard D. “Israel as the Prodigal Son: An Allegorical Model.” In Selections from BYU Religious Education 1999 Student Symposium, 75–83. Provo, Utah: Religious Education, BYU, 2000. Argues that the parable of the prodigal son is an allegory about the tribes of Israel, with the older brother representing Judah and the younger brother symbolizing Israel, or the northern ten tribes.


———. When a Child Wanders. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996. Counsel for parents with children who stray from the gospel. Talks about the parable of the prodigal son, the parable of the lost sheep, and the parable of the lost coin. [Also in Parables]

Ogletree, Mark. “Parables of Jesus.” WBC, 111–27. Expounds on the purpose and meaning of the “parables of the lost” in Luke 15, namely, the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. [Also in Parables]

Porter, Bruce D. “Redeemer of Israel.” Ensign 25 (Nov. 1995): 15–16. Testifies that each of us is a prodigal son or daughter in need of Jesus’ Atonement to permit us to come home. Parallels the elder son in the parable with Jesus. Luke 15:11–32. [Also in Christology]

Passion Week—General

Harris, Victor W. “The Final Week.” WBC, 149–65. Summarizes and testifies of the events of the Passion Week.


Marsh, W. Jeffrey. His Final Hours. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000. Analyzes in detail the significance of the events of the Passion Week, from Jesus’ triumphal entry to his Resurrection.

Passion Week—Gethsemane and Atonement

Brown, S. Kent. “Gethsemane.” *EM* 2:42–43. Describes Gethsemane as the place where Christ suffered the most during the Atonement.

Callister, Tad R. *The Infinite Atonement*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000. Expounds on the infinite nature of the Atonement in God’s plan and on Christ’s unique ability to accomplish it. [Also in Christology]

Holland, Jeffrey R. “Atonement of Jesus Christ.” *EM* 1:82–86. Discusses the importance of the Atonement in the plan of salvation. 1 Ne. 9:7.


Nelson, Russell M. “The Atonement.” *Ensign* 26 (Nov. 1996): 33–36. Discusses the connection between the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement in the plan of salvation. Recounts Christ’s suffering in Gethsemane and on the cross, and explores the meaning of the word “atonement.” [Also in Christology]


Passion Week—Last Supper


Passion Week—Trials and Crucifixion


Welch, John W. “The Factor of Fear in the Trial of Jesus.” JCSGS, 289–318. Discusses inconsistencies in the accounts of the trial of Jesus and proposes that

The Potter’s Field. Also called the Field of Blood, the Potter’s Field was located south of the Dung Gate. The chief priests of the Jews purchased this field using the thirty pieces of silver Judas returned to them. New Testament accounts give differing origins for the name “Field of Blood.” Matthew 27:6 indicates that the name refers to the money’s role as the price of Christ’s blood. Acts 1:18–19 indicates that Judas died in the field, and his blood “gushed out.”
fear of the supernatural powers of Jesus may have been a factor in the creation of these inconsistencies. Matt. 26:65; Mark 14:64; John 7:12–13; 20:19.

Welch, John W., and John F. Hall. “The Trial and Resurrection of Jesus.” CNT, section 10. Details the main parts of Christ’s trial and Resurrection. Compares the unique features of each of the Gospels. [Also in Gospels in General]


Paul’s Life

Gibbons, Ted L. “Paul as a Witness of the Work of God.” SBSS 2002, 27–40. Expounds on the idea that Paul was a witness of God at all times, all things, and all places, even unto death.


Welch, John W., and John F. Hall. “Paul.” CNT, section 15. Organizes the life and practices of Paul. [Also in Acts through Revelation in General, Paul’s Teachings]

Paul’s Teachings

Brooks, Kent R. “Paul’s Inspired Teachings on Marriage.” SBSS 2002, 75–97. Discusses the idea that Paul was married, expounds on Paul’s teaching that marriage is ordained of God. 1 Cor. 7; 11; Eph. 5.

Christofferson, D. Todd. “Justification and Sanctification.” Ensign 31 (June 2001): 18–25. Expounds on the meaning of “justification” and “sanctification” and the connection of each to the Atonement. [Also in Salvation]


Caesarea from the South. Caesarea, located on the west coast of Palestine, contained the largest harbor on the eastern Mediterranean seaboard during the time of Jesus. “When [the soldiers] came to Caesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor [Felix], they presented Paul also before him” (Acts 23:33). Paul spent two years of his life in the palace of the governor, awaiting his appeal to Nero in Rome.


Hansen, J. Peter. “Paul the Apostle: Champion of the Doctrine of the Resurrection.” SBSS 2002, 13–26. Argues that resurrection was the constant theme of Paul’s preaching. Follows Paul’s conversion history, his apostleship, and his various discourses on resurrection. [Also in Resurrection]


Richardson, Matthew O. “Ephesians: Unfolding the Mysteries through Revelation.” SBSS 2002, 130–44. Looks at Paul’s teachings concerning mysteries and enlightenment that comes through the Spirit. [Also in Epistles of Paul and Hebrews]


Strathearn, Gaye. “Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified’ (1 Corinthians 2:2): Paul’s Testimony of Christ.” JCSGS, 340–65. Explains the basis of Paul’s ministry:

The Potter and Wheel. In this depiction of the ancient industry of pottery, the artisan stands at the wheel and shapes the clay, illustrating the relationship between God the Father (the potter) and his children (the clay), as taught by Paul: “Hath not the potter power over clay? . . . that he might make vessels . . . prepared unto glory, even us” (Romans 9:21, 23).
the only way to understand God’s plan is to know Christ and his Atonement. Acts 26:13–14; Rom. 3:22, 26.

———. “Law and Liberty in Galatians 5–6.” SBSS 2002, 57–74. Talks about the concepts of agency and choices in Galatians. Includes historical setting for Galatians. [Also in Epistles of Paul and Hebrews]


Welch, John W., and John F. Hall. “Paul.” CNT, section 15. Organizes the teachings and speeches of Paul. [Also in Acts through Revelation in General, Paul’s Life]


**Peter’s Life**


Johnson, Sherrie Mills. “Think It Not Strange concerning the Fiery Trial.” *Ensign* 25 (Apr. 1995): 36–43. Relates Jesus’ wilderness trial of forty days to Peter’s wilderness experiences, as well as our own “wilderness trials.” [Also in Christology]


**Post-Resurrection Appearances**


**Religious Setting**

Black, Susan Easton. “Sabbath Day Journey.” WBC, 103–10. Describes the Sabbath laws of the Jews at the time of Jesus and discusses the Savior’s view on Sabbath-day observance. [Also in Setting of Scenes, Teachings in General, Worship]


Nibley, Hugh W. “Jerusalem: In Early Christianity.” MEC, 323–54. Briefly surveys the Christian interest in Jerusalem from the second and third centuries to the modern rise of the state of Israel.


**Resurrection**


Hansen, J. Peter. “Paul the Apostle: Champion of the Doctrine of the Resurrection.” SBSS 2002, 13–26. Argues that resurrection was the constant theme of Paul’s preaching. Follows Paul’s conversion history, his apostleship, and his various discourses on resurrection. [Also in Paul’s Teachings]
Hinckley, Gordon B. “He Is Not Here, but Is Risen.” *Ensign* 29 (May 1999): 70–72. Highlights events from the Savior’s mortal ministry and testifies of the surety of the Resurrection. [Also in Christology]


Porter, L. Aldin. “He Is Risen.” *SBSS* 2002, 1–12. Explains that the dominant message of the scriptures is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Includes explanations of the testimonies of Peter, Thomas, and Paul as well as explanations of testimonies from the Book of Mormon and modern-day leaders of the Church. [Also in Teachings in General]


Salvation

Christofferson, D. Todd. “Justification and Sanctification.” *Ensign* 31 (June 2001): 18–25. Expounds on the meaning of “justification” and “sanctification” and the connection of each to the Atonement. [Also in Paul’s Teachings]

———. “The Redemption of the Dead and the Testimony of Jesus.” *Ensign* 30 (Nov. 2000): 9–12. Discusses the power and reach of Christ’s Atonement and Resurrection, specifically for those who have died without a knowledge of the Savior. [Also in Christology]

Doxey, Roy W. “Calling and Election.” *EM* 1:248. Discusses having one’s calling and election made sure as taught in Peter’s writings. 2 Pet. 1:3–10. [Also in Epistles of Peter]


Millet, Robert L. Jesus Christ: The Only Sure Foundation. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999. Expounds on the nature of God’s grace offered to us through Christ. [Also in Christology, Teachings in General]

Oaks, Dallin H. “Have You Been Saved?” Ensign 28 (May 1998): 55–57. Compares and contrasts our definition of being saved with that of other Christians. Also discusses the role of grace and works, drawing heavily on the writings of Paul and latter-day scripture for support.


Thomas, M. Catherine. “Hebrews: To Ascend the Holy Mount.” TAWRS, 479–91. Discusses several passages in Hebrews where Paul teaches regarding temple ordinances. [Also in Paul’s Teachings]


Sermon on the Mount


Setting of Scenes

Black, Susan Easton. “Sabbath Day Journey.” WBC, 103–10. Describes the Sabbath laws of the Jews at the time of Jesus and discusses the Savior’s view on Sabbath-day observance. [Also in Religious Setting, Teachings in General, Worship]


Pool of Bethesda. At the time of Christ, the Pool of Bethesda was down in a steep valley in Jerusalem. Today the valley is largely filled in, and observers can see only the small remains of the ancient pool. On the left side of this etching is the north wall of the Temple Mount.

Believing that the first person to enter the pool after the “moving of the water” would be healed of his or her infirmity, people with all kinds of sicknesses or disabilities would gather at the poolside to wait. It was here that the Lord healed a man who had had an infirmity for thirty-eight years (John 5:1–5).


Symbols


Hart, Richard K. “The Marriage Metaphor.” Ensign 25 (Jan. 1995): 22–27. Comments on the so-called marriage metaphor found in both the Old and New Testaments, focusing on the meaning of symbols such as the betrothal, the bridegroom, the bride, the wedding, and the reconciliation. Explains how this metaphor testifies of the Lord’s love for us. Matt. 22:1–14; 25:13. [Also in Parables]


Johnson, Sherrie. “Tasting the Bread of Life.” Ensign 28 (Dec. 1998): 47–48. Draws on personal experience from a visit to Bethlehem to testify that Jesus is the bread that can forever satisfy our spiritual hunger. Also explains the symbolism of the shepherds, sheep, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. John 6:35, 58. [Also in Birth, Christology]


Tvedtnes, John A. “Temple Prayer in Ancient Times.” TTE, 79–98. Explains how various aspects of the Israelite temple prayer were symbols of Jesus Christ. [Also in Jewish Backgrounds—Old Testament—Culture, Worship]


**Teachings in General**

Ball, Terry B. “The Final Judgment.” *BMMFG*, 1–18. Examines the timing, process, and criteria of the final judgment as taught in the Gospels and Book of Mormon.


Black, Susan Easton. “Sabbath Day Journey.” *WBC*, 103–10. Describes the Sabbath laws of the Jews at the time of Jesus and discusses the Savior’s view on Sabbath-day observance. [Also in Religious Setting, Setting of Scenes, Worship]


Burgess, Allan K. *Be of Good Cheer.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997. Focuses on Jesus’ teachings about happiness and joy. [Also in Parables]


Covey, Stephen R. “The Abundant Life in Christ.” *RRLTJC*, 73–122. Examines the mortal existence of the Savior to show how a person may obtain the “abundant life” of which Jesus spoke in John 10:10.

Cramer, Steven A. *Draw Near unto Me.* American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2001. Comments on questions posed in the scriptures either by the Lord or to the Lord, including several from the Gospels.


Flinders, Neil J. “The Key of Knowledge.” *BMMFG*, 19–31. Uses the Book of Mormon and the JST to show that the “key of knowledge” mentioned in Luke 11:52 is revelation. Discusses the importance of heeding revelation from the Lord through his servants.


———. “Submit Yourselves as unto the Lord.” *SBSS* 2002, 98–113. Focuses on the place of women in Paul’s day, cultural background, submissiveness in women, Jesus as the perfect leader, men as leaders, and honoring men’s and women’s specific responsibilities. [Also in Cultural Settings, Women]


Judd, Daniel K. “A Scriptural Comparison concerning Anger: 3 Nephi 12:22 and Matthew 5:22.” BMMFG, 57–76. Examines the morality of anger by focusing on alternative translations of KJV Matthew 5:22 and on Christ’s cleansing of the temple. [Also in Christology]

Largey, Dennis L. “Hell, Second Death, Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and Outer Darkness.” BMMFG, 77–89. Discusses the insights provided by the Book of Mormon on the New Testament references to hell, second death, fire and brimstone, and outer darkness.

Madsen, Ann N. “Taught at the Feet of Jesus.” RRLTJC, 39–71. Explains, largely through accounts from the Gospels, how, what, and to whom Jesus teaches. [Also in Teaching Techniques]


Maxwell, Neal A. “Becoming a Disciple.” Ensign 26 (June 1996): 12–19. Discusses how becoming a disciple involves taking Jesus’ yoke upon them, as the Savior taught in Matthew 11:29.


———. Jesus Christ: The Only Sure Foundation. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999. Expounds on the nature of God’s grace offered to us through Christ. [Also in Christology, Salvation]


Oaks, Dallin H. “The Challenge to Become.” Ensign 30 (Nov. 2000): 32–34. Touches on the parable of the laborers in the vineyard to teach that we are rewarded by the Lord not for the time we spend serving him, but for what we become during that time. Matt. 20:1–16. Also explains the meaning of the Savior’s commandment to his disciples to become converted. Matt. 18:2–4; Luke 22:32. [Also in Parables]


Porter, L. Aldin. “He Is Risen.” SBSS 2002, 1–12. Explains that the dominant message of the scriptures is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Includes explanations of the testimonies of Peter, Thomas, and Paul as well as explanations of testimonies from the Book of Mormon and modern-day leaders of the Church. [Also in Resurrection]

Reeve, Rex C., Jr. “Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” BMMFG, 159–71. Shows how the Book of Mormon supplements the Gospels in describing the importance of developing faith in Christ.


Top, Brent L. Living Waters: Messages for Latter-day Disciples from the Life and Teachings of Christ. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002. Provides commentary on several events and teachings from the Gospels to help the modern disciple partake of the living waters offered by Christ. [Also in Parables]

———. Lord, I Would Follow Thee. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996. Discusses what is required of the modern disciple to better follow the Savior’s commandments and example.


Welch, John W., and John F. Hall. “Doctrine and Practice.” CNT, section 12. Displays New Testament beliefs, including the nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the offices of the Priesthood; and the duties of an early Christian bishop. [Also in Acts through Revelation in General]

———. “The Teachings of Jesus.” CNT, section 9. Explicates the lessons and teachings of Jesus. [Also in Gospels in General]

Wirthlin, Joseph B. “Follow Me.” Ensign 32 (May 2002): 15–17. Recounts the story of Peter, Andrew, James, and John, who left their nets to follow the Savior. Asks if we are willing to do the same. Matt. 4:18–22.

Teaching Techniques

Madsen, Ann N. “Taught at the Feet of Jesus.” RRLTJC, 39–71. Explains, largely through accounts from the Gospels, how, what, and to whom Jesus teaches. [Also in Teachings in General]

Richardson, Matthew O. “Jesus: The Unorthodox Teacher.” JCSGS, 227–50. Describes Jesus as a teacher and shows how he was different from other teachers at this time. Matthew 4:23; 7:29; John 3. [Also in Christology]

Temptation

Ogletree, Mark. “Jesus Christ: Our Model in Overcoming Temptation.” WBC, 43–62. Examines the lessons taught by Christ as he overcame the temptations of Satan described in Matthew 4.


Women

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