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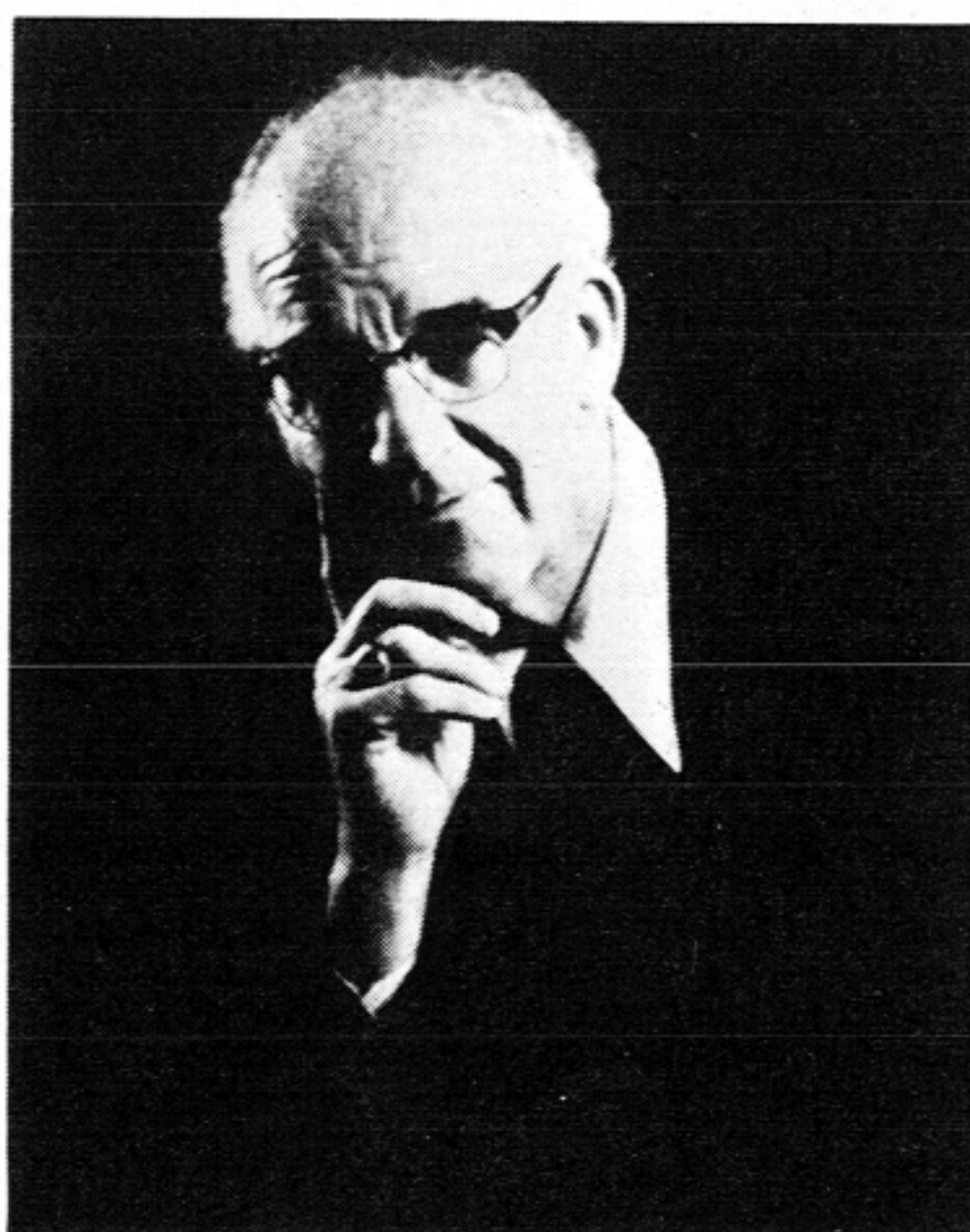
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T. Edgar Lyon

We, the Editorial Board and editors of *Brigham Young University Studies*, wish to express our sympathy and sense of loss at the passing of a member of the Editorial Board. T. Edgar Lyon has served on the Board for nearly ten years, from 1969 until his death on September 20, 1978.

An outstanding scholar in history, Christian studies, and LDS Church history—particularly the Nauvoo period—he was the author of nearly 200 scholarly articles, book reviews, and Church lesson manuals, as well as several books.

Born and reared in Salt Lake City, Utah, T. Edgar Lyon, upon graduation from the University of Utah with a B.A. in history in 1927, joined the Church Education System as a seminary teacher in Rigby, Idaho. He attended the University of Chicago, where he received an M.A. degree in Christian history in 1932, and later, in 1962, he received a Ph.D. degree in history from the University of Utah. In 1933, having earlier served as a proselyting missionary in the Netherlands, he returned to that country as mission president.

He was a great teacher. For over forty years he served in the Church Educational System as teacher and Associate Director of the University of Utah Institute of Religion. He was a popular teacher because he blended an abundant knowledge and a great faith and testimony with a vibrant sense of humor and a deep concern for his students.

Dr. Lyon was a leading expert on the Nauvoo period of Church history. In 1963, he was appointed research historian of Nauvoo Restoration, Inc. At the time of his death, he was preparing a volume on the Nauvoo period for the projected sixteen-volume history of the Saints. His death is a great loss to the completion of this particular work of scholarship, for his vast knowledge and perspective as a historian and his percipience and skill as a writer will be impossible to replace.

We are thankful for T. Edgar Lyon's life of service and scholarship, and for his willing contribution of time and energy in the years he served as a member of the Editorial Board of *BYU Studies*.

And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileinye ne sayde
In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit gentil knight.
—Chaucer

He will be greatly missed among us.

What of the Lectures on Faith?

Leland H. Gentry

INTRODUCTION

Latter-day Saint history is replete with historical questions, some of which pertain to what are termed the Lectures on Faith. What are the Lectures on Faith? How did they originate? Why were they taken out of the Doctrine and Covenants? Who wrote and delivered them? It is the purpose of this paper to examine these questions and to supply some plausible answers.

The Lectures on Faith are a series of seven theological presentations made to the School of the Elders held in Kirtland, Ohio, during the winter of 1834-35.¹ For more than eighty years these lectures were printed with the revelations of God to Joseph Smith in every English edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.² Although never held to be on a par with the revelations themselves, the lectures were widely used as doctrinal aids by members and missionaries during this period.³

In 1921, the lectures were removed from the Doctrine and Covenants for reasons later to be shown. Since that time, interest in and use of the lectures in the Church has waned considerably. As Joseph Fielding Smith once observed, "The rising generation knows little about the Lectures on Faith."⁴ Fewer still, it would seem, understand their doctrinal importance. It is not the intent of this paper, however, either to examine the doctrinal implications of the lectures or to speak at length concerning their present value for Latter-day Saints. A thorough study of the teachings of the lectures would be the subject for another article.

The printed format for the lectures is a fairly simple one. Each of the first five lectures is divided into two parts: a formal argument

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¹The lectures were first given in December 1834 and appear to have borne the title "lectures on theology." Later, at or near the time of their publication, the title was changed to Lectures on Faith (Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1959-60], 2:176, 180 [hereafter cited as HC]).

²Some of the earliest revelations given to Joseph Smith were initially published in 1833 under the title, *A Book of Commandments, For the Government of the Church of Christ* (Zion [Independence, Mo.]: W. W. Phelps and Co., 1833). In August 1835, a new edition, containing many more revelations, was published in Kirtland, Ohio. This new publication, *Doctrine & Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams and Co., 1835), also included the Lectures on Faith.

³Joseph Fielding Smith, *Seek Ye Earnestly* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970), p. 194.

⁴Ibid.

and a catechism designed to test student understanding and retention of the basic information provided.⁵ At varying intervals, the student is also urged to commit portions of his study to memory.⁶ In addition, the discourses are laid out in an impressive, if somewhat redundant, manner, and each line of argument is thoroughly buttressed with supporting scripture.⁷

Much evidence exists to show that the lectures were composed with care and precision. Each, except the first, begins with a brief paragraph summarizing the arguments of the one before. Then follows a second paragraph which sets forth the leading thought of that particular lecture. Each lecture builds in systematic fashion upon its predecessor until the final conclusion is reached in lecture seven, namely, that faith in God is an essential feature of man's quest for eternal life.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In order to understand the essential background of the lectures, it is necessary to know something about the School of the Elders and its predecessor, the School of the Prophets. Both were held in Kirtland, Ohio—the School of the Prophets from January to April 1833 and the School of the Elders from November 1834 to March 1835. Learning is, and always has been, a cardinal principle of the Latter-day Saint faith,⁸ and the establishment and maintenance of schools have received much attention wherever the Church has gone.

The aforementioned schools were unique in that their attention was directed solely to the adult males of the Church, many of whom

⁵The catechismal portions of the lectures are labeled "Questions and Answers on the Foregoing Principles." Queries such as "What is theology?" or "How old was Noah when Shem was born?" form a part of each catechism. Each question is followed by an answer taken from the lecture and is accompanied by appropriate scriptural citations. In assigning a reason for including the catechism with the lectures themselves, the *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* (Kirtland, Ohio) 1 (May 1835):122 states: "It was found, that by annexing a catechism to the lectures as they were presented, the class made greater progress than otherwise; and in consequence of the additional proofs, it was preserved in compiling."

⁶Nels B. Lundwall, comp., *A Compilation Containing the Lectures on Faith* (Salt Lake City: N. B. Lundwall, n.d.), pp. 47, 53, 60.

⁷While most of the scriptural citations come from the Bible, brief quotations are also cited from the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith's "new translation" or Inspired Version of the Bible.

⁸Such Mormon aphorisms as "The glory of God is intelligence" (D&C 93:36), "It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance" (D&C 131:6), and "A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1959), p. 217, while uttered in contexts having definite spiritual application, have long been employed to induce Church members to seek secular learning.

could neither read nor write.⁹ When it is remembered that the early propagators of the faith were called upon to proselyte men whose academic attainments often exceeded that of the elders, the keenly felt need for educational growth and assistance will be readily apparent. One could scarcely recommend the Book of Mormon as the word of God if he, himself, could not read it.

The School of the Prophets was called into being by revelation. Although primarily intended for growth in things spiritual,¹⁰ the School did not confine itself to such matters. Indeed, the revelation directing that the School be formed commanded its members to become "instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God." Members were also urged to study

... things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms.¹¹

Sometime in April 1833 the School of the Prophets closed, in-

⁹Joseph Smith's schooling consisted of training in reading, writing, and basic arithmetic, most likely received at home. Joseph's father, Joseph Smith, Sr., had taught school in Vermont prior to moving to New York, and it may have been from him that Joseph Smith, Jr., received his early education. (See Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, ed. Preston Nibley [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958], p. 46.) Joseph Smith's situation was by no means unique. Brigham Young had gone to school only eleven days before he joined the Church in 1832. (See *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1855-86], 13:176.) On the other hand, there were exceptions. Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, William E. McLellin, and Orson Hyde had all taught school prior to 1830, and each played an important role in the early efforts of the Saints to increase their education. Orson Hyde had attended Burton Academy near Kirtland, Ohio, where he studied grammar, geography, arithmetic, and rhetoric. William E. McLellin had taught in five states prior to his move to Kirtland. (History of Orson Hyde, MS, pp. 3-4, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University; see also *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* [Kirtland, Ohio], 1 [February 1835]:80.)

¹⁰Meetings of the School of the Prophets were "solemn assemblies" in which "light speeches ... laughter ... lustful desires ... pride and light-mindedness" were excluded (D&C 88:121). Meetings began about sunrise and continued until about 4 P.M. Each member was required to appear for study in "clean linen" and was to have bathed beforehand. How often the School met is not known, but each time it did meet, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered according to the pattern set forth in the New Testament (John 13). (See Minutes Regarding the School of the Prophets, Utah Phase, MS, 3 October 1883, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.) The information provided about this school was furnished by Zebedee Coltrin, only surviving member of the 1833 school; (hereafter this source will be cited as "Coltrin's Testimony").

¹¹D&C 88:78-79. Orson Hyde served as teacher in the School, but Sidney Rigdon also lectured on grammar ("Coltrin's Testimony," 11 October 1883). Another source states that "F. G. Williams, M. D., Sidney Rigdon, William E. McLellin, M. D., Orson Hyde and Joseph Smith are said to have instructed from time to time in the common academic branches" (H. S. Salisbury, "History of Education in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Journal of History* 15 [1922]:263). A brief but illuminating survey of this phase of Mormon history may be obtained by consulting Orlen Curtis Peterson, "A History of the Schools and Educational Programs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Ohio and Missouri, 1831-1839" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), chap. 3.

tending "to commence again in the fall."¹² In the meantime, plans were laid to commence a school for the elders of the Church "who should come together to receive instruction preparatory for their missions, and ministry."¹³ Whereas the School of the Prophets was intended primarily for leaders of the Church only, the School of the Elders was open to all potential missionaries.

Neither school commenced as anticipated. By the fall of 1833, the Church was deeply involved in its Missouri troubles.¹⁴ Throughout the winter and the next spring, members were busily engaged in raising an army (Zion's Camp) to aid the stricken Missouri Saints. Plans for further schooling were temporarily set aside.¹⁵

The fall of 1834 saw in the Church the revival of educational interest. Near the end of October, writes Joseph Smith, "It was necessary to make preparations for the School for the Elders,¹⁶ wherein they might be more perfectly instructed in the great things of God, during the coming winter." A special room, located in the recently completed printing office in Kirtland, was appointed as the classroom for instruction.¹⁷ It was here that the Lectures on Faith were

¹²*Times and Seasons* [Nauvoo, Illinois], 5 (1 January 1844):753. See also *HC* 1:340. Precisely why the School closed at this time is not known. A revelation given to Joseph Smith on 1 June 1833 reports that "my servants sinned a very grievous sin; and contentions arose in the school of the prophets, which was very grievous unto me, saith your Lord; therefore I sent them forth to be chastened" (D&C 95:10). But it was also the spring and time to begin spring work. The pattern in all of the schooling offered in Kirtland during the Latter-day Saint sojourn there was for the elders to use their winters in educating themselves and their springs and summers for plowing, planting, and preaching. Coltrin claims that the school closed, however, so that the brethren could go to work to obtain funds for the purchase of three farms in Kirtland which were needed in order to complete the Kirtland Temple. These farms belonged to Peter French, Elijah Smith, and a Mr. Morley. ("Coltrin's Testimony," 11 October 1883.) It is possible that all three factors operated to bring the School to a close.

¹³*Times and Seasons* 5 (1 January 1844):754-55. See also *HC* 1:342.

¹⁴In July of 1833, hostilities threatened to break out in Jackson County, Missouri, between the Mormons and their Missouri neighbors. Matters calmed somewhat, however, until late October and early November, when an estimated 1,000 Saints were forcibly evicted from their homes. Thereafter, attention centered on how to help the exiles in their efforts to recover their lands, and this left little time for the pursuit of educational matters. For an account of the Missouri difficulties, their causes and results, see Warren A. Jennings, "Zion Is Fled" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1962), chaps. 4 and 5.

¹⁵See D&C 101:55-60; 103:22-34. For a brief account of this episode in LDS Church history, see Wilburn D. Talbot, "Zion's Camp" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1973), and Peter Crawley and Richard L. Anderson, "Zion's Camp," *BYU Studies* 14 (Summer 1974):406-20.

¹⁶A similar school of the same name was held during the summer of 1833 in Missouri, with Parley P. Pratt as teacher and president. For Elder Pratt's interesting account of the school and his personal relationship thereto, see his *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1960), pp. 92-93. He was commended by revelation for his part in the school. (See D&C 97:3-6.)

¹⁷*HC* 2:169-70. According to one source, the building was hastened to its completion through the efforts of Lucy Mack Smith, Joseph Smith's mother. (See Salisbury, "History of Education in the Church," 15:264.) Precisely how many elders attended the School is not known, though Joseph Smith reports that it was "well attended" (*HC* 2:175-76). The numbers could not have been too many, however, for the meeting place was a small room, a mere 30 by 38 feet, and was also used for Sunday worship services. It was so small that those who appeared for worship on the Sabbath sometimes had to be turned away, and it gradually became the practice for members to take turns staying home so that all could have an equal chance in attending. (Caroline B. Crosby's Journal, MS, Church Historical Department.)

delivered to and carefully studied by the elders.

Classwork commenced somewhere between the middle and last of November. "The classes, being mostly Elders," wrote the Prophet, "gave the most studious attention to the all-important object of qualifying themselves as messengers of Jesus Christ, to be ready to do His will in carrying glad tidings to all that would open their eyes, ears and hearts."¹⁸ How often classes convened, or during which hours of the day, is not known,¹⁹ but the School continued until the last week in March 1835, at which time the elders thus trained were given "opportunity to go forth and proclaim the Gospel."²⁰

The Lectures on Faith were initially published in complete form in 1835 in the first edition of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.²¹ A few years later, Parley P. Pratt republished the lectures in the newly founded *Millennial Star*, a British Mission publication. As editor of the new periodical, Elder Pratt informed his readers that he was presenting them with "a brief course of Lectures on the first principles of theology."²²

The period between 1840 and 1900 can best be described as a "settling-in period," during which time use of the lectures solidified in the Church. In 1850, John Davis of Methyr Tydvil, Wales, made the lectures available in Welsh.²³ Later, in 1878, Orson Pratt wrote from England wondering whether or not to include the lectures in a

¹⁸HC 2:176.

¹⁹The Elders' School of 1835-1836 met from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. each day. This may have been the pattern of the 1834-1835 school also, since both schools had a similar intent, namely, to qualify the elders as "messengers of Jesus Christ" (Ibid., pp. 176, 218, 430-33, 476). See also Erastus Snow's testimony in Minutes of the School of the Prophets, Utah Phase. One can gather an idea of how busy the elders were during the 1835 session from Oliver Cowdery's answer to a proposal from Sampson Avarad that the latter bring a series of philosophical lectures to Kirtland in the fall of the same year. Cowdery replied by letter that the elders were much too "busily engaged in other studies" to attend. (Letter of Cowdery to Avarad, 15 December 1835, Oliver Cowdery Letters, Church Historical Department.)

²⁰HC 2:218.

²¹Shortly after the Doctrine and Covenants was published, various quorums of the priesthood met in Kirtland to express themselves regarding the book. Many of those present testified that the book was true and its contents were "the doctrine and covenants of their faith." Nothing, however, was said concerning the lectures except by John Smith who, representing the Kirtland High Council, "bore record . . . that the lectures were judiciously arranged and compiled, and were profitable for doctrine." (HC 2:244.)

²²*The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* [Manchester, England] 1 (September 1840):129. The first four lectures appeared in volume 1, pp. 129-33, 137-50, 169-74, and 241-45; the last three lectures appeared in volume 3, pp. 135-38, 150-52, 165-69. A careful check shows that the lectures were published by Parley P. Pratt precisely as they stood in the original publication without emendations of any sort. It is possible that the delay in the publication of the last three lectures was occasioned by the soon-to-be-printed Doctrine and Covenants in Liverpool. This was the first foreign edition of the Doctrine and Covenants and did not make its appearance until 1845.

²³Journal History, 31 December 1850, p. 2, Church Historical Department. The Journal History is a day-to-day scrapbook history of the Church. It should not be confused with the *Journal of History*, a publication of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

new publication of the Doctrine and Covenants which he was preparing. John Taylor, then president of the Twelve and presiding officer of the Church, replied: "The Lectures on Faith were published with the sanction and approval of the Prophet Joseph Smith and we do not feel that it is desirable to make any alteration in that regard, at any rate not at the present."²⁴ Two decades later in 1897, Edwin F. Parry, a missionary in England and a writer for the *Millennial Star*, penned a brief article in which he recommended the lectures as "an excellent study for missionaries. . . . The lectures," he wrote, "are plain and logical, and every assertion made in them is fully sustained by conclusive scriptural proof."²⁵

Shortly after the turn of the century, the Doctrine and Covenants was adopted as a course of study for the Mutual Improvement Association of the Church. Prior to their study of the revelations, however, students were treated to a brief historical outline of the lectures by Elder John A. Widtsoe. The review is largely a series of quotations which show the genesis of the lectures and their relationship to the Doctrine and Covenants.²⁶

Later on, in 1921, the Lectures on Faith were removed from the Doctrine and Covenants. No edition since that time has carried them. A number of years later (the exact date is not known), Nels B. Lundwall, a compiler and publisher of books in the Salt Lake City area, reprinted the lectures. The 1906-07 historical sketch by Dr. John A. Widtsoe and a treatise on "True Faith" by Orson Pratt were included in the new publication. Lundwall entitled his work *A Compilation Containing the Lectures on Faith*. The pamphlet has current circulation in the Church.

WHY THE LECTURES WERE REMOVED

Some have wondered why the Lectures on Faith were removed from the Doctrine and Covenants. The answer is not difficult to find. Their inclusion in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants had gained for the lectures a position of honor not likely intended by those who first placed them there. They were study helps, not revela-

²⁴Letter of John Taylor to Orson Pratt, First Presidency, Letterpress Copybooks, vol. Z, 1877-1949, 1 April 1879. These letterbooks are housed in the Church Historical Department.

²⁵*Millennial Star* 59 (August 1897):522.

²⁶General Board of the YMMIA, *Modern Revelation: The History and Message of the Doctrine and Covenants*, MIA Manual, 1906-07 (Salt Lake City: Skelton Publishing, 1906), pp. 31-37. Elder Widtsoe was, at this time, teaching at Brigham Young University. The course he wrote covered two years of study for the Mutual Improvement Association young men and women (John A. Widtsoe, *In a Sunlit Land* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1952], p. 93).

tions. When it became apparent that some in the Church were according these doctrinal aids dignity equal to, and sometimes surpassing, that of the revelations themselves, the lectures were removed. Joseph Fielding Smith, one of three apostles appointed to look into the question of removing the lectures,²⁷ once explained: "The reason they were taken out [of the Doctrine and Covenants] was that they were not revelations; they were only 'helps.' " Although he had personal regard for the lectures and often cited them in his spoken and written works, Elder Smith wished it distinctly understood that the lectures were removed, not because, as some had claimed, "they contained false doctrine"²⁸ but because they were "not now considered, and were not considered when they were placed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, on a par with the revelations."²⁹

Charles W. Penrose, member of the First Presidency in 1921, was also in a position to know the facts. In a private letter, written prior to the deletion of the lectures, he stated:

The statement that the Lectures on Faith, which have been published from time to time in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants were never considered or published as revelations is correct. . . . They were considered to be very excellent expositions of the doctrines contained therein, but never ranked as the word of the Lord which is contained in the real book of Doctrine and Covenants. . . .

There is no need of any regrets concerning the publication of the Lectures. They contain a great many very fine thoughts, well expressed, but they are not an essential part of the book, and can be eliminated if necessary without any detriment to the revelations contained in the book.³⁰

The lectures did pose one significant doctrinal problem for the Church. It had long been accepted church doctrine that "the Father [i.e., God] has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit."³¹ Lecture five contained a statement which seemed to contradict this view. It reads:

There are two personages who constitute the great, matchless, governing, and supreme power over all things, by whom all things were

²⁷The committee was composed of Joseph Fielding Smith, John A. Widtsoe, and James E. Talmage, with Elder Talmage as committee chairman.

²⁸Smith, *Seek Ye Earnestly*, p. 194.

²⁹Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956), 2:304. See also 3:194.

³⁰Letter of Charles W. Penrose to Mrs. Oscar Perry (Arco, Idaho), 21 March 1921, Heber J. Grant Letterbooks, p. 860, Church Historical Department. President Penrose, just advanced from second to first counselor ten days before, was writing in behalf of President Heber J. Grant, who was out of town.

³¹D&C 130:22.

created and made, that are created and made, whether visible or invisible, whether in heaven, on earth, or in the earth, under the earth, or throughout the immensity of space. They are the Father and the Son—the Father being a personage of spirit, glory, and power, possessing all perfection and fullness, the Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, a personage of tabernacle, made or fashioned like unto man, or being in the form and likeness of man, or rather man was formed after his likeness and in his image; he is also the express image and likeness of the personage of the Father, possessing all the fullness of the Father, or the same fullness with the Father.³²

Difficulty is occasioned by the statement that the Father is a “personage of spirit” while the Son is a “personage of tabernacle.” Such a statement needs clarification in view of the orthodox view that both the Father and the Son have bodies “as tangible as man’s.” Increased confusion results from a statement in the same lecture which asserts that Christ, as God’s Only Begotten Son, possesses “the same mind with the Father, which mind is the Holy Spirit.” Rightly understood, the statement might cause no difficulty, but the following line states that “these three [i.e., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] constitute the great, matchless, governing and supreme power over all things.”³³ For Latter-day Saints, the third member of the Godhead is a “personage of Spirit” rather than simply “the mind of God.”

Hence it was that Joseph Fielding Smith, in an interview on 22 July 1940, is quoted as having assigned the following reasons for the removal of the lectures from the Doctrine and Covenants:

- (1) The Lectures were never received by Joseph Smith as revelation;
- (2) The Lectures are only instructions relative to the general subject of faith and are not the doctrine of the Church;
- (3) The Lectures are not complete as to their teachings regarding the Godhead;
- (4) It was thought by Elder James E. Talmage, chairman of the committee responsible for their removal, that to avoid confusion and contention on this vital point of belief [i.e., on the Godhead], it would be better not to have them bound in the same volume with the commandments and revelations.³⁴

³²Lundwall, *Compilation Containing the Lectures on Faith*, p. 48.

³³Ibid. Elder Bruce R. McConkie and President Charles W. Penrose have given interpretations of the Prophet’s meaning in the lectures. (See Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], pp. 319–20, and *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:6, fn. 18. See also Charles W. Penrose’s explanations in the *Liabona: The Elders’ Journal* 18 [1920–1921]:485 and the *Ninety-Second Semi-Annual Conference Report*, pp. 23–99, and Heber J. Grant Letterbooks, p. 860.) President Penrose’s comments are significant in that they were made at the very time that the question of removing the lectures from the Doctrine and Covenants was being considered.

³⁴John William Fitzgerald, “A Study of the Doctrine and Covenants” (Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1940), pp. 343–45.

Since 1921, all editions of the Doctrine and Covenants have carried a brief explanation in relation to the removal of the lectures:

Certain lessons, entitled "Lectures on Faith," which were bound in with the *Doctrine and Covenants* in some of its former issues, are not included in this edition. These lessons were prepared for use in the School of the Elders, conducted in Kirtland, Ohio, during the winter of 1834-1835; but they were never presented to nor accepted by the Church as being other than theological lectures or lessons.³⁵

AUTHORSHIP AND DELIVERY

Two important questions remain: (1) Who delivered the Lectures on Faith? and (2) Who wrote them? Unfortunately, no categorical answer based on unassailable historical evidence can be given to either question. Two immediate prospects, however, present themselves: Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. Claims for both have been made through the years.

There seems to be little question that Sidney Rigdon had something to do with the lectures. Charles W. Penrose, former member of the First Presidency, once wrote: "We learn by reading the history of the early times in the Church that the lectures were delivered by Sidney Rigdon when he was in full fellowship."³⁶ Unfortunately, President Penrose offers no hard evidence to support his claim that the lectures were, in fact, delivered by Elder Rigdon. Neither does an examination of historical sources for the 1834-1835 period reveal any Rigdon connection. The remark is merely an offhand comment made in a personal letter written during the press of other Church business.

The statement of President Penrose does, however, reveal a persistent tradition in the Church that Sidney Rigdon delivered the lectures. Just how early this tradition gained acceptance is not known. Such a conclusion may have come from a statement made by Zebedee Coltrin in Salt Lake City in the 1880s. Coltrin, oldest and only survivor in 1883 of the original School of the Prophets, reported in a public meeting that the lectures were given, not in the School of the Prophets, "but in a larger school on the hill afterwards, where Sidney

³⁵The Doctrine and Covenants of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1921), p. v.

³⁶Heber J. Grant Letterbooks, p. 860.

Rigdon presided.”³⁷

Unfortunately, we do not know what Coltrin meant by his use of the word “preside.” Perhaps he intended to say that Sidney Rigdon taught the class; or he may have meant that Elder Rigdon was the school’s presiding officer.³⁸ What can be safely said is that by the turn of the century a tradition connecting Sidney Rigdon with the lectures was clearly established in the Church. In November of 1902, the *Deseret News* carried the following:

The inquiry is frequently made and one has just been received, as to “Who delivered the lectures on Faith. . . .” Those excellent addresses, which have furnished information and argument for many of the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were delivered by Sidney Rigdon, but they were subsequently examined and prepared for publication in the Doctrine and Covenants by the Prophet Joseph Smith.³⁹

None of the foregoing is particularly helpful in answering the question of authorship, however. To deliver the lectures is not necessarily to compose them. Someone else could have written them and then Sidney Rigdon, widely known for his oratorical skills, could have delivered them.⁴⁰ Such appears to have been the point of view taken by Joseph Fielding Smith when he wrote:

The statement has been made that Sidney Rigdon wrote these lectures. Sidney Rigdon did not have an analytical mind, I am told. He was considered to be the leading orator of the Church in his day, but he could not sit down and analyze his thoughts and arrange and correlate them, as we find them arranged and correlated here.⁴¹

Still, there have been some who have insisted on Rigdon’s au-

³⁷“Coltrin’s Testimony,” 11 October 1883. Judging from the detail furnished by Coltrin in two sessions with the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, his memory was excellent considering he was nearing eighty years of age. Coltrin was born 7 September 1804 (Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Company, 1901], 1:190). Several Schools of the Prophets were held in Utah under the administrations of Presidents Brigham Young and John Taylor during the 1860s–1880s. For an excellent study of these schools, see John R. Patrick, “The School of the Prophets: Its Development and Influence in Utah Territory” (Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1970).

³⁸The latter possibility seems unlikely, particularly if Joseph Smith, the Church’s presiding officer, were in constant attendance at the School. (See *HC* 2:176.)

³⁹*Deseret News*, 8 November 1902, p. 2.

⁴⁰Daryl Chase, “Sidney Rigdon—Early Mormon” (Master’s thesis, University of Chicago, 1931), chap. 5; F. Mark McKiernan, *The Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness: Sidney Rigdon, Religious Reformer, 1793–1876* (Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1971), pp. 16, 18, 26, 123. Neither biographer says a word about Rigdon’s connection with the lectures.

⁴¹Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:303.

thorship.⁴² The lectures, wrote John Henry Evans in the 1920s, are

as unlike anything Joseph Smith ever wrote as was Ralph Waldo Emerson's writing different from that of his contemporary, Margaret Fuller. "Uninspired" is the only word that properly describes the pamphlet [i.e., the printed lectures]. It begins with a definition taken from Buck's [theological] dictionary, proceeds to tell us how our knowledge of God is derived, and goes on to describe the qualities of God as shown in the Bible. The treatment is just what any one of a thousand theologians of Rigdon's time could produce. It is said that Oliver Cowdery also aided in the composition of this document.⁴³

Others disagree. Edwin Parry, writing in the *Millennial Star* in 1897, refers directly to the Prophet Joseph Smith as "the author of the lectures."⁴⁴ Charles C. Richards, first counselor in the Ogden Stake Presidency in 1910, said: "Before these schools [the School of the Prophets and the School of the Elders], in the fall of 1834, the prophet delivered 'Lectures on Theology,' which were afterwards published in the Doctrine and Covenants, and called 'Lectures on Faith.'"⁴⁵

Elinore Partridge and Alan J. Phipps, who have both analyzed the lectures by statistically comparing them with known works of Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith, take a different point of view.⁴⁶ Partridge concludes:

First, although Joseph Smith did not write the lectures as they appear in the 1835 version, his influence can be seen in images, examples, scriptural references, and phrasing. Second, Sidney Rigdon may well have prepared them for publication; however, the style throughout is

⁴²Sidney Rigdon, still in favor with the Church in 1834-35, was considered the likely candidate. Following his excommunication from the Church founded by Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon began his own organization. There may be some significance to the fact that although Sidney Rigdon later published the lectures in his own church's periodical, he made no claim to authorship. (See *Messenger and Advocate of the Church of Christ* [Pittsburgh], 15 October 1845, pp. 364-66; November 1845, pp. 385-89; December 1845, pp. 405-07; January 1846, pp. 422-24; February 1846, pp. 443-45.) Rigdon's publication is not to be confused with that of similar name edited by Oliver Cowdery in Kirtland some ten years before.

⁴³John Henry Evans, *Joseph Smith: An American Prophet* (New York: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 95-96. This writer, anxious to present Joseph Smith in the most favorable light possible, and considering the lectures to be a most inferior product, sought to disassociate Joseph Smith from them.

⁴⁴*Millennial Star* 59 (August 1897):522. Edwin Parry was born in 1860 and was too young to have known, firsthand, precisely who authored the lectures. The same can be said of Charles W. Penrose who, although born in 1832, did not join the Church until 1850 and did not emigrate to Utah until 1861 (Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:645, 246).

⁴⁵*Improvement Era* 14 (1909-1910):18.

⁴⁶Stylistic analysis attempts to determine authorship by means of comparing known writings of a given author with those in doubt. Comparison is based on the use of "function" or high-frequency words (e.g., "for," "and," "but," etc.) as well as the use of "content" or lesser-used words. Words in both categories are counted, tallied, and compared. Comparison is also based on the assumption that writers habitually used similar patterns of expression in their written work. Results are held by some experts to be as revealing as, say, one's fingerprints.

not consistently his. Third, the lectures in their published version represent a compilation or collaboration, rather than the work of a single person.⁴⁷

Phipps' work is the most complete effort to establish authorship for the lectures thus far attempted by statistical analysis. He concludes that Sidney Rigdon authored lectures one and seven, while Joseph Smith was responsible for lecture five. Lectures two, three, four and six possess elements of both men's styles, indicating a collaboration. Phipps theorizes as follows:

It is possible the lectures were produced by discussion, with Sidney Rigdon as scribe or as the reworker of the rough draft. After reading the new draft, Joseph Smith could have suggested changes and decided to author his own lecture, the fifth, to round out the series. . . . If they had been entirely Joseph Smith's or Sidney Rigdon's or any other person's, it seems probable their authorship would have been divulged.⁴⁸

It is important in assessing the lectures to know that their published form is not necessarily the precise form in which they were delivered at the School of the Elders. A special committee, formed on 24 September 1834 by the high council in Kirtland, was appointed "to arrange the items of the doctrine of Jesus Christ" for publication. These items were "to be taken from the Bible, Book of Mormon, and the revelations which have been given to the Church." Members of the committee were the Prophet Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams.⁴⁹ Sometime during their deliberations, the committee decided to publish the lectures with the above "items."

Whatever may be the truth with respect to the authorship or delivery of the lectures, there is good historical evidence to show that Joseph Smith's connection with them was more than superficial. In recording his activities for late October 1834, the Prophet states in his journal: "It now being the last of the month, and the Elders beginning to come in, it was necessary to make preparations for the school for the Elders."⁵⁰ The account does not reveal the nature of

⁴⁷Elinore H. Partridge, "Characteristics of Joseph Smith's Style and Notes on the Authorship of the Lectures on Faith," *Task Papers in LDS History*, No. 14, December 1976, p. 28.

⁴⁸Alan J. Phipps, "The Lectures on Faith: An Authorship Study" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1977), pp. 67-68.

⁴⁹HC 2:165. Phipps' study considered Oliver Cowdery, Frederick G. Williams, Parley P. Pratt, and W. W. Phelps as potential authors also. The evidence was overwhelmingly in favor of Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith.

⁵⁰HC 2:169.

those "preparations," and we are left to wonder if they had anything to do with the Lectures on Faith.

Other statements in the Prophet's journal cause similar questions to arise. For example, of his activities in November of 1834, the journal states: "No month ever found me more busily engaged than November; but as my life consisted of activity and unyielding exertions, I made this my rule: *When the Lord commands, do it.*"⁵¹ Later that same month the record states: "I continued my labors daily, preparing for the school."⁵²

These questions naturally present themselves: What was the nature of Joseph Smith's "preparations" during this period? Why was he so "busily engaged," more so than in any other month of his life to that point? Of what did his "daily" labors consist as he prepared for the school? What had he been commanded of the Lord to do? Part of the answer to these interrogatories may have been provided by the Prophet himself. Of his activities in early December, following the opening of the School, the Prophet wrote: "Our school for the Elders was now well attended, and with the lectures on theology, which were regularly delivered, absorbed for the time being everything else of a temporal nature."⁵³ Why should attendance at the School and the "lectures on theology" absorb all other things of a temporal nature unless Joseph Smith was somehow intimately connected therewith. Granted that attendance at the School would take time, why would the Prophet mention the lectures as a specific time-consumer if all that were necessary was to attend school and listen? The evidence, while admittedly not conclusive, argues most persuasively, if not for Joseph Smith's delivery of the lectures, at least for his hand in the authorship of the same.

But even if it could be shown that the Prophet did not write or deliver the lectures personally, it cannot be denied that he had much to do with their final published form. As a member of the committee appointed to oversee the printing of the revelations, Joseph Smith could have busied himself with their preparation. Why, then, did he choose to involve himself with the Lectures on Faith instead? Writing under date of January 1835, the Prophet states: "During the month of January, I was engaged in the school of the Elders, and in preparing the lectures on theology for publication in the book of

⁵¹HC 2:170.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³HC 2:175-76.

Doctrine and Covenants, which the committee appointed last September were now compiling.”⁵⁴ Note that while others on the committee were “compiling” the revelations, Joseph Smith was busy “preparing” the lectures for publication. Why? The Prophet alone appears to have determined the “shape and texture” of the lectures in their published form. Sidney Rigdon was also a member of the publication committee. Had he been the sole author of the lectures, it would seem that he, not Joseph Smith, would have been the logical one to edit and to prepare them for publication.⁵⁵ Is it not possible that Joseph Smith, realizing that the lectures were to be published in an official church record, felt the finished document should have his official sanction as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator?

For these reasons, as well as the spirit contained in the lectures themselves, some of the Church’s finest scholars have supported the view of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s authorship. Joseph Fielding Smith, widely known for his gospel scholarship, was of the opinion that “we must give the Prophet Joseph Smith credit” for the lectures.⁵⁶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, longtime student of the lectures, and known to cite them on occasion, has written that the lectures “were prepared by the Prophet for study in the school of the elders in Kirtland in 1834–1835, and also for publication in the Doctrine and Covenants.”⁵⁷

These same scholars also disagree with the statement that the lectures are uninspired. Joseph Fielding Smith, for example, insisted: “In my own judgment these Lectures on Faith are of great value and should be studied. . . . I consider them to be of extreme value in the study of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁵⁸ Elder McConkie has added: “. . . In them is to be found some of the best lesson material ever

⁵⁴HC 2:180.

⁵⁵If it is argued that the Prophet Joseph Smith should have been the logical one to review and prepare the revelations for publication also, since he was the one who originally received them from the Lord, let it be remembered that the Prophet had already performed that function two years earlier in connection with the Book of Commandments. Under assignment from a Conference of the Church in November 1831, Joseph Smith was appointed to “arrange and get them [the revelations] in readiness” by 15 November 1831 (HC 1:229). Later we read that “my time was occupied closely in reviewing the commandments and sitting in conference, for nearly two weeks” (HC 1:235). These comments are very like those made later in connection with preparing the Lectures on Faith for publication.

⁵⁶Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:304.

⁵⁷McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 439. This idea was later modified by Elder McConkie in a speech at Brigham Young University. He said: “These statements that I now read were *in part* written by the prophet and in the whole approved by him. . . . They are taken from the ‘Lectures on Faith.’” “The Lord God of Joseph Smith,” *Speeches of the Year* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1971), p. 4. Italics added.

⁵⁸Smith, *Seek Ye Earnestly*, p. 194.

prepared on the Godhead; on the character, perfections, and attributes of God; on faith, miracles, and sacrifice. They can be studied with great profit by all gospel scholars.”⁵⁹ Charles W. Penrose, a leading theologian of his own day, likewise referred to the lectures as “very excellent expositions of the doctrines contained therein.”⁶⁰

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Conclusive historical evidence for an answer to the question of who wrote the Lectures on Faith is lacking. Careful searches through letterbooks and other papers of Joseph Smith and early Church leaders, as well as scrutiny of numerous diaries, journals, and autobiographies for the 1834–1835 period, have revealed nothing of a definitive nature concerning the identity of either the writer or the deliverer of the Lectures on Faith. What has been discovered is that the lectures were presented to the School of the Elders in December of 1834 and formed the basis for much of the theological study undertaken at the School during its tenure.

Whereas the lectures were very popular in the early days of the Church, owing, it would seem, to their place of importance in the Doctrine and Covenants, they are little known and seldom used by the younger or newer members of the Church. Their removal from the Doctrine and Covenants in 1921 is felt to be largely responsible for this fact.

The question of authorship, however, is a moot one since Joseph Smith personally prepared the lectures for publication. The condition in which we have them today, while not necessarily their original state, is precisely as he approved them and sent them forth. They are as suitable for study today as they ever were.

The very spirit of the lectures is the spirit of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Who wrote them is surely of lesser importance than the great benefits to be derived from a careful study of the same. If the ancient aphorism that a tree is known by the fruit it bears is still a valid test, Latter-day Saints would be well advised to acquaint themselves more fully with the Lectures on Faith.

⁵⁹McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 439. At least two other LDS scholars, Hyrum Andrus and Sidney B. Sperry, have studied the lectures and used them extensively. Andrus writes: “There can be no doubt that the theological ideas [in the lectures] . . . came from Joseph Smith. All the major ideas within them can be found in his revelations and teachings before 1834.” (Andrus, *Principles of Perfection* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970], p. 20; see also Sperry, *Doctrine and Covenants Compendium* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960], p. 580.)

⁶⁰Heber J. Grant Letterbooks, p. 860.

All My Children

Clifton Holt Jolley

1.

If your foreheads curl
About the peril of pinched
And purple fingernails
And hair goes straight against
A mother's mind for it to twirl
About bright temples, purling amber
Past white unworried brows,
Look here, my little girls:
I have an appetite for troubled children,
And hair too plain, and pain
Of yours; look here,
My weary, small, spring squirrels:
I am the oak to all your treasure
And you the only pleasure
To my old and wooden bone.

2.

My sons, like linen on my arm,
Stars about my narrow forehead,
Grace upon my common tongue.
I taste a brilliant calor
Where the fragile rhythm of a young,
Unbroken mind has mine
Inquired, the sacramental stone
To lie upon and break.
Fathers father sons
Just so, and sons, like bread
On silver—white—have come
To lie beneath the knife
And burn to sacrificial form.

3.

My children make a Patriarchy.
Like jewels on a priestly gown
Or petals on an olden tree,
They speak the final comfort.

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An Analysis of the Padilla Gold Plates

Ray T. Matheny

The Padilla gold "plates"¹ are well known in LDS Church archaeological-anthropological circles, where they have been the subject of publications, papers,² discussion, and firsthand examination. They have become an exciting topic and have often been used in missionary endeavors as an example of empirical evidence for the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. If authentic, these twelve postage stamp-size plates represent the most significant archaeological evidence of the Book of Mormon yet to appear. If not authentic, they are an embarrassing fraud. Thus, they deserve careful examination. The following article will examine the circumstances of their reported discovery, their physical description, their apparent means of production, and the content of their engravings in an attempt to determine their historic value.

The plates were reportedly found in a tomb in Guerrero, Mexico, which was excavated by Dr. Jesus Padilla Orozco and his companions sometime between 1952 and 1956.³ Dr. Padilla, now a physician in Mexico, claims that many other gold objects were found and distributed among other men participating in the tomb excavation, but he chose to take the plates because the writing on them interested him.

The original Padilla collection consisted of twelve plates, five of which were turned over to Jose Davila,⁴ and seven were retained by

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¹Metallurgists classify sheet as being under 1/8 inch in thickness and plate as being over 1/8 inch; therefore, the Padilla "plates" should be referred to as sheets of gold stock since they are about 1/20 as thick as plate.

²M. Wells Jakeman and Ray T. Matheny, "Gold Plates from Mexico," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the SEHA*, Number 78.7 (January 1961); see also the following unpublished manuscripts: Jose O. Davila, "A Study of the Amuzgus Gold Plates," 31 July 1963; Paul R. Cheesman, "A Report on the Gold Plates Found in Mexico," 1971; Paul R. Cheesman, Ray T. Matheny, and Bruce Louthan, "A Report on the Gold Plates Found in Mexico," 1973, all in the possession of Paul R. Cheesman, BYU Religion Department.

³In a letter to Paul R. Cheesman, 26 June 1971, Dr. Padilla stated that the tomb was located and emptied of its contents between 1952 and 1956 by himself and several friends. He declined to give the location of the site, but subsequently informed Dr. Cheesman that it was in the state of Guerrero.

⁴Jose Octavio Davila Morales obtained five small, hinged plates from Dr. Padilla in about 1961. His report (see fn. 2) states that Padilla dug at the site of Piedra del Rey, near the village of Amuzgus, Oaxaca, in 1957. Davila was unaware when he received the plates that seven other inscribed plates existed.

Dr. Padilla. All twelve plates have now been examined by the author.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF DISCOVERY

In January 1971, Dr. Padilla displayed for Dr. Paul Cheesman and me some of the plates and other artifacts reportedly taken from the Guerrero tomb. These consisted of numerous small objects including an array of jade beads shaped like calabashes, short tubes, and round forms, all drilled for stringing. Also found were carved shell, stone receptacles, carved obsidian and jade earspools, jade labrets (ornaments worn in a perforation in the lip), monochrome pottery with cascabel supports (slit-type, bell-like openings), projectile points, miniature pottery vessels, and copper bells—all of which appeared to be of late date for Mesoamerica. Absent from the collection were polychrome-pottery vessels which may have been sold. The assemblage in general is of the Post Classic Period (A.D. 900–1200) and strongly supports Padilla's claim that the material was taken from a tomb in Guerrero. The only objects conspicuously different from those normally found in tombs in the area are the gold plates.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES

General Description of the Plates. The plates are bright gold in color, but the smaller ones in Davila's possession show a slight copperish hue when turned to different angles in the light. The plates are of several sizes: .512" × .669" (five plates), .787" × .945" (two plates). Five plates consist of small rectangles of gold sheet for which I do not have dimensions. All plates measured are thin, ranging from .011" to .0125" in thickness. More exact notation on individual sizes warrants the careful appraisal that follows. The smaller five plate set has a hinge attached on one edge so that the plates fit together like a bracelet when strung by wire or thread. Each plate has symbols engraved on it, some on one, others on both sides.

Size and Layout of the Plates. The remarkable accuracy of layout and precision manufacture of the plates provides evidence of their date of origin. The plates are laid out as near perfect rectangles. Plate 8 is .5085" and .508" in its width (measured at each end) and .693" and .682" in its length. This is only .0005" difference in its width and .011" difference in length, which are remarkably small deviations from rectangularity for a handmade item. Table 1 was constructed for five plates (Numbers 8-12) to check whether this small deviation was accidental or not.

TABLE 1
Manufacturing Deviance to Produce a Rectangular
Form for Five of the Padilla Plates

| Deviation for Rectangularity | | | Average Deviation From Perfect Rectangle |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|--|
| Plate No. | Length | Width | |
| 8 | .011 | .0005" | .00575" |
| 9 | .001 | .009" | .005" |
| 10 | .0043 | .0026" | .00345" |
| 11 | .0046 | .0014" | .003" |
| 12 | .0012 | .0032" | .0022" |

Plates 10, 11, and 12 exhibit deviances, considering the length, perceptible only to sophisticated modern measuring devices. Plates 8 and 9 show deviances detectable only when the dimension in question is checked against known standard edges with a perpendicular base, or perfectly flat surface, by such tools as an engine-divided square and surface plate.

The question of how these gold plates were scribed out and cut is an important one to explore because it will also tell us something about the tools available to the maker. I know of nothing made in antiquity, either in the Old or New Worlds that approaches the rectangularity achieved by the maker of the Padilla Plates.

Figure 1 shows on one edge of Plate 10 the marks of the fine-toothed saw which was used in cutting the metal. This method of

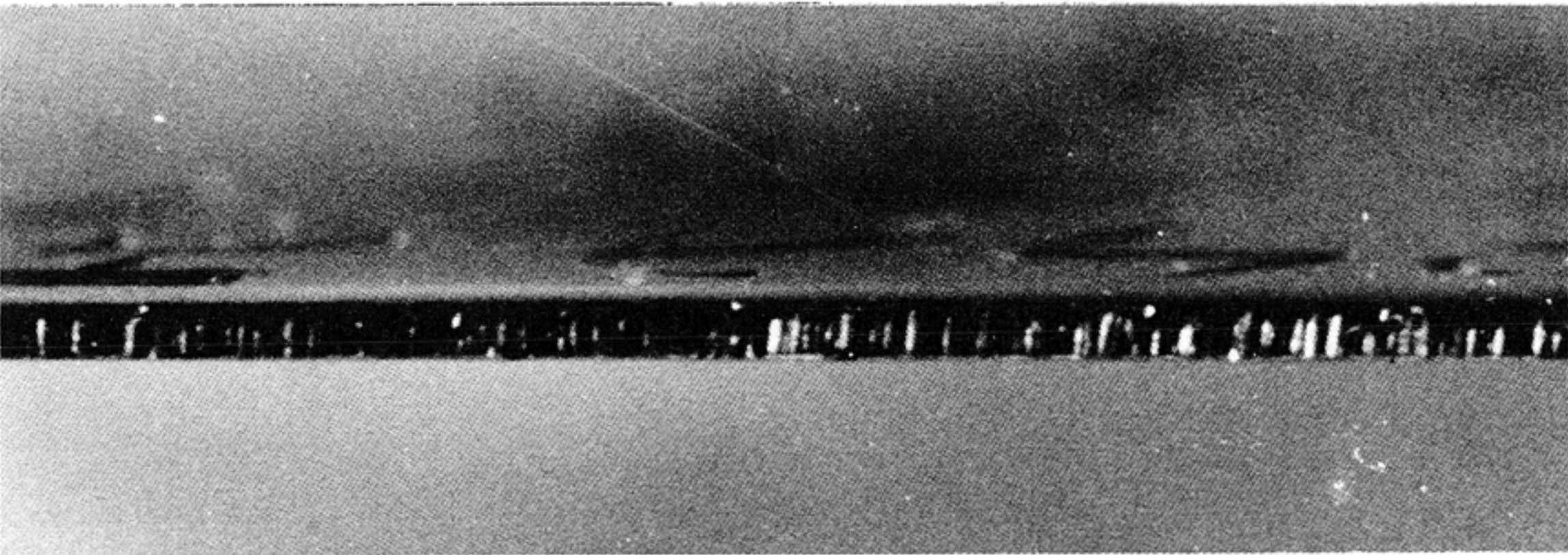


Figure 1. Plate 10 showing saw marks identified as having been produced by a modern jeweler's fine-toothed saw.

cutting is necessary to prevent thin sheet metal from being distorted as it is when cut with shears. Sawing leaves a flat surface next to the cut edge. Shears often drag unwanted metal to one edge which must be trimmed off, and distorted edges must be hammered flat. Figure 2

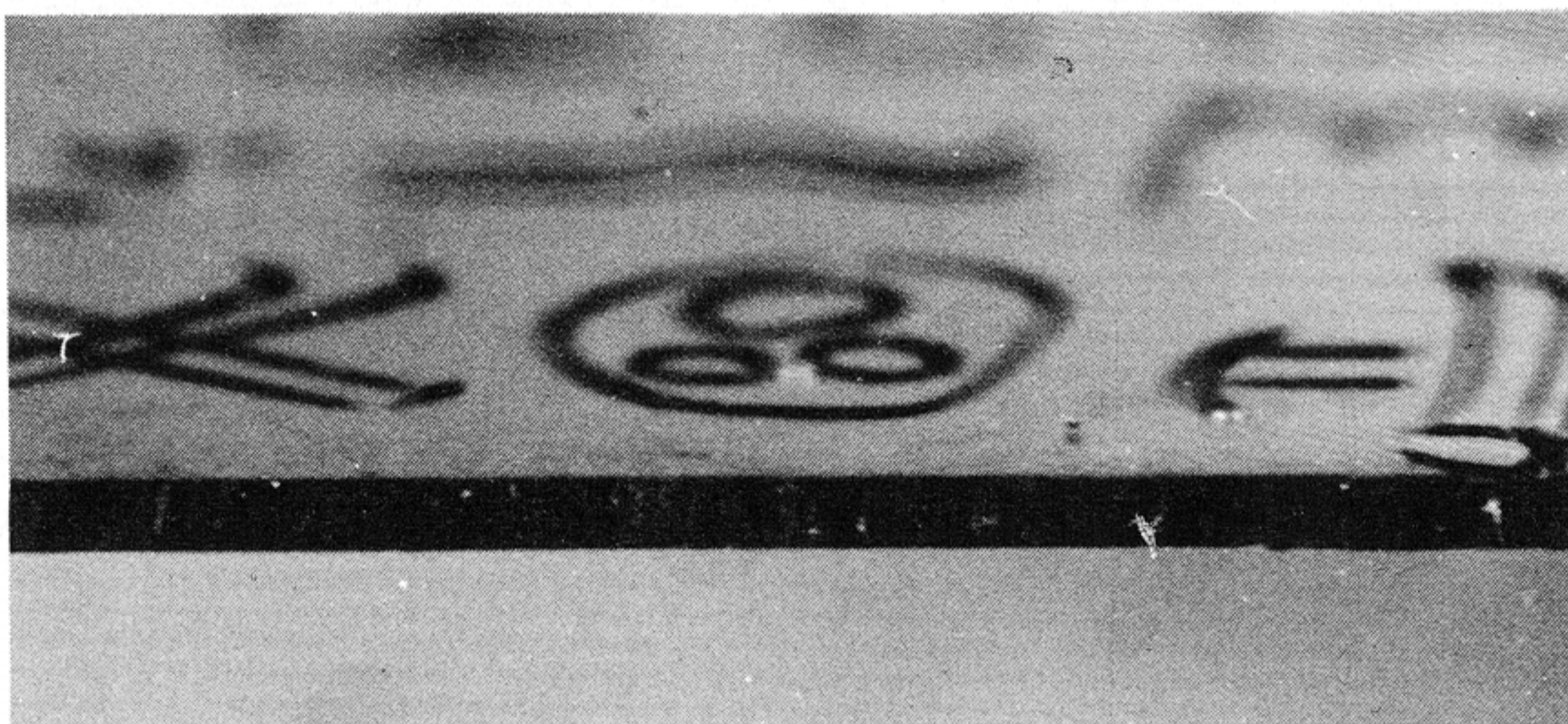


Figure 2. Plate 9 showing saw marks on one edge which match those found on Plate 10.

shows that Plate 9 was also cut with a saw. Figure 3 shows that one edge of Plate 10 was filed to its final dimension, which left groove marks in long lines on the edge.



Figure 3. One edge of Plate 10 showing that it was filed to size. Note file marks running lengthwise on the edge.

Plate Thickness. Plates 8, 9, and 10 constitute a set made up into a bracelet. These plates were measured with a micrometer at five points free from engraving. The comparative results are shown in Table 2. The plates average .0125" in thickness and show an average difference in thickness of .00018". The latter measurement is such a small quantity that to manufacture a set of gold plates by hand methods within these minute tolerances is truly a marvelous achievement.⁵

TABLE 2
 Manufacturing Deviance in Thickness for
 Three of the Padilla Plates (Hinged Set)

| Plate No. | Average Thickness | Plate No. | Maximum Difference |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| 8 | .01255" | 8-9 | .00020" |
| 9 | .01235" | 9-10 | .00028" |
| 10 | .01263" | 8-10 | .00008" |
| Plate No. | Average Thickness For All | Plate No. | Average Difference For All |
| 8 | | 8 | |
| 9 | .0125" | 9 | .00018" |
| 10 | | 10 | |

Since the human eye cannot detect such small differences in thickness as those noted for the small plates examined above, one must conclude that a sophisticated measuring device was required to produce a gold sheet in close tolerances.

The larger plates were also measured and the results are shown in Table 3. The average thickness for both plates is .01124" and the average difference in thickness between the two is .00016". According to Sr. Jose Davila, Plate 12 was examined by Dr. Daniel C. Worlton about 1962. Davila quotes Worlton as saying, "... These gold plates were hammered flat ... the thickness of the plates varied." In light

⁵To illustrate how small the variances are, I measured head hair samples from three European-descent individuals and found the maximum difference was .0006" or three times the thickness difference measured on plates 8, 9, and 10.

of my own measurements of Plate 12, I wonder if Worlton examined a different plate than Plate 12.⁶

TABLE 3
Manufacturing Deviance in Thickness for
Two of the Padilla Plates

| Plate No. | Average Thickness | Difference in Thickness |
|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 11 | .01116" | .00016" |
| 12 | .01132" | |

It should be clear that our sophisticated measurements show we are dealing with gold sheet that has been manufactured by the most precise means known. The plates were cut out of a gold sheet stock that gives every indication of having been manufactured on a metal roller press and not by any known hand method. (The sheet metal roller press was invented by Leonardo da Vinci in the sixteenth century and was not generally used in Europe until the nineteenth century.)

Quantitative Analysis. Plates 11 and 12 have been analyzed quantitatively at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and by Dr. Maurice D. Lambert, of Richland, Washington. Analysis by the atomic absorption method at Brigham Young University showed Plate 11 to be made up of 89% gold, 2% silver, 9% copper, a small amount of zinc and iron, plus traces of other elements. Lambert's testing, using X-ray spectography, shows Plate 12, a probable companion to Plate 11, to be composed of 73% gold, 13% silver, and 14% copper. Only three elements were tested for, and they accounted for 100% of the plate's composition. These methods, then, produced gross results with considerable discrepancy in analysis of the two plates. The assumption that because of the close thickness dimension that both Plates 11 and 12 came from the same gold sheet stock may thus be in error. We must either reject the analyses or assume that

⁶See Davila, "A Study of the Amuzgus Gold Plates." Hand-hammered gold sheet is necessarily of unequal thickness because of the method used in making it, and it does have a rough surface. Dr. Worlton either did not examine Plate 12 very closely, did not use a micrometer, or examined a crude duplicate of the plate that I have examined.

two gold sheet stocks of identical thickness were used in the manufacture of Plates 11 and 12.⁷

Despite these discrepancies, the gold in the Padilla Plates is considerably purer than the gold of most New World artifacts. For example, positively identified gold foil from Peru, when checked by the atomic absorption method, showed about 47% gold, 29% silver, 23% copper, and smaller amounts of zinc and iron, plus traces of several other elements. Nonetheless, these analyses do not provide conclusive information at this time, and indicate the need for further quantitative analysis.

ANCIENT GOLDWORKING IN THE NEW WORLD

To place the preceding comments on the shape and composition of the plates in context, it is desirable to review the historical background of Mexican metallurgy. It is well known that metallurgy was practiced in Mexico during Early Classic times⁸ (A.D. 200–600) and perhaps earlier.⁹ The development of metallurgical techniques in South America is reported recently by Clair C. Patterson¹⁰ to have been a step-wise discovery of techniques going back to 1800 B.C. Specifically, the earliest-known technology for working gold in the New World also comes from South America, in the Province of Andahuaylas, Department of Apurimac, at the site of Waywaka, where gold foil and a metalworker's tool kit were found. Joel Grossman reports of this find, "Implications are that the use of metal was already well established in Peru by the initial period."¹¹ Complicated

⁷It is not likely that different stocks could be found of identical thickness. Even modern manufacturing tolerances allow some variation between runs of production sheet.

⁸The following locations and chronological scheme apply: Lowland Maya country, consisting of the Yucatan Peninsula; Gulf Coast region including the Mexican states of Campeche, Tabasco, Chiapas, and Veracruz; the Peten of Guatemala, British Honduras, and parts of Honduras. The Maya cultures of the past have been divided into the following chronological scheme:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Pre Classic Maya: | Before the time of Christ |
| Proto Classic: | 100 B.C.–A.D. 200 |
| Early Classic: | A.D. 200–600 |
| Late Classic: | 600–900 |
| Post Classic: | 900–1200 |
| Proto Historic: | 1200–1500 |

⁹John L. Sorenson, "Reconsideration of Early Metal in Mesoamerica," unpublished manuscript, 1972, in the possession of Sorenson, BYU General Education Department.

¹⁰Clair C. Patterson, "The Development of Arsenic-Copper Alloys in Peru During Middle Horizon Times," paper delivered to the Society for American Archaeology, 37th Annual Meeting, May 1972. Patterson presents evidence for the development of metallurgy in Peru in stages between 1800 B.C. and A.D. 1500. She says the Peruvians did not discover the principle of the bellows, sulfide smelting, or silver cupolation.

¹¹Joel Grossman, "The Beginnings of Metallurgy in South-Central Highlands of Peru." Paper delivered to the Society for American Archaeology, 37th Annual Meeting, May 1972. The "Initial Period" is presumed to mean food production economy ca3000 B.C.

metal treatments were known in later Peru that equalled the best technology of the Old World craftsmen.¹²

Gold sheet was made by casting various quantities of gold, silver, and copper into ingots which contained numerous impurities, including traces of other elements. The cast ingot was then made into sheet by repeated hammering and annealing. This was the only known process of making thin metal sheets in the New World. Thick sheet metal called plate was cast with ancient technology, but examples of this type are rare. The hammering and annealing process produced a thin but uneven sheet metal marked by numerous pocks (see Figure 4) made by the hammer and anvil. Examination of the Padilla Plates shows no such hammer pockmarks, but only slightly scratched, smooth surfaces.

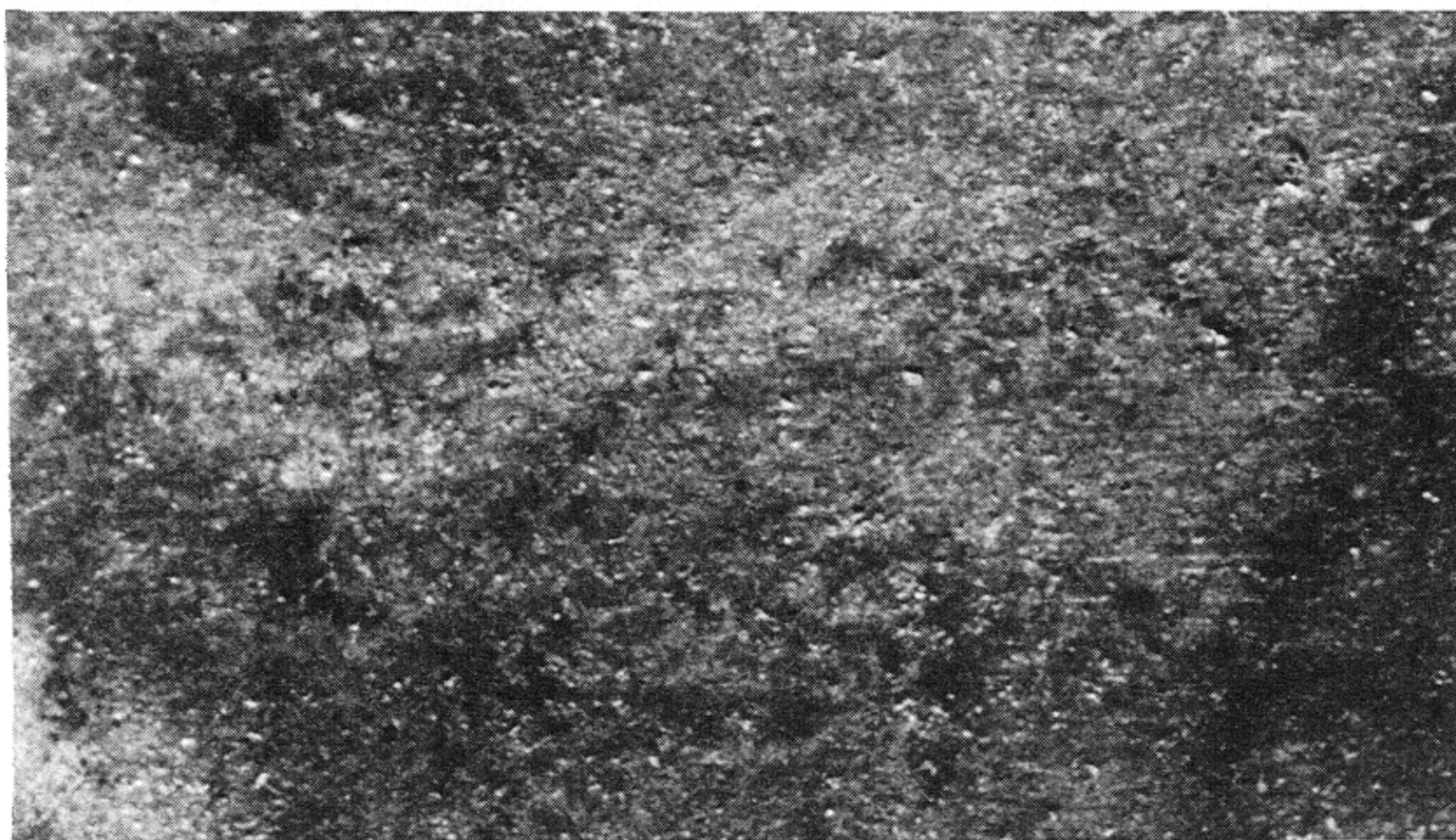


Figure 4. Gold foil from Peru which has been hammered to the desired thickness by stone tools. Note the rough, pocked appearance of the surface.

SCRIPT LAYOUT AND ENGRAVING

It is the engraving on the plates, however, that gives them their Book of Mormon implications. The Padilla Plates labelled 8–12 have engraved characters on both sides laid out in a consistent symmetry.

¹²Heather N. Lechtman, "Ancient Methods of Gilding Silver: Examples from the Old and the New Worlds," in *Science and Archaeology*, ed. Robert H. Brill (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971); and "The Gilding of Metals in Precolumbian Peru," in *Application of Science in Examination of Art*, ed. William J. Young (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1973).

Five characters can be read across for the width and five for the length, showing twenty-five characters for each side of each plate (see Figure 5). The complex, engraved characters are small, measuring .165" to .084". The smallest character is .027". Such fine engraving probably required the use of a magnifying glass during the engraving process. The engraving technique was analyzed by Don J. Christensen of Las Vegas, Nevada, a professional jeweller and engraver, who asserts that modern methods were used in engraving the

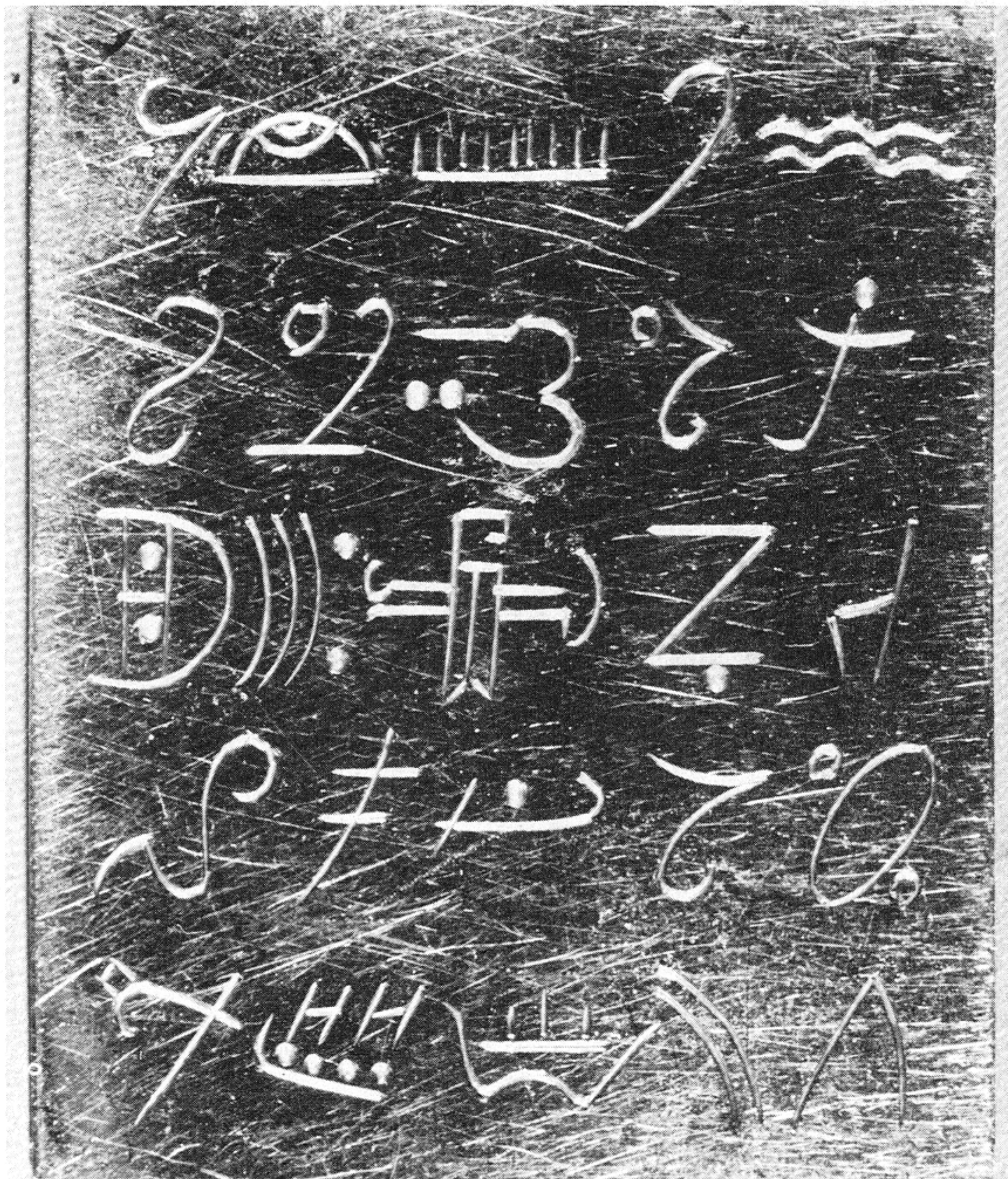


Figure 5. One side of Plate 11 showing the symmetry of characters numbering five across and five down. Plates 8-12 each exhibit this peculiar symmetry.

metal plates and in attaching the hinge onto the sheet metal.¹³ Christensen notes that the sheet metal is uniform in hardness and thickness, and the attached hinges have been made with modern tubing dies.

The hinges themselves have been attached to the plates¹⁴ by a soft solder which on Plate 9 shows a crack at the point of attachment (see Figure 6). This soft solder can only be a lead base, probably mixed with tin, which melts at around 350° F. No other use of soft solder has been found from pre-Columbian America; only an alloyed type is known. It was made of gold, copper, and sometimes silver, which melts at about 1500° F.¹⁵

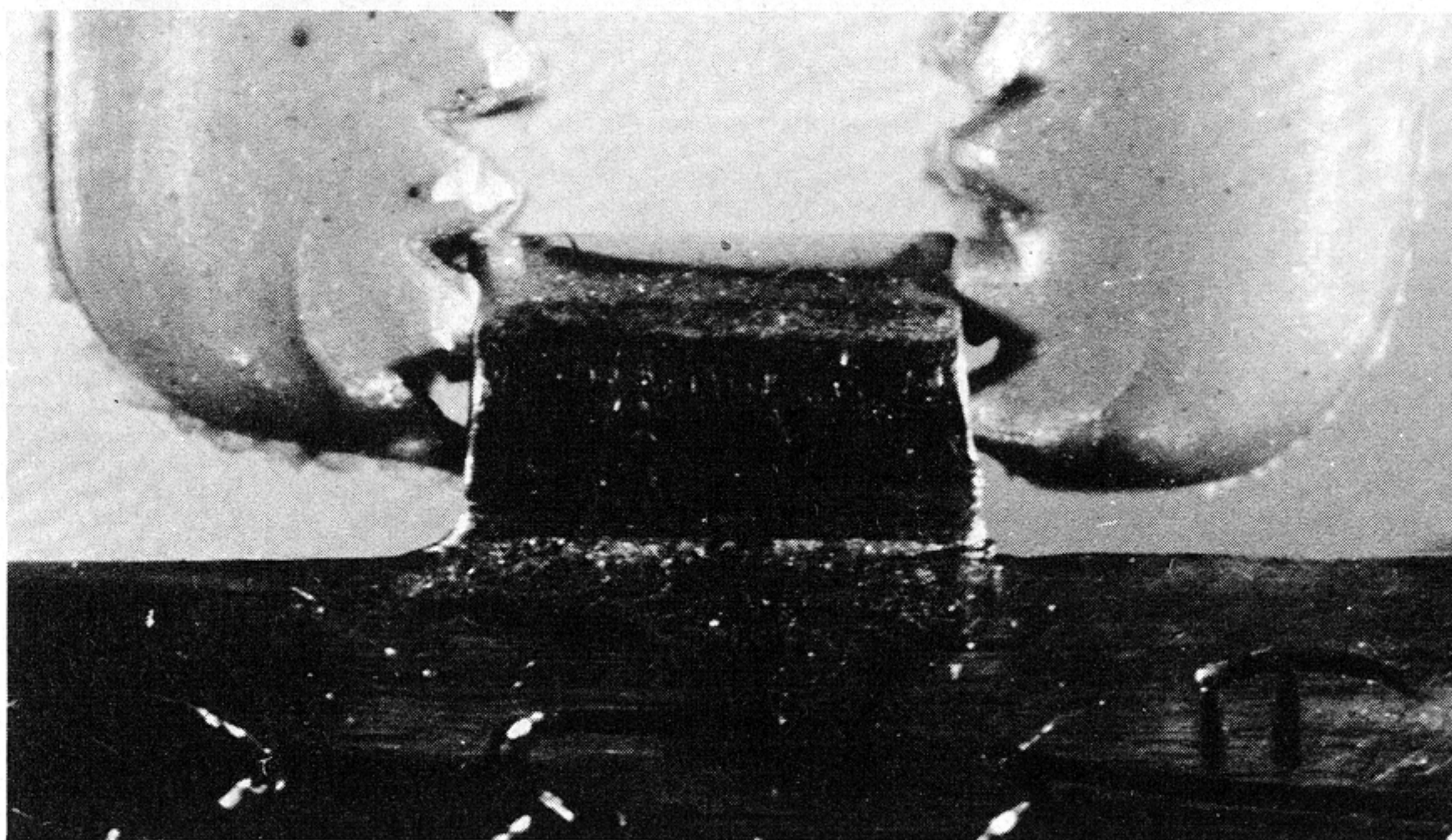


Figure 6. Hinge attachment on Plate 9. Note crack in soft solder on the right side of the hinge where it is attached to the plate.

¹³Don J. Christensen (of M. J. Christensen & Sons Jewelers, Las Vegas, Nevada) to Ray T. Matheny: "We have examined the small gold and silver alloyed plate you have numbered S-3. In our opinion, this is of fairly recent manufacture. They would have been rolled out on fairly modern (present century) rollers to obtain the uniform thickness and hardness. Also, the attached partial hinge is a tube of recent tubing dies. The engraving is done by hand using steel engraving tools. This type of work could be done by anyone who is familiar with hand engraving at this time. It is my belief and understanding that ancient engraving was done by the method we presently call chasing, that is by using a tool and a mallet to propel the tool in cutting the characters. The engraving in question was not produced in this manner. The edges of the plate appear to have been cut with a modern jeweler's saw. There are what appear to be saw or file marks on some of the edges. The thickness of the plate is .3 mm. This is a standard thickness in modern supply. It is my opinion based on the above evidence that the plate is a modern one made to look old and is not of ancient origin."

¹⁴Cylindrical hinges in near perfect symmetry, made in such small size, could only have been formed by a hard metal die and mandrel. It is inconceivable that a metalsmith could have rolled gold sheet to such symmetry as is represented here by the tools available in pre-Columbian times.

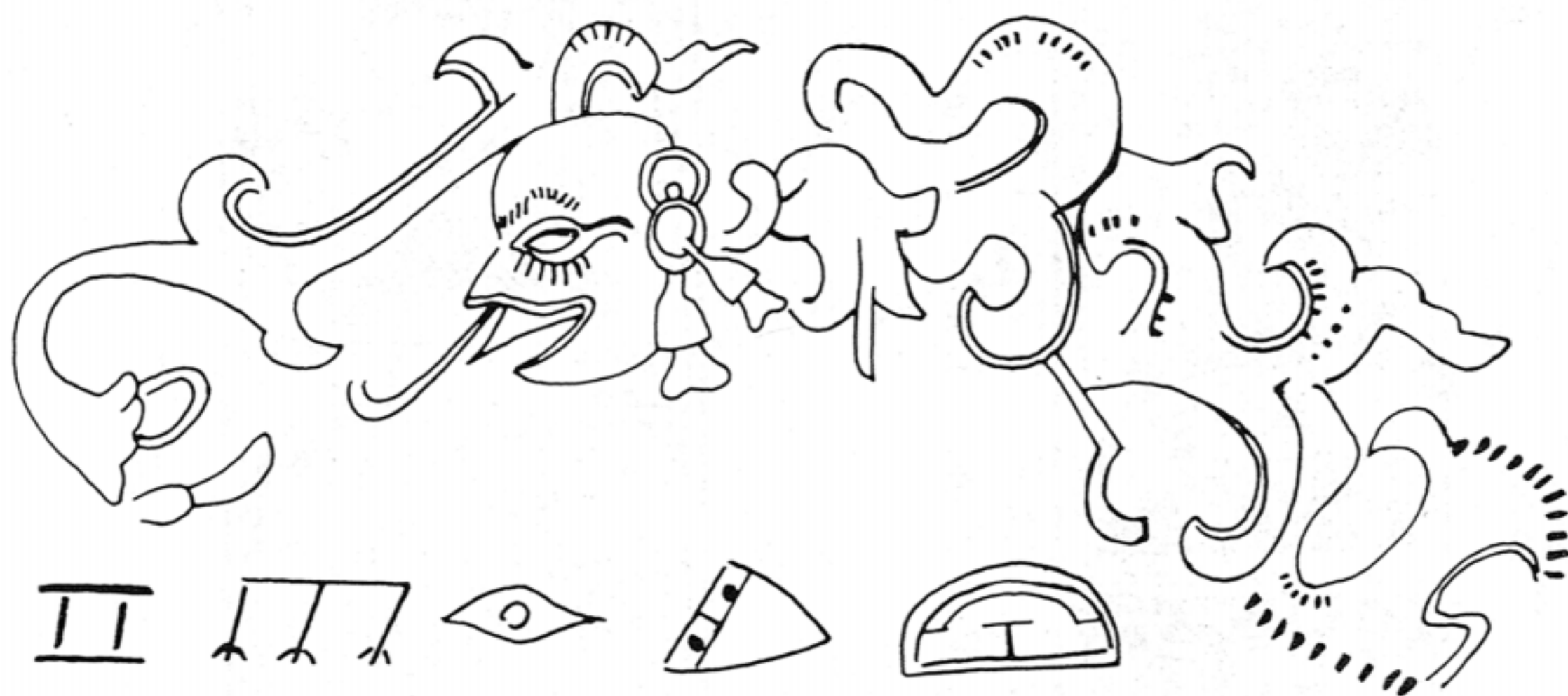
¹⁵D. T. Easby, Jr., "Ancient American Goldsmiths," *Natural History* 65 (October 1956):401-09.

ANALYSIS OF THE ENGRAVEN CHARACTERS

Art motifs on the plates present a curious mixture of Aztec, Maya, and Anthon transcript likenesses. Plate 3 shows five Anthon transcript-like symbols at the bottom and an anthropomorphic head with scrolls positioned over the characters. The head motif is also found on a gold disk taken from the sacred well at Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico (Figure 13c; Figure 7a).¹⁶ The art style found on the gold disk is rendered in typical Lowland Maya curvilinear design and is in particular noted for the Post Classic Period of the Yucatan Peninsula.¹⁷ The rendering on Padilla Plate 3 is crude in comparison to the disk found at Chichen Itza in that it tends to reduce the aesthetic curvilinearity of the Maya design to more angular lines (Figure 7b).



Figure 7a. Part of an art motif found on a gold disk taken from the sacred well at Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico (after Lothrop, 1952, Figure 13c).
7b. Same motif found on Padilla Plate 3.



¹⁶Samuel K. Lothrop, "Metals from the Cenote of Sacrifice: Chichen Itza, Yucatan," *Memoirs of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University* 10:2 (1952).

¹⁷Lothrop calls this particular design a Maya one with the exception of the small hatched lines which he shows to be a Toltec characteristic. See Lothrop, "Metals from the Cenote of Sacrifice," p. 32.

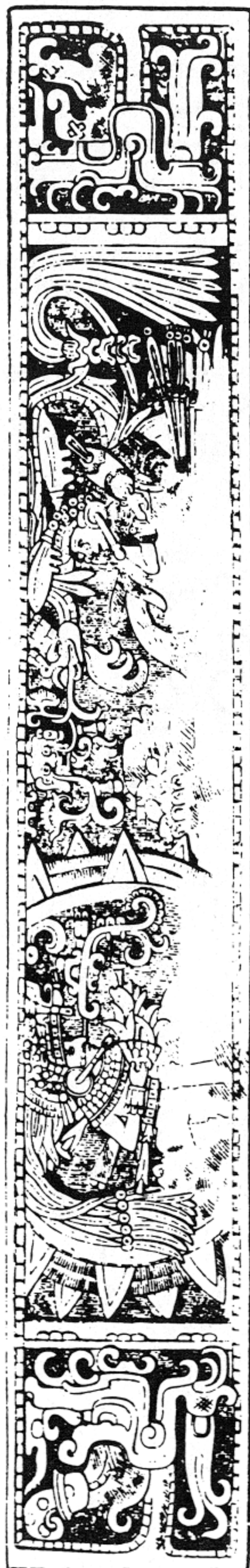
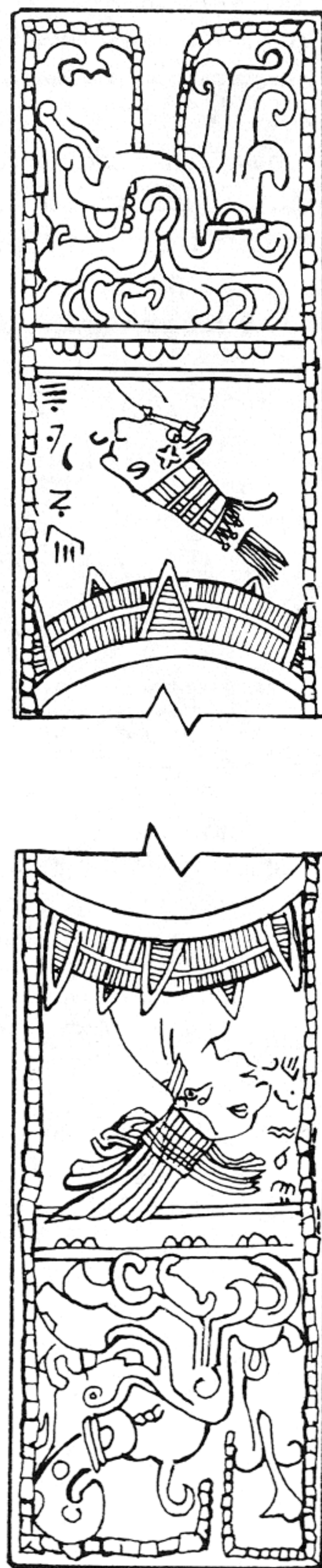


Figure 8a. Part of an art motif found on a wooden lintel at Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico (after Selser, 1915, p. 283).



8b. Same motif found on Padilla Plate 6.

Plate 6 has three panels showing art motifs nearly identical to those found on a carved wooden lintel at Chichen Itza (Figure 8).¹⁸ Again, the design is a crude rendering in comparison to the wooden lintel carving, though the different scale must be considered. This lintel is dated to the Post Classic occupation of the Yucatan Peninsula.

Plate 12 shows a tree pictograph that is practically identical to that found on the Aztec Codex Borbonicus, which is dated to the sixteenth century. Other symbols are interspersed with the tree design that are like those found on the Anthon transcript.

The fourth set of symbols are those identified as the Anthon transcript. There is an abundance of these symbols throughout all of the plates and several other symbols not associated with the Anthon transcript, which is a copy of symbols taken from the Book of Mormon plates by Joseph Smith. Martin Harris then took the transcript to Dr. Charles Anthon and asked him to verify their authenticity. The correspondences of the inscriptions on the Padilla Plates to those of the Anthon transcript are remarkable and those correspondences deserve very close analysis.

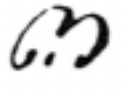
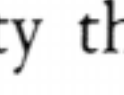
In checking on a possible source for the Anthon symbols, I was told by Dr. Gareth W. Lowe, field director of the New World Archaeological Foundation, that the Mexican Mission had used a tract in the early 1960s entitled *El Libro de Mormon: La Historia de las Americas Antes de Colon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, n.d.). In this tract (p. 5; Figure 9a), the top four lines of the Anthon transcript were reproduced by an artist's drawing (not a photocopy of the original). The bottom three lines of the transcript were not reproduced in the tract.


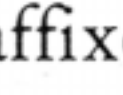

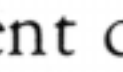
Checking the possibility that someone had copied these top four lines as a base for the symbols used in the Padilla Plates, I broke down the entire set of Anthon symbols into basic elements occurring singly and in compounds (see Figure 10), using the Crowley numbering system (see Figure 11).¹⁹

The single elements did not need to be repeated to qualify. Symbols that appear to be similar to one another are listed as variants.


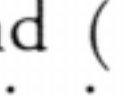
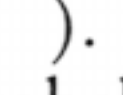
¹⁸Edward Seler, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* 5 (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck-Verlagsanstalt, 1961), p. 283.

¹⁹Ariel L. Crowley, *About the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1961). Crowley's fine work is well known, hence the use of his numbered characters. It should be noted that numbers 97, 98, and 99 are missing from Crowley's system. Also, there is some disagreement on the total number of separately rendered characters; for instance, Crowley numbers 136 and 137 would be a single symbol to me (compare the photocopy of the Anthon transcript, Figure 9b).

For example, Crowley number 4 () is regarded as the same as number 39 (), but in reality these may have been separate morphemes.

Compounds were regarded as assemblages of elements which may be made up of infixes and/or affixes appended to a basic element. An example of the use of an infix may be found by referring to the Crowley numbers 100 and 104, which show the use of () as a basic element without appendages, but then seeing it used as part of a compound infix in numbers 3, 7, and 31, and in others. An example of an affix may be found in Crowley number 4, where the symbol () is appended by the affixes () making a complete assemblage of (), but no element crosscuts another.

Following these simple rules allows us to make a reasonable breakdown of the Anthon transcript and to see at least the limited number of symbols used singly and in combination. This was not an attempt to make a linguistic analysis of the Anthon transcript—I leave this to epigraphers—but it is a useful device to isolate all possible components of symbols available to anyone wishing to reproduce it. Further, no claim is made that the element breakdown is complete; it was made as a matter of convenience for this study.

Using this method, ninety-five elements and compounds were discerned which were used as symbols having some presumed meaning. Of these, thirty-six are single-occurring elements, many of which also appear as parts of compound symbols. Sixty-two are compounds consisting of elements noted above. There are several instances where some of the elements of the compound appear only in one compound symbol and not singly. For example, Crowley number 201, consisting of elements () and (), can be considered to make up a compound (). As it is only a sample of one or more of the writing systems (probably taken from a single text) found on the gold plates from which Joseph Smith translated, we would expect the Anthon transcript to be an incomplete set of symbols, which is what we think to be the case.

Method of comparison of the Anthon symbols with those of the Padilla Plates was to use the above-described element and compound list placed in vertical columns (Figure 10) with the symbols that appear on each numbered plate shown to the right in respective columns. Autograph copies of each plate²⁰ in an enlarged form were

²⁰Autograph copies of the symbols found on each plate were made by William Adams, Jr., a scholar of Semitic languages.

| Crowley Numbers | Elements as: | | | | Element Compound Number | Present in Mexican Tract | Present in Padilla Plates by Plate Number | Crowley Numbers | Elements as: | | | | Element Compound Number | Present in Mexican Tract | Present in Padilla Plates by Plate Number |
|-----------------|--------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------|--------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| | Basic | Infixes | Affixes | Compounds | | | | | Basic | Infixes | Affixes | Compounds | | | |
| 1 |) | — |) |) | 1 | X | 10 | 86 | o | . | | o | 26 | X | 9,10,12 |
| 12 |) | |) |) | 2 | X | 1,8,11 | 4 | o | | | | 27 | X | 8,10,11 |
| 25 |) | | |) | 3 | X | | 5 | o | | | | 28 | X | 7,11 |
| 61 |) | | |) | 4 | X | 1,6,10 | 35 | o | | . | o | 29 | X | |
| 53 |) | — | |) | 5 | X | 7,9,10,11 | 6 | o | / | | o | 30 | X | |
| 76 |) | | |) | 6 | X | | 23 | o | o | | o | 31 | X | |
| 18 |) | | |) | 7 | X | 6a. | 7 | o | — | | o | 32 | X | |
| 82 |) | | |) | 8 | X | 1,6,7,9,10,11 | 24 | o | | o | o | 33 | X | 6,7,11 |
| 111 |) | — | |) | 9 | | | 17 | o | | , | o | 34 | X | 6,7,8,9,10,11,12 a. |
| 119 |) | | |) | 10 | | | 68 | o | | , | o | 35 | X | 7,10,11 |
| 134 |) | | |) | 11 | | | 8 | o | o | | o | 36 | X | |
| 146 |) | | |) | 12 | | | 9 | o | / | | o | 37 | X | 8 |
| 170-171 |) | | |) | 13 | | | 10 | o | / | | o | 38 | X | |
| 178 |) | | |) | 14 | | | 11 | o | | | o | 39 | X | |
| 2 | o | | | o | 15 | X | 1,10,11 | 168 | o | | | o | 40 | | |
| 50 | o | | | o | 16 | X | | 108 | o | | | o | 41 | | |
| 54 | o | | | o | 17 | X | 4,5,6,7,8,9,12 | 56 | o | = | | o | 42 | X | 1,7,11 |
| 95-96 | o | | | o | 18 | X | | 13 | o | | | o | 43 | X | |
| 3 | o | | | o | 19 | X | 1,6,7, a 12 | 107 | o | | | o | 44 | | |
| 36 | o | — | | o | 20 | X | 12 | 166 | o | | | o | 45 | | |
| 81 | o | — | | o | 21 | X | | 15 | o | | . | o | 46 | X | 6 |
| 69 | o | — | | o | 22 | X | 6a,7,9,10,11,12 | 45 | o | | | o | 47 | X | 7,8,9,10,11 |
| 175 | o | / | | o | 23 | | | 105 | o | | | o | 48 | | |
| 207-208 | o | | | o | 24 | | | 16 | o | — | | o | 49 | X | |
| 113 | o | | | o | 25 | | | 19 | o | | | o | 50 | X | 6,7,8,9,10,11,12 |

| Crowley Numbers | Elements as: | | | | Element Compound Number | Present in Mexican Tract | Present in Padilla Plates by Plate Number | Crowley Numbers | Elements as: | | | | Element Compound Number | Present in Mexican Tract | Present in Padilla Plates by Plate Number | Crowley Numbers | Elements as: | | | | Element Compound Number | Present in Mexican Tract | Present in Padilla Plates by Plate Number |
|--------------------|--------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| | Basic | Infixes | Affixes | Compounds | | | | | Basic | Infixes | Affixes | Compounds | | | | | Basic | Infixes | Affixes | Compounds | | | |
| 28 | { | | | | 51 | X | | 112 | 3 | | | | 76 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | 2 | | | | 52 | X | | 153 | | | | | 77 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 32 | B | 3 | | B | 53 | X | 1,3,6,7, 9&10 ^a ,11,12 | 115 | 13 | | | | 78 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 33 | . | | | | 54 | X | c | 117 | | | | | 79 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 37 | { | | | | 55 | X | 1,6,7,9,10,11 ^b | 174 | | | | | 80 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | — | |) | | 56 | X | 6 ^c ,10 | 118 | | | | | 81 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 85 | — | |) | | 57 | X | 6 | 128 | | | | | 82 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 157 | — | |) | | 58 | | | 130 | | | | | 83 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 104 | — | | | | 59 | | c | 136-137 | | | | | 84 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 47 | — | | | | 60 | X | 6,7,11,12 | 141 | | | | | 85 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 92 | — | ... | | ... | 61 | X | 6,10 | 143 | | | | | 86 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 43 | ■ | | | | 62 | X | | 151 | | — | | | 87 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | 7 | | | | 63 | X | 6,7,8,11 | 180 | | | | | 88 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 204 | 7 | | | | 64 | | 10 | 181 | | | | | 89 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 55 | ? | | | | 65 | X | 6,7,9,10,11,12 | 189 | | | | | 90 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 84 | 2 | 1 | | | 66 | X | 6,7,10,11 | 212 | | | | | 91 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 63 | . | | | | 67 | X | | 220 | | | | | 92 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 64-65 | 2 | 3 | / | | 68 | X | | 14 | | — | | | 93 | X | | | | | | | | | 7,8,10,11,12 |
| 66 | 3 | 4 | | | 69 | X | 6,9,10,12 | 135 | | | | | 94 | | | | | | | | | | c |
| 152 | 3 | 4 | | | 70 | | | 149-150 | | | | | 95 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 67 | 5 | 6 | | | 71 | X | 7,11 ^c | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | a= in part |
| 22 | 5 | 6 | — | | 72 | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | b= all in part |
| 72 | V | | | | 73 | X | 6,10,12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | c= all but never alone |
| 103 | Y | | | | 74 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 93 | 5 | — | | | 75 | X | 6,12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 10. Breakdown of the Anthon transcript into basic elements. Crowley's identification numbers of symbols appear in the left-hand column. Basic elements are appended to form compound symbols which are labelled "infixes" and "affixes." My numbered symbols appear under the column labelled "Element/ Compound Number."

used against the symbol list of the Anthon transcript looking either for single elements that stood alone or for compounds. A total of thirty-eight Anthon transcript-like symbols appear on the Padilla Plates. Of these, twenty-three are compounds, and fifteen are single symbols, recognizably the same or greatly similar to the transcript rendered by Joseph Smith.²¹ Several of the compound symbols are complex assemblages of up to ten parts which would seem to rule out accidental duplication.

How do we account for the fact that so large a number of the Anthon transcript symbols appear on the Padilla Plates in almost identical style? Recall the Mexican missionary tract that has the top four lines of the Anthon transcript reproduced by an artist (Figure 9a). An analysis of these four lines of symbols and those found on the Padilla Plates reveals a curious fact: 66% occur on the plates. An analysis of symbols found on the bottom three lines of the Anthon transcript shows that of those symbols that were not already displayed in the top four lines of the missionary tract, only three (.031%—one only in part) are found on the Padilla Plates. Forty that do not appear in the top four lines do not appear on the Padilla Plates. If even one complicated compound symbol from the bottom three lines of the Anthon transcript appeared on the Padilla Plates, one would be forced to consider some source other than the missionary tract, but since the only symbols that can be correlated are a simple dash, a dot, and one zig-zag line (Element number 64), then we must look at these as being purely accidental correspondences.

CONCLUSIONS

Since Dr. Padilla has provided testimony concerning when, how, and where the plates were found, and has maintained over the past thirteen years that this story is true, the plates were investigated from the point of view that they were genuine. Each question that was generated about the technology of the plates during the investigation was treated in such a way as to discover the nature of the tools and techniques of their manufacture.

Layout and cutting of the plates were remarkably accurate, to say the least. A flat surface, perpendicular reference, and precision measuring devices were required. In addition, the plates were cut by a fine-toothed saw, a type commonly employed by jewelers today.

²¹Dean C. Jessee has identified the handwriting of the Anthon transcript as that of Joseph Smith, Jr.; however, this has been challenged.

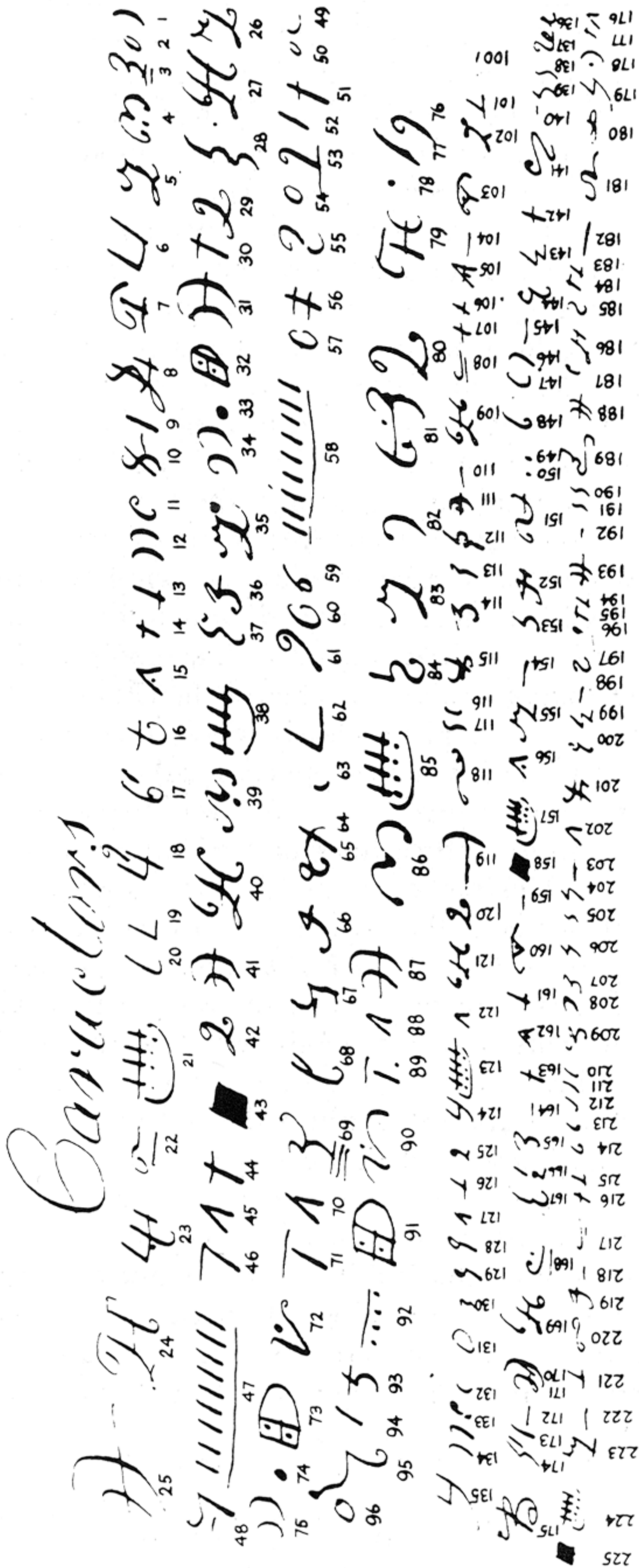


Figure 11. Numbered symbols by Ariel L. Crowley (1961).

These instruments were not available to ancient American metallurgists and were available to Old World craftsmen only in relatively recent times. The production of gold alloy sheet with the close tolerances of thickness of the Padilla Plates is most certainly a modern achievement. The method of engraving is also a modern one, requiring finely-made, hardened steel tools. The making of cylindrical hinges in such perfect symmetry is also astonishing as is the fact that they were soldered by a technique known only in recent times.

The copied art motifs from the wooden lintel located at Chichen Itza and from the gold disk taken from the sacred well of the same archaeological site are clumsy attempts to portray authenticity. It is highly unlikely that these motifs, being individual works of art, should be duplicated in another medium by another culture at another location at another time. Further, the copying of the Aztec symbol from the Codex Borbonicus was an act of little ingenuity. It is difficult to imagine a written medium showing writing symbols used from the Book of Mormon period, which closed at A.D. 421, according to Pratt's chronology, mixed with symbols used over 1,000 years later by the Aztecs, and yet another of the Classic Maya period.

The script used for the plates clearly was in part copied from the Mexican missionary tract which supplied a large percentage of the total number of symbols used. Not only was the artist apparently unaware that the bottom three lines of the Anthon transcript were not printed on the Mexican tract, but he also failed to understand the clustering of symbols that occurs in any language in his indiscriminate distribution of the Anthon figures.²² Additionally we must consider that the Anthon transcript was written with a quill pen or equivalent. This is evident in the fact that the symbols begin with a thin line, then widen on the curvilinear strokes. Thus, when we see the Anthon transcript duplicated on metal or other media with the same curvilinear strokes, we suspect that it is a copy from the pen and ink rendition, without a change in artistic style. Such a rendition in itself constitutes grounds for rejection.

It is my opinion that the Padilla Plates are not authentic because of any one of the major technological anachronisms given above. But given all of the factors considered, the case against the authenticity of the Padilla Plates should be closed once and for all.

²²William Adams, Jr., "Cryptographic Analysis of the Padilla Plates," unpublished manuscript, March 1973. Adams' comments on the Padilla Plates suggest that the artist of the plates seems to have gotten mixed up in the directions the symbols should appear. Some symbols, and clusterings of symbols, are rendered backwards. Ms. in the possession of Paul R. Cheesman, BYU Religion Department.

The Early Christian Prayer Circle

Hugh Nibley

The nature of the early Christian prayer circle may be described by letting the oldest documents speak for themselves, beginning with the latest and moving backwards to the earliest. The rite was depicted for the last time in a document read to the assembled churchmen of the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 A.D. and condemned by them to the flames. Their objection was to parts of the text that proclaimed the Gnostic doctrine of the total immateriality of Christ; on the subject of the prayer circle, which was strange to them, they preserved a discreet silence.¹ Actually that part of it was an excerpt taken from a much older writing, the Acts of John, being the earliest apocryphal Christian Acta, dating at least to the early third century.

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¹J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima Collectio* (Graz: Akademischer Verlag, 1960), vol. 13, cols. 169–75. The minutes of the meeting are instructive, beginning with col. 172: "Tarasius, the most holy Patriarch, said: Let us view the document as a whole as contrary to the Gospel.

"The Holy Synod said: Aye, sir: and it says that the human nature was only an appearance. . . .

"Constantine the most holy bishop of Constantia in Cyprus said: This book is the basis of their unauthorized assemblies.

"Tarasius the m. h. Patriarch said: These things are simply ridiculous.

"Theodore the most God-beloved Bishop of Catana said: Yes, but this book has been undermining the authority (lit. wrenching the vestments) of the Holy Church of God!

"Euthymius the most holy Bishop of Sardis said: Their false sects (*parasynagogai*) had to have this book to back them up (lit. as witnesses).

"The Entire Synod declared: All heresy depends on this book.

"Tarasius the most honorable Bishop said: Alas, how many heretical books support their false teachings!

"Gregory the most holy bishop of Neocaesarea said: But this book is nothing but vile infection (*miasma*) and a disgrace.

"On a motion by Tarasius the Holy Synod said: Let it be condemned (anathema) from the first letter to the last.

"John a most revered monk and vicar to the Eastern Patriarchs said: Behold, blessed Fathers, it is most clearly demonstrated herewith that the leaders of the heresy which criticizes true Christianity are really the companions and fellow travelers of Nebuchadnezzar and the Samaritans, to say nothing of the Jews and Gentiles (Greeks), and also of those cursed atheists the Manichaeans, whose testimony they cite. . . . Let them all be anathemized along with their writings!

"The Holy Synod said: Anathema!

"John the Monk then made a motion: May it please the Most Holy and Oecumenical Synod to vote that no further copies be made of this pestilential book.

"The Holy Synod voted: Let no copies of it be made; furthermore we herewith declare it worthy to be consigned to the flames.

"(Here Peter, the Secretary of the meeting signs his name to the minutes.)" Conventional Christianity views the ancient prayer circle as a sort of Gnostic aberration. (L. Gougaud, in F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie chretienne et de liturgie* [Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1921], vol. 4, col. 249ff.) It is never mentioned again in orthodox sources. (Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 4:787ff.)

In reading this and other accounts of the prayer circles we seem to enter, as Max Pulver expressed it, into "a strange space, a strange world—unlike ours—a world above that opens before us when we enter into the round dance of the disciples, led by Jesus."² The passage from the Acts of John reads as follows, after a notice on the extreme secrecy in which these things were guarded:

Before he was seized by wicked men and by the wicked serpent of the Jewish authorities (lawgivers, *nomothetoumenoi*), he called us all together and said: "Before I am given over to those men, let us sing a hymn (of praise) to the Father and so go forth ready to face whatever lies ahead." Then he commanded us to form a circle, taking hold of each other's hand; And he himself taking up a position in the middle uttered the Amen (formula) and "pay attention to me (*epakouete mou*—follow my instructions)." Then he began a hymn, saying, "Praise (glory, *doxa*) to thee, Father," and we standing in the circle, followed him with the Amen.

"Glory to thee Logos, glory to thee grace (*charis*, love). Amen.
Glory to thee spirit, glory to thee Holy One; praise to thy glory.
Amen. (or be praised [*doxasou*] with glory. Amen).
We praise thee Father; we thank thee Light in which there is no darkness. Amen.

And while we (all) give thanks, I say (explain):
I wish to be saved and I wish to save. Amen.
I wish to be delivered, and I wish to deliver. Amen.
I wish to bear wounds (*titrosko*) and I wish to inflict them. Amen.
I wish to be born and I wish to bring forth (bear). Amen.
I wish to eat and I wish to be eaten [cf. Ignatius, Epistle to the Romans 4:1]. Amen.
I want to hear and I want to be heard. Amen.
I want to comprehend (know), being all intelligence (*Nous*). Amen.
I want to be washed, and I want to wash. Amen.
Charis (grace) (leads) dances in the chorus: I wish to pipe (Play the flute)—dance all of you! Amen.
I wish to mourn, all of you mourn (lit *Kopsasthe*—inflict blows [cuts] upon yourselves). Amen."

And after having led us in other things in the circle (chorus), beloved, the Lord went out. And we went forth like lost wanderers or like people in a dream, fleeing our several ways.³

St. Augustine in his 237th Epistle quotes a slightly different version calling it "a hymn . . . commonly found in the apocryphal writ-

²Max Pulver, "Jesus' Round Dance and Crucifixion According to the Acts of John," in *The Mysteries*, Eranos Papers II, Bollingen Series, vol. 30, no. 2 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), p. 169.

³Texts of this part of the Acts of John, taken from a number of sources, may be found in Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum*; Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 4:787ff; M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 253ff.; Ed. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), 2:227–32.

ings," which he gets from the Priscillians, who believed it to be "the hymn of the Lord which he recited in secret to his disciples, the holy Apostles, according as is written in the Gospel: After he recited a hymn, he ascended the mountain" (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26). Its absence from the New Testament, which was Augustine's argument for rejecting it as spurious, was explained by the sectaries by quoting Tobit 12:7: "The *ordinances* of the King it is well to conceal, though it is praiseworthy to reveal the *works* of God." Conventional Christianity, following Augustine, has always denied that there was any significant teaching of Christ not included in the New Testament, for to admit such would be to admit serious gaps in their own knowledge. Yet Augustine labors to show line by line that the hymn is not heretical (as the Bishops of Nicaea found it 350 years later) but that each statement can be duplicated somewhere in the scriptures.⁴ The further back we go the more prominent becomes the rite in the church.

The actual performance of such a rite is described in a very old text, attributed to Clement of Rome and preserved in a seventh century Syriac translation, entitled "The Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ as delivered orally by him to us the Apostles after his Resurrection following his death."⁵ In celebrating the sacrificial death of the Lord (Pulver calls his study "The Round Dance and the Crucifixion"), the Bishop would

make the sacrifice, the *veil* of the *gate* being drawn aside as a sign of the straying of the former people; he would make the offering within the veil along with priests, deacons, authorized widows, subdeacons, deaconesses, readers and such as were endowed with spiritual gifts. As leader the Bishop stands in the middle . . . [the men and women are assigned their places, north, south, east and west, around him]. Then all give each other the sign of peace. Next, when absolute silence is established, the deacon says: "Let your hearts be to heaven. If anyone has any ill feeling towards his neighbor, let him be reconciled. If anyone has any hesitation or mental reservations (doubts) let him make it known; if anyone finds any of the teachings incongenial, let him withdraw [etc.]. For the Father of Lights is our witness with the Son and visiting angels. Take care lest you have aught against your neighbor. . . . Lift up your hearts for the sacrifice of redemption and eternal life. Let us be grateful for the knowledge which God is giving us."

⁴St. Augustine, Epistle No. 237, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, 221 vols. (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844-64), 33:102 (hereafter cited as *PL*); quoted partially H. Leclercq in Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 1:786 and Hennecke and Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2:228, note.

⁵Ignatius Ephraem II Rahmani, ed., *Testamentum Domini nostri Jesu Christi* (Moguntiae: F. Kirchheim, 1899); hereafter cited as *TDNJX*. The age of the work is discussed on pp. ix-xiv.

Then the Bishop says in an awesome voice: "Our Lord be (or is) with you!" And all the people respond: "And with thy spirit."⁶

A sort of antiphonal follows with the people in the ring responding to the words of the Bishop. Then the Bishop begins the prayer proper, "the people repeating these same things, praying." He thanks God "for the Plan of Salvation," by which "thou hast fulfilled thy purposes by preparing a holy people, hast stretched forth thy hands in suffering, that they might be freed from such suffering and from the corruption of death."⁷

The identical idea is expressed in the prayer circle so fully described by Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 350 A.D.) which we have discussed elsewhere:

O strange and paradoxical thing! We did not die in reality . . . after having been actually crucified. Rather it was an imitation by a token. . . .

O love of men overflowing! Christ really received the nails in his blameless hands and feet and suffered pain; while I, without any pain or struggle, by his sharing of suffering the pain enjoy the fruits of salvation!⁸

Also in a long passage in the Acts of John:

You who dance, consider what I do, for yours is this passage of Man which I am to suffer.

For you could by no means have understood what you suffer unless to you as Logos I had been sent by the Father. . . .

If you knew how to suffer you would be able not to suffer.

Learn how to suffer and you should be able not to suffer. . . .⁹

Plainly the rite is intimately involved with the suffering of the crucifixion.

The Syriac prayer ends: "Grant, therefore, O God, that all those be united with thee who participate in these sacred ordinances. . . ." And the people say Amen. Bishop: "Give us unity of mind in the Holy Ghost, and heal our spirits . . . that we may live in thee throughout all eternity!" Then certain ordinances are explained to those in the circle: "It is he who gave Adam a garment and the promise that after death he might live again and return to heaven." It is explained how Christ by the crucifixion reversed the blows of

⁶Ibid., pp. 36ff.

⁷Ibid., pp. 38, 40ff.

⁸Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheticae orationes*, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, 161 vols. (Paris: n.p., 1857-68), 33:1109-25 (hereafter cited as PG); also in Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), p. 282.

⁹Hennecke and Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2:230ff., lines 31-42.

death, "according to the Plan of the Eternal Father laid down before the foundations of the earth."¹⁰

Still older are some documents designated as the Gospel of Bartholomew, belonging to that growing corpus of very early writings believed to contain instructions and teachings given to the Apostles in secret by the Lord after his Resurrection. "On one occasion when the Apostles were met together, Bartholomew said to Peter, Andrew, and John, 'Let us ask Mary the favored one how she conceived the Lord and bore him. . . .'" This was an embarrassing question, and no one was willing to approach Mary on the subject. "And Bartholomew said to Peter, 'You are the President and my teacher, you go and ask her!'" But Peter says Bartholomew himself should ask, and after much hesitation he approaches Mary on behalf of the other apostles, and she agrees to enlighten them.¹¹

They form a prayer circle, "and Mary, standing before them, raised her hands to heaven" and began to call upon the Father in an unknown language, a number of versions of which are given.

When she finished the prayer, she said, "Let us sit on the ground (or stand quietly, *kathisomen*, at the prepared place, *edaphos*—since it is plain that they remain standing); come Peter, you are in charge. Stand at my right hand and place your left hand under my forearm; and you, Andrew, you do the same thing on my left side."¹²

John and Bartholomew are instructed to support or catch Mary if she faints, "lest my bones fail me when I start to speak." This mutual support in the circle is necessary where some may be caught away in the spirit and pass out.

In a variant version, when the brethren are met together on the Mount of Olives, "Peter said to Mary, 'Blessed one, please ask the Lord to tell us about the things that are in heaven.'" But Mary reminds Peter that as Adam has precedence over Eve, so it is his business to take the lead in such things.¹³ Having taken position in the circle, Mary begins to speak:

When I was in the Temple of God [a number of early sources report that Mary served in the Temple, like Samuel, as a child]¹⁴ . . . there

¹⁰Rahmani, *TDNJX*, pp. 44, 60.

¹¹A. Wilmart and E. Tisserant, "Fragments grecs et latins de l'évangile de Barthelmy," *Revue Biblique* N.S. 10 (1913):321.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 324.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 327.

¹⁴Some references to this in Hugh Nibley, "Qumran and 'The Companions of the Cave,'" *Revue de Qumran* 5 (April 1965):186.

appeared to me one day a manifestation like an angel of unfamiliar aspect. . . . And suddenly the veil of the Temple was rent and there was a great earthquake and I fell on my face unable to bear the sight of him. But he stretched forth his hand and raised me up, and I looked up to heaven and a dewy cloud came and (*lacuna*) moistened me from head to foot; and he wiped me off with his stole (robe, shawl) and said to me, "Greetings, thou favored one, chosen vessel!" and he grasped my right hand. And there was bread in abundance and he set it out on the altar of the Temple (cf. the shewbread), and he ate first and then gave to me. And he put forth his hand from his garment and there was drink in abundance, and he drank first and then gave to me, and I beheld and saw a full cup and bread. And he said to me, "In three years' time I shall send to you my Logos and you will bear a son, and through him the creation will be saved. . . . Peace to thee, my beloved, forever and ever." And suddenly he was gone from me, and the Temple was as it was before.

At this point the Lord himself appeared and commanded Mary "to utter no more of this mystery," while "the Apostles were sore afraid that the Lord would be angry with them."¹⁵ The sacramental episode is close to the holy wedding in the temple described in the Story of Joseph and Asenath, giving some indication of the great age and wide ramifications of the motif.¹⁶ The account continues with Jesus giving the apostles further instructions in the ordinances, but the text is badly damaged. In one version Andrew accuses Mary of teaching false doctrine (an authentic human touch is the occasional reference in the early documents to a slight but uncomfortable tension between Mary and some of the apostles), but Peter reminds him that the Lord confided in Mary more than any other, while Mary, upset, weeps and says, "Peter, do you think I am making all this up?"¹⁷

In the book of 2nd Jeu, considered by Carl Schmidt to be the most instructive of all early Christian texts, the apostles and their wives all form a circle around the Lord, who says he will lead them through all the secret ordinances that shall give them eternal progression.¹⁸ Then "all the Apostles, clothed in their garments, placing foot to foot, made a circle facing the four directions of the cosmos," and Jesus standing at the altar (*shoure*) proceeded to instruct them

¹⁵Wilmart and Tisserant, "Fragments grecs et latins," p. 325.

¹⁶Joseph and Asenath, chaps. 14-17.

¹⁷Evangelium Mariae 17-18, ed. W. C. Till, "Die gnostische Schriften des kopt. Pap. Berlin 8502," in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 60 (1955):74-76.

¹⁸II Jeu, p. 54 (40), text in C. Schmidt, "Gnostische Schriften in koptischer Sprache aus dem Codex Brucianus," in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8 (1892):99.

in all the signs and ordinances in which the Sons of Light must be perfect.¹⁹

Snatched at the last moment from the rising waters of the Aswan Dam in 1966 was the Kasr el-Wazz fragment, where we read,

We made a circle and surrounded him and he said, "I am in your midst in the manner of these little children." When we finished the hymn they all said Amen. Then he said other things and each time they must all answer Amen. "Gather to me, O holy members of my body, and when I recite the hymn, you say Amen!"²⁰

The Acts of John describes the circle as being in *motion*, a sort of dance, and earlier texts than the Nicaean version add a cosmic touch to the formula:

"I would pipe: Dance all of you. I would mourn: mourn all of you!"²¹
One Ogdoad sings praises with us. Amen.
The number 12 dances on high. Amen.
All that which is above participates in the circle. Amen."
[Or—(alternate version)] "He that danceth not knoweth not what is being done. Amen. . . ."
"Now if you follow my dance
See yourself in Me who am speaking,
and when you have seen what I do,
keep silence about my mysteries."²²

It is doubtless to this rite that Clement of Alexandria refers in the second century when he writes, "Come to our mysteries and you shall dance with the angels around the Unbegotten and Eternal one, while Logos of God sings along with us . . . the great High Priest of God, who prays for men and instructs them."²³

Clergymen of every denomination have vied in fervor in condemning all dancing as of the devil, yet strangely the only passages they can find to use from early Christian writings never condemn it outright. The favorites are St. Augustine's dictum: "*Melius est arare*

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 66ff. (53g ff.), in Schmidt, "Gnostische Schriften," pp. 114-17, quote from p. 114. Both First and Second Jeu contain sketches showing various arrangements of prayer circles. Other texts, e.g., the Gospel of Bartholomew and Pistis Sophia, p. 358, make it clear that the facing in four directions denotes standing in a circle.

²⁰Kasr al-Wazz fragment, p. ii end, from photographs kindly lent to the author by Professor Hughes at the University of Chicago at the time of their discovery in 1966.

²¹Pulver, "Jesus' Round Dance and Crucifixion," p. 186, notes that mourning here denotes that the initiate is expected to suffer after the manner of the leader. The word for "mourn" in Matthew 11:17 is *koptomai*, literally, to inflict wounds upon oneself.

²²Variants in M. R. James, *Apocrypha Anecdota* (Cambridge: University Press, 1894), 2:11.

²³Clement of Alexandria, *Cohortation ad gentes* xii, in Migne, PG 8:241.

quam saltare,”²⁴ and Chrysostom’s, “Where there is dancing, there is the devil also,” but the churchmen who quote it never finish what Chrysostom has to say, as he continues, “God gave us feet not to cavort shamefully . . . but that we may some day join in the dance of the angels!”²⁵ To which angelic dancing the great Basil also refers as part of the Christian tradition: “What is more blessed than to imitate the dance of the angels here on earth?”²⁶ Ritual dancing was condemned by the Fathers not because it was new, but because it was old in the Church—it smacked of the old Jewish heritage. Both Augustine and Chrysostom condemn the old Jewish dancing as part of the Sabbath rejoicing.²⁷

Were it not for a violent prejudice against dancing, the long debates of the scholars as to whether the participants in the prayer circle really danced or not would be pointless, since the earliest texts clearly say they did dance. But what kind of a dance? In the classic work on the Essenes, Philo, writing at the time of Christ, tells how men and women in the circle following the lead of an *exarchos* or choral instructor would chant hymns with antiphonal responses in a manner resembling both the “rapt enthusiasm” and the circular motion of ancient choric dances, “hands and feet keeping time in accompaniment.”²⁸ He is describing the Therapeutae who were an Essene group related both to the Egyptian communities of desert sectaries and to the people of the Dead Sea Scrolls—one could hardly accuse them of frivolity.

The Greek and Russian Orthodox churches still preserve the ring dance around the altar in that most conservative of rites, the wedding ceremony, when bride, groom, and priest all join hands and circle the altar three times; H. Leisegang connects this definitely with the old prayer circle.²⁹ At the coronation of the Byzantine Em-

²⁴St. Augustine, *Ennaratio in Ps. xci*, in Migne, *PL* 37:1172; quoted differently along with other texts on the same subject, by Gougaud in Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 4:250.

²⁵John Chrysostom, *Homily No. 48, on Matthew*, in Migne, *PG* 58:491, and Gougaud in Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 4:248.

²⁶St. Basil, *Epistle*, Class i, no. 2, in Migne, *PG* 32:225–26.

²⁷Augustine, *Ennaratio in Ps. xci*; Chrysostom, *Adv. Judaeos*, in Migne, *PG* 48:845–46.

²⁸Philo, *On the Contemplative Life*, xi. The passage as rendered by F. H. Colson in the Loeb Classical Library edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), 179:165ff., reads: “After the supper . . . they rise up all together and standing in the middle of the refectory [cf. Qumran!] form themselves first into two *choroi* (choirs, circles), one of men and one of women, the leader and precentor (*exarchos*) . . . being the most honored amongst them. . . . Then they sing hymns to God . . . sometimes chanting together, sometimes . . . antiphonally. . . . Then . . . they mix and both together become a single choir, a copy of the choir set up of old beside the Red Sea.” This is the way Augustine and Chrysostom describe the Sabbath dancing of the Jews (see preceding note), but Philo being himself a Jew found nothing shocking in it.

²⁹Gougaud in Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 4:251, giving these and other examples of ancient dances surviving in Christian church. H. Leisegang, in *Eranos Papers II*, p. 244.

peror everyone danced around the emperor's table three times.³⁰ The most common representations of ritual dancing in early Christian art show pious damsels dancing around the throne of King David.³¹ And the Jewish apocryphal writings often depict a situation best described at the opening of the Book of Mormon, where Lehi sees God on his throne "surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God" (1 Nephi 1:8). Surrounding concourses are concentric circles, and the singing and praising are never static: it is a dynamic picture with everything in motion, as Lehi sees it, and as the cosmic pattern of the thing requires. The prayer circle is often called the *chorus* of the apostles and it is the meaning of *chorus* which can be a choir, but is originally a ring dance, as Pulver designates it in the title of his study. The prayer was a song such as Paul prayed and sang in the darkness of a prison: "About midnight they prayed a hymn to God . . ." (see Acts 16:25). And if they sang in chorus, would they not dance? Philo says that the true initiate during the rites moves "in the circuit of heaven, and is borne around in a circle with the dances of the planets and stars in accordance with the laws of perfect music"—the music of the spheres.³²

The most puzzling reference to the dance is also the oldest one, that in Matthew 11:16–17: "[This generation] . . . is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. . . ." It was taking liberties with this strange passage "as a pretext" that the early sectaries justified the dancing in their prayer circles, according to Gougand.³³ In the text read at Nicaea the Lord says to the circle, "Amen! When grace comes I want to pipe and you all dance." But in a circle where they are already singing, the dancing is only to be expected in view of old Jewish customs—and this episode takes place in the upper room at the Last Supper, the Passover. Why should that playful game be introduced on that most solemn of occasions? In Matthew 11:7, Jesus is speaking about John the Baptist's followers and begins, "concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see?" This is a challenge to the desert sectaries. They were out there, as the

³⁰Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De caeremoniis aulae Byzantinae*, 1:65, 83, in Migne, *PG* 112:568, 689.

³¹Many illustrations from early Christian art published in Gougand in Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 4:524ff.

³²Philo, *De opificio mundi*, pp. 70ff.; Leisegang, *Erano Papers II*, p. 234.

³³Gougand in Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 4:428.

Serekh Scroll (VIII, 12ff.) so clearly tells us, to “prepare the way” (see Matthew 11:10). He speaks of John’s great mission as the herald of a dispensation, an “Elias, which was for to come” (Matthew 11:14), and then addresses the initiates: “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear” (v. 15), describing the present generation as those rejecting John’s message (v. 12)—they would accept neither John nor the Lord (vs. 18–19): they refused to dance to their playing, nor would they mourn with them for the sins of the world (vs. 16–17). The knowledge is properly guarded—“he that hath ears to hear, let him hear” (v. 15), a hint to the initiated that it is meant only for them. In the Acts of John, the Lord says, “Grace is dancing. I would pipe: Dance all of you. I would mourn: mourn all of you!” The connection with Matthew is undeniable, and again the limitation of the real meaning to the inner circle: “He that does not move in the circle knows not what is happening. Amen.” An important clue is the likening to little children in Matthew 11:16. The Kasr el-Wazz fragment says, “We made a circle and surrounded him and he said, ‘I am in your midst in the manner of these little children. . . ,’ he added, ‘Gather to me, O holy members of my body, and when I recite the hymn, you say Amen.’”³⁴

In both the Acts of John and the Apocryphon of John, Jesus appears at the same time as a grown man and a little child; and in a famous infancy account when he and John embrace as small children, they fuse into one.³⁵ Is it a mere coincidence that he repeatedly speaks of the little children and the dancing when declaring unity with John? The central act of the prayer circle was prayer, and it was “as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as *John* also taught his disciples” (Luke 11:1–2; italics added). Again in close comparison with John, he teaches them the Lord’s prayer. Jeremias in a recent study of that prayer notes the significant fact that in it Christ addresses the Father as *Abba*. And that, Jeremias observes, “was something new,” using an Aramaic word “used by a small child when addressing his father. . . . Jesus’ contemporaries,” Jeremias writes, “never addressed God as *Abba*”³⁶—that was little child’s talk, addressing God as a real, intimate father, as a trusting little child would. Little children do not stand on their dignity when they are happy;

³⁴See above, notes 20 and 21.

³⁵Acts of John 88 (in Hennecke and Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:322).

³⁶J. Jeremias, “The Lord’s Prayer in Modern Research,” *Christian News from Israel* 14 (April 1963):12–13.

their singing and dancing is spontaneous. Some of that spontaneity and simplicity carries over into the later cult of the Christ child; but in the early Christian texts it is the clue to an authentic situation. In the Testament of the XII Apostles, the Lord, appearing to the people after the resurrection just before producing bread and wine miraculously for the administering of the sacrament, has a conversation with a little child.³⁷ In exactly the same situation in the Book of Mormon the resurrected Lord blesses the little children "one by one," but he begins his discourse to the Nephites by telling them three times that no one can approach him except as a little child. (See 3 Nephi 9:22, 11:37–38.) The prayer circle is the nearest approach to the Lord that men make on earth—and they can approach him only "as little children."

The prayer spoken in the circle differs every time; it is not strictly prescribed. The one leading the prayer expresses himself as the Spirit moves him, and the others either repeat each line after him (which would not be necessary if they all knew it by heart) or add an "amen" at the end of each phrase, which is the equivalent of reciting the prayer for oneself. The most significant example of this freedom of composition is certainly the Lord's Prayer. "Originally," wrote Jeremias, "the doxology, 'For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever', was absent," yet it is found in the oldest Church order, the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." Has someone taken liberties with the sacred canon, then? No, "the absence of the doxology from the original text, . . ." Jeremias explains, "does not mean that Jesus intended his prayer to be recited without a word of praise at the end. But in the very earliest times, the doxology had *no fixed form* and its precise wording was left to those who prayed." Only "later on . . . it was felt necessary to establish the doxology in a fixed form,"³⁸ which explains why the prayer has different forms in Matthew 6:13 and Luke 11:4. Also, the older Aramaic form of the prayer required forgive "our debts" which the Greek of Luke changes to forgive "our *sins*."³⁹ This vindicates both the inclusion of the doxology in the Lord's prayer in 3 Nephi 13:9–13 and the reading there of "debts" instead of "sins."

Almost all accounts mention the introduction of the prayer as being in a *strange language*, a triple formula of words resembling each

³⁷Gospel of the XII Apostles, Frg. 2, in R. Graffin and F. Nau, eds., *Patrologia Orientalis*, 39+ vols. (Paris: Librairie de Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1903), 2:133.

³⁸Jeremias, "Lord's Prayer in Modern Research," p. 10; italics added.

³⁹Ibid., p. 11.

other. Thus in 1 Jeu after they form the circle, Jesus "begins a hymn which appears to be meaningless, a speaking in tongues, a glosso-lalia."⁴⁰ In the Pistis Sophia also, the Lord, having formed the apostles and their wives in a circle around him and "taking the place of Adam at the altar, called upon the Father three times in an unknown tongue."⁴¹ Elsewhere the text explains how while they stood "all in white, each with the cipher of the name of the Father in his hand, Jesus prayed in a strange language," beginning with the words *Iao, aoi, oia!* which, we are told, meant "Hear me Father, the Father of all fatherhood, boundless light!" According to our source, "This is the interpretation: Iota, because everything came out of (began with) it; Alpha because everything will return to it; Omega because everything is process (lit. the fulfilling of all fulfilling)."⁴²

In another version, when the Lord "ordered the Twelve to make a prayer circle and join him in a triple Amen and hymn to the Father and Creator of all treasure," he began by saying "iē, iē, iē, calling upon the Father to create beings to be the Lords of every treasure, and as such to bear the name of their Father Jeu, who has replenished the treasures with countless spirits and degrees of glory."⁴³ When Abraham, according to an old and highly respected source, "rebuilt the altar of Adam in order to bring a sacrifice to the Eternal One," as he had been instructed by an angel, he raised his voice in prayer, saying: "El, El, El! El Jaoel! [the last meaning Jehovah] . . . receive the words of my prayer! Receive the sacrifice which I have made at thy command! Have mercy, show me, teach me, give to thy servant the light and knowledge thou hast promised to send him!"⁴⁴ Abraham was following the example of Adam, who prayed to God for three days, repeating three times the prayer: "May the words of my mouth be heard! God, do not withdraw thyself from my supplication! . . . Then an angel of the Lord came with a book, and comforted Adam and taught him."⁴⁵ When Adam and Eve found themselves cut off from the glory of the Lord, according to the intriguing Combat of Adam, they stood with upstretched hands calling upon the Lord, as "Adam began to pray in a language which is unintelligible to us."⁴⁶ The so-called Coptic Gnostic Writing purports to give

⁴⁰Pulver, "Jesus' Round Dance and Crucifixion," p. 175.

⁴¹Pistis Sophia, p. 358.

⁴²Ibid., p. 357.

⁴³1 Jeu, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:326, 371.

⁴⁴Apocalypse of Abraham 12:8-9; 17:11-17.

⁴⁵M. J. Bin Gorion, *Die Sagen der Juden*, 5 vols. (Frankfurt: M., Rutten & Loening, 1913), 1:260ff.

⁴⁶Combat of Adam, text in J. P. Migne, *Dictionnaire d'Apocryphes*, 2 vols. (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1856), 1:329ff.

us Adam's words on the occasion as being composed of the elements io-i-a and i-oy-el, meaning "God is with us forever and ever," and "through the power of revelation."⁴⁷ The Jewish traditions indicate that the story is no Gnostic invention, though of course mysterious names and cryptograms are the stuff on which human vanity feeds, and every ambitious sectary would come up with his own words and interpretations. Yet, though none of these writings may be taken as binding or authentic, taken all together they contain common elements which go back as far as the church of the apostles. When Mary asks the Lord "tell me your highest name!" "He, standing in the midst of a cloud of light, said, 'He, Elohe, Elohe, Elohe; Eran, Eran, Eran; Rafon, Rafon, Rafon; Raqon, Raqon, Raqon,' " etc., etc.⁴⁸ Such mysteries are just the sort of thing unqualified persons love to play around with, and various Gnostic groups took fullest advantage of them. But again, the Jews are way ahead of them, as we see in the huge catalogues of mysterious angelic names in such works as 3 Enoch.

What H. Leclercq calls "that magnificent gesture" of raising both hands high above the head with which those in the prayer circle began their prayer was, as he notes, a natural gesture both of supplication and submission.⁴⁹ It was specifically a conscious imitation of the crucifixion,⁵⁰ and that brings to mind the significant detail, mentioned by the Synoptic writers, that the Lord on the Cross called upon the Father in a strange tongue: those who were standing by, though Aramaic was supposed to be their native tongue, disagreed as to the meaning (see Mark 15:33ff.), and indeed the Mss give many variant readings of an utterance which the writers of the Gospels left untranslated, plainly because there was some doubt as to the meaning. It recalls the cry of distress of David in Psalms 54:2: "Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth,"⁵¹ and in Psalm 55:1: "Give ear to my prayer, O God. . . . Attend unto me, and hear me. . . . My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me."

F. Preisigke, studying the same gesture among the Egyptians (it is none other than the famous "ka" gesture), notes that it represents

⁴⁷Coptic Gnostic Work, ed. C. Schmidt in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:253.

⁴⁸Sebastian Euringer, "Die Binde der Rechtfertigung," *Orientalia* 9 (1940):249.

⁴⁹Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 10:1212.

⁵⁰Pulver, "Jesus' Round Dance and Crucifixion," pp. 175ff., 193.

⁵¹Psalms 54:2: *Elohim shma' tphilati ha-zinah l-imrei-phi*.

submission (the “hands up” position of one surrendering on the battlefield) while at the same time calling the attention of heaven to an offering one has brought in supplication. He also points out that the early Christians used the same gesture in anticipation of a visitation from heaven, to which they added the idea of the upraised arms of the Savior on the cross.⁵² We have already mentioned the prayers of Adam and Abraham calling upon God in a strange tongue in the midst of darkness and distress. Abraham, says the Zohar, received no message until he built an altar and brought an offering, “for there is no stirring above until there is a stirring below . . . we do not say grace over an empty table”—or altar.⁵³ Enoch was another who as he prayed “stretched forth his arms, and his heart swelled wide as eternity,” and to comfort him God sent him the vision of Noah’s salvation. (See Moses 7:41ff.) According to First Enoch, Noah also prayed in his distress, “calling upon God three times and saying, Hear me! hear me! hear me!”⁵⁴ Let us also recall that when Mary led the prayer circle of the apostles “she raised her hands to heaven, and began to call upon the Father in an unknown tongue” (above note 17).

Suffering is an important theme of the ancient prayer circle. The rite is always related to the crucifixion, according to Pulver, which was anticipated by it in the upper room, for “the core of the Lord’s Supper is the idea of sacrifice.”⁵⁵ In the rites “the believer must incur the same sufferings as his god, and therefore he must mourn with him”—hence the peculiar passage in Matthew 11:16–17.⁵⁶ Ignatius’ Letter to the Romans shows that “real suffering . . . alone enables one to become a disciple, to learn and gain experience. . . . For Ignatius, the believer must repeat the destiny of his God, he must become an imitator of God, *mimetes tou Theou*.”⁵⁷ This is done ritually, as is plainly stated by Cyril of Jerusalem and the author of the Testament of Jesus Christ, cited above: “and thou hast stretched forth thy hands in suffering, that they might be freed from such suffering” by an act of imitation.⁵⁸

The clearest expression of the idea is given in that archetype and model of all initiates and suppliants, Adam. As he and Eve were sac-

⁵²F. Preisigke, *Vom göttlichem Fluidum nach ägyptischer Anschauung* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1920), p. 41, n. 3; p. 42.

⁵³Zohar, *Lech lecha*, 88a.

⁵⁴1 Enoch 65:2.

⁵⁵Pulver, “Jesus’ Round Dance and Crucifixion,” pp. 175ff.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 186.

⁵⁷Rahmani, *TDNIX*, pp. 40, 44; cf. Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, p. 282.

⁵⁸Ibid.

rificing on an altar "with arms upraised," an angel came down to accept the sacrifice, but Satan intervened and smote Adam in the side with the sacrificial weapon. Adam fell upon the altar and would have died were it not that God intervened and healed him on the spot, declaring that what Adam had suffered so far was acceptable to him as a true sacrifice, being in the similitude of his own offering: "Even so will I be wounded!"⁵⁹

The prayer asks for light and knowledge as well as other aid, and the answer is a teaching situation. Thus the angels who came down in answer to Adam's three-fold appeal, "May the words of my mouth be heard!" etc. "came with a book, and comforted Adam and taught him."⁶⁰ Or, in another version, when Adam and Eve prayed at their altar three messengers were sent down to instruct them.⁶¹ The Lord himself appears to teach Abraham as he is studying the heavens, according to Clement,⁶² and the valuable Testament of Abraham begins with his receiving instruction at an altar on a holy mountain, surrounded "by men whom I will show you, how they will form a circle around you, being on the mountain of the altars."⁶³ Indeed, the main theme of those many ancient writings called "Testaments," and attributed to almost every patriarch, prophet, and apostle of old, is the journey of the purported author to heaven during which he receives lessons in the most advanced theology, history, and astronomy.

Of particular interest is the Testament of Job, whose age has been vindicated by the recent discovery of fifth century Coptic fragments of it.⁶⁴ "Make a circle around me, my children, form a circle around me that I may show you what the Lord and I did," (lit., what the Lord did *met'amou*—along with me). Thus he begins with what seems no more than an admonition to gather round. But when he begins explaining things to his daughters, strange ordinances emerge. When the famous three daughters of Job complain to him that their seven brothers received a greater inheritance than they, he assures them that he has reserved for them a better heritage (46:1ff., 5). He then tells one of the girls to go to the "celle" and fetch three

⁵⁹Combat of Adam, in Migne, *Dictionnaire d'Apocryphes*, 1:329ff.

⁶⁰Bin Gorion, *Sagen der Juden*, 1:260ff.

⁶¹F. Temestrini, trans., *Le code Nazoreen*, "Livre d'Adam," in Migne, *Dictionnaire d'Apocryphes*, 1:87.

⁶²Clementine Recognitions 1:32-33, in Migne, *PG* 1:1226-27.

⁶³Apocalypse of Abraham, chap. 12.

⁶⁴R. A. Kraft, *The Testament of Job according to the SV Text* (Missoula, Montana: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974), pp. 3-11 on the various texts. The Greek version is also reproduced by F. C. Conybeare, "Testaments of Job and the XII Patriarchs," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 13 (October 1900):111ff.

golden caskets containing their inheritances. In each one is a mysterious article of clothing designated as a *chorda*—a string or thread, but of such cunning design as to defy description, being of no earthly design, but of heaven “giving off lightning-like emissions like sunbeams” (46:8). The girls are told to put them on like shawls “so that it would be with them throughout the days of this earthly life” (46:9). One of the women asks, disappointed, “Is this the heritage you told us about?” In reply Job tells her that these *chordai* will not only preserve them in this life “but will also lead you into a better world, even the heavens” (47:3). He explains that the Lord gave him the three bands “on the day when he decided to show me mercy,” healing him of the afflictions of the flesh, and placing the item before him saying: “Arise, gird up thy loins like a man! I shall ask you certain questions, and you shall give me certain answers!” (47:4–6). When Job tied them on, all sickness left him and his body became strong and his mind at ease (47:7–10). “And the Lord spoke to me in power, showing me things past and future” (47:10–11). He tells the girls that they will have nothing to fear in this life from the Adversary, because these things they wear are a “power and a protection (*phylakterion*) of the Lord” (47:11–12). Then he tells them to arise and gird themselves to prepare for heavenly visitants (47:12).

Thus it was that when one of the three daughters . . . arose and clothed herself (*perieilexen*—showing that this was a garment and more than a string) according to her father’s instructions, she received another heart and no longer thought about earthly things. And she began to utter words (*apophthengxato*—make a clear and important statement) in the angelic sounds (*phone*), and sent up a hymn to God using the manner of praising of the angels. And as she recited the hymns, she let the spirit make marks (*charagmata*) on her garment (48:1–8).

Here the “string” or chord is definitely called a garment—*stole*. The next girl girded herself likewise and recited “the hymn of the creation of the heavens” speaking “in the dialect of the Archons,” making her a true Muse (49:1–3). The third girl “chanted verses in the dialect of those on high . . . and she spoke in the dialect of the Cherubim,” her words being preserved as The Prayers of Amaltheiaskeras—a most significant name (50:1–3).

In the opening lines of the Testament, Job tells his three daughters and seven sons to form a circle around him (the second son is called Choros). “Make a circle around me (*perikyklosate me*—he repeats the word) and I will demonstrate (*hypodeixo*, a very explicit word) to you the things which the Lord did with me (*epoiesen met’ emou*, i.e., which we did together. It does not mean what he did to

or for me!). For I am your father Job who was faithful in all things (*en pasei hypomomei*) and you are the chosen and honored lineage (*genos*) of the seed of Jacob"; i.e., he gives them a patriarchal blessing—his "Testament" (1:1–5).

Then Job recounts an adventure quite like that of Moses in the first chapter of the Book of Moses, after which Job suddenly appears as the humiliated King who regains his glory, the "Job who ruled over all of Egypt," no less! (28:86). He shows his royal visitors his real throne, which is in heaven (33), and they become upset and angry about his illusive "eternal kingdom" which he assures them is the *only* stable state of existence (36). "If you do not understand the functions of the body," he asks them, "how can you hope to understand heavenly matters?" (38:86). In the midst of his terrible afflictions he calls upon the Lord with upraised hands: "They lifted me up, supporting my arms on each side, and standing thus I first of all gave thanks, and then after a great praying I said to them: Lift up your eyes to the East" and there they saw Job's dead children crowned in the presence of the Heavenly One (40:2) and his wife who had just joined them: she having died of sorrow and exhaustion. According to an old legend, Satan had appeared to her as a baker, and when she asked for a scrap of bread to feed herself and her ailing husband, reminding him of his former generosity to one and all, Satan coolly replied that he would give her bread when she gave him money, piously assuring her—"You can have anything in this world for money!" (cf. 24:6–8). Elephaz and the other friends were forgiven by God for resenting Job's claim (which is also Enoch's) that God had given him a right "to his own throne in the heavens" (43:1), and in his joy Elephaz led *another* prayer circle: "He began a hymn, the other friends repeating after him along with their supporters (troops) near the altar." He began by casting out Satan (43:1ff.). "Behold, the Lord has drawn near, the Saints now stand prepared, their crowns of glory awaiting them in advance (*pro-eyoumenon*)" (43:11a). "After Elephaz finished with the hymn, all the others repeating after him (*epiphonounton*) while moving in a circle (Kraft: 'and circling about'), we arose and went into the city to the house where we live and carried on festivities rejoicing in the Lord" (44:1). Thus the story ends as it were in the upper room where it began (cf. Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26).

In 2 Jeu the apostles and their wives form a circle around Jesus specifically "so that he can *teach* them the ordinances of the treasury of light, they being conducted by him through all the ordinances

and thereby learning to progress in the hereafter.”⁶⁵ At Mary’s request on behalf of the apostles the Lord specifies the progressive order of “all ordinances (*mysteria*), all knowledge (instructions—*Sooun*), seals (*sphragides*), tokens (*psephoi*), supplications (or forms of address—*epikalesthai*), degrees (or positions—*Topoi*.)”⁶⁶ And in the Acts of John he tells those in the circle, “What you do not know, I myself will teach you.”⁶⁷ The whole situation centers around the Last Supper and belongs to the church from the beginning.⁶⁸

In a Bartholomew text, the Lord takes the Twelve up into the mountain and standing in their midst gives them certain signs and tokens and then departs.⁶⁹ The Gnostics exploit and distort this situation in their usual way: Thus when an angel comes to rescue Norea in response to her prayer he says, “I am El-El-Eth . . . who stands before the Holy Ghost (obviously a Hebrew source—the Shekhina). I have been sent to converse with you and to save you from the Adversary. I will instruct you concerning what you should know.”⁷⁰

Indeed, in various accounts Satan tries to get in on the act. We have seen how he smote Adam, interrupting his lessons at the altar. And when Abraham prayed at his altar, “Have mercy, show me, teach me, give to thy servant light and knowledge thou hast promised to send him!” Satan promptly appeared on the scene with an insolent “Here I am!” And as he began to teach Abraham, a true messenger from God arrived and cast Satan out and proceeded with the proper instructions.⁷¹ In 2 Jeu the Lord warns the men and women in the circle that the ordinances in question are very secret, because Satan wants them distorted and misrepresented, as they surely will be if they go abroad in the world.⁷² Divulging those very things, it will be recalled, was the sin for which the Watchers in Enoch’s day were destroyed.⁷³ According to Rabbi Eleaser, Abraham built three altars in order to instruct his children and fortify them against apostasy.⁷⁴

⁶⁵2 Jeu, p. 54 (40) in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:99.

⁶⁶Pistis Sophia, pp. 358ff. (363ff.).

⁶⁷Acts of John, 1. 43, in Hennecke and Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2:231.

⁶⁸Even those Gnostic versions defending the proposition that Jesus did not really suffer on the cross celebrate “a pseudo passion and a pseudo death of Christ,” according to Pulver, “Jesus’ Round Dance and Crucifixion,” pp. 176–78.

⁶⁹Evang. of Bartholomew, fol. 14b–15a, in E. A. W. Budge, *Coptic Apocrypha* (London: British Museum, 1913).

⁷⁰Hypostasis of the Archons 140:3, trsl. in *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1958, no. 10, col. 667.

⁷¹Apocalypse of Abraham 12:8ff.; 17:11–17.

⁷²2 Jeu, pp. 54ff., in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:100ff.

⁷³A. Wuensche, *Midrasch Rabbah*, p. 11 (101).

⁷⁴G. H. Box, *The Apocalypse of Abraham* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1918), p. xxv.

As to the teacher, sometimes it is Jaol or Jehovah as "the heavenly choirmaster," and sometimes it is Michael or Gabriel. As often as not it is three Sent Ones.⁷⁵ But of course all the knowledge is sent down from God. "Abraham . . . would utter prayers on certain occasions while sacrificing, thus invoking the 'One God.'"⁷⁶ This was the beginning of Jewish liturgy. Clement, however, takes it back a step farther: "Adam finding he needed help, solicited divine assistance with prayers and sacrifices. . . . That was the beginning of the ordinances of God."⁷⁷ According to the Moslem commentators, all creatures form in circles around God to be taught, suggesting the gathering of all the beasts at life-giving water holes in the desert.⁷⁸ H. Leisegang finds that throughout the ancient world the prayer circle is for the instruction of initiates.⁷⁹ We may even go beyond his range to the medicine circles of Indians all over America. Among the Plains Indians, as described by H. Storm,

the people all sit quietly together and learn the four harmonies of balance. Each of the people can now perceive the others, and they realize that they are all *Teachers*. They put their arms around each other and care for each other. Then they begin to dance towards the Flowering Tree together in a Great Circle.⁸⁰

The "four harmonies" mentioned in the last quotation appear throughout the world in the ring dance. The number of those forming the circle is among the pagans almost always sixteen, as Leisegang shows; with the Christian circle it is twelve, combining the three levels and the four cardinal points.⁸¹ In the Jewish 3 Enoch the three levels of the twelve produce rings of thirty-six. In 1 Jeu, "At every station (or step, *topos*) there are twelve springs of reason . . . and in each every father has three faces, so that the fathers that encircle Setheus have 36 faces. . . . At every level (*taxis*) there is a treasure containing 12 heads . . . and in each *topos* there are always three Watchers to instruct."⁸² As might be expected, the number 360 is constantly mentioned and pedants and mystics had a field day shuffling and rearranging their cosmic circles, as did mathematicians and

⁷⁵See the important discussion of the Three Men in White, in Erwin Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 13 vols. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), 1:25-28.

⁷⁶A. Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Liturgy and Its Development* (New York: Henry Holt, 1932), p. 3.

⁷⁷Clementine Recognitions, 4:11.

⁷⁸F. Dieterici, ed., *Their und Mensch vor dem König der Genien* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1881), pp. 2ff.; cf. Clement I. Epistle ad Corinthos, 20.

⁷⁹Leisegang, in *Eranos Papers II*, p. 244.

⁸⁰Heyemoyohst Storm, *Seven Arrows* (New York: Harper & Rowe, 1975), p. 20.

⁸¹Especially instructive on the circles of eight and twelve, etc., is the Coptic *Sophia Christi*, pp. 95ff., 107-17, 123-24, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 60 (1944):230ff., 254ff.

⁸²1 Jeu, pp. 10ff., in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:52ff.

astronomers—our circles still have 360 degrees. If the Gnostic can tell us in a typical text that “the Nous of the universe has 12 faces and the prayer of each one is directed solely towards Him,” while in the midst stands an altar upon which is the Only Begotten Word,⁸³ that it is not so far from the impeccably orthodox Ignatius of Antioch, for whom the dance of Twelve “is in imitation of God.”⁸⁴

Monuments of great age and imposing majesty in many parts of the world suggest the prevalence of the main ideas. Thus when Heliiodorus went far up the Nile to Meroe, describing conditions during the Persian occupation of the fourth century B.C., he saw a council of holy men sitting in a circle of twelve with three altars in their midst.⁸⁵ As an eyewitness to the operation and as a personal friend to the Emperor, Eusebius was able to describe the arrangement of Constantine’s tomb and the mystique behind it. “He built a martyrium in memory of the 12 Apostles in the city bearing his name.” It was a golden superdome, open to the sky and utterly dazzling. A ring of twelve columns with relics of an apostle deposited at the foot of each represented the holy chorus. Then Constantine had a happy afterthought: He had twelve reliquaries in honor and memory of the sacred chorus of the apostles placed in the circle of the rotunda, each at the foot of a column; and in the center of this he put his own casket . . . so that, as he explained it, by a clever calculation any honor shown to an apostle would be automatically focused—as if by a burning glass, on the object in the center—the remains of the Emperor. Thus that smart man characteristically “utilized the intercession of the Apostles to his own advantage.”⁸⁶

The plan was carried out in the still-surviving mausoleum of Constantine’s daughter Constantia, with its twelve double columns in a circle around the sarcophagus or altar,⁸⁷ and from the same period in the Tomb of Diocletian at Split and many other imposing monuments dedicated to harnessing the power of the heavens through the prayer circle. There is a definite cosmic connection here. “‘What is eternal . . . is circular, and what is circular is eternal,’” write Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend, quoting Aristotle with the comment, “That was the mature conclusion of human

⁸³Second Coptic Gnostic Work, p. 8a, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:231ff.

⁸⁴Pulver, “Jesus’ Round Dance and Crucifixion,” pp. 175ff.

⁸⁵Heliiodorus, *Aethiopica*, 10:5–6.

⁸⁶Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, chaps. 58–60, in Migne, *PG* 20:1209–11.

⁸⁷Photo in Moses Hadas, *Imperial Rome* (New York: New York Times, 1965), p. 175.

thought over millennia. It was . . . an obsession with circularity.”⁸⁸ If Plato bids us behold “immortal souls standing outside of heaven (as) the revolution of the spheres carries them round, and they behold all things beyond,”⁸⁹ 1 Clement, among the oldest and most esteemed of Christian writings, declares that “the sun and the moon and the chorus of stars according to his decree in harmony and without any deviation circle in their appointed orbits.”⁹⁰ The life of the soul is related to the motions of the heavenly bodies in the Twelfth Thanksgiving Hymn of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the remarkable tenth page of the Manual of Discipline is an ecstatic song with instrumental accompaniment and dance in the temple attuned to the circling of the spheres and the revolutions of the times, seasons, and festivals. It begins:

At the beginning of the rule of light in its circling, at the gathering to the appointed place, at the beginning of the watches of darkness, when its treasury is opened and poured out upon the earth, and in its revolving and drawing together from its source of (or for the sake of) light, when the outpouring of the light shines forth from the holy abode, etc. . . . I will sing what I learn and all my harping is for the glory of El, and all the sound of my harp shall be attuned to his holiness while the flute of my lips shall strictly conform to (lit. be laid to the line of) his instruction. . . . I will prescribe the limits from which I will not depart (11) . . . I will gladly receive what he teaches me. . . . As soon as my hand and feet are stretched forth I will call upon (*abarekh*) his name at the beginning both of the going out and the coming in. (line 13).⁹¹

Here the singer compares his solitary song to the strict discipline and instruction of the prayer circle in the temple, e.g., “I will make the heave-offering with my lips” (line 6), that being a temple ordinance.

With the Fall, according to a Hebrew Enoch fragment, Adam tried his best to behold again the glory of the Shekhina, but had to settle in his fallen state for “the circle of the Sun which all behold in glory as the sign of the Shekhina with 6000 prophets circling around it.”⁹² In the various “Ascension” texts we are taken again and again through the various levels of concentric rings, “the order (*taxis*) of holy angels in their ring-dances (*chorostasian*, lit. standing properly in

⁸⁸Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill* (Boston: D. R. Godine, 1977), pp. 48ff.

⁸⁹Plato, *Phaedrus*, p. 247.

⁹⁰1 Clement, *Epistle ad Corinthos*, 20.

⁹¹IQS (Manual of Discipline) 10.1–3.9.

⁹²Adolf Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrash*, 6 vols. (Jerusalem: Wahrman Books, 1967), V, 172 (Book of Enoch).

a ring).” Isaiah is instructed in his Ascension not to worship at any of the six central thrones at any of the *chorostaias* or singing praise-circles, circles he must pass on the way up, since all the others are simply focusing their praise on “him who sitteth in the Seventh Heaven.”⁹³ Such a mounting up is described by Philo:

The soul . . . is borne ever higher to the ether and the circuit of heaven, and is carried around with the dances of the planets and fixed stars in accordance with the laws of perfect music, reaching out after . . . the patterns of the originals of things of the senses which it saw here (on earth, while) longing to see the Great King himself.⁹⁴

Philo is attempting to combine Jewish lore with the mysteries of Egypt. Pulver notes that the eight-circle is commoner than the twelve and “occurs also in early Christianity whenever it discloses an *Egyptian* influence.”⁹⁵ Certainly what is purportedly the first and oldest shrine in Egypt, the Abaton, tomb of Osiris and first place of settlement with its great ring of 365 altars and its three levels, etc.,⁹⁶ suggests the circle of 365 aeons that marks the place of the Adam of light with its three sides or directions,⁹⁷ and even more does the arrangement of the ideal temple in the newly published Temple Scroll from the Qumran Cave I.⁹⁸ Plutarch explains certain mysteries on the authority of the Egyptians in a combination of earthly and heavenly geography which is typically Egyptian: “The worlds are so ordered that one always touches the other in a circle, moving as it were in a stately ring-dance,” which takes place surprisingly within a triangle, “the foundation and common altar of all these worlds, which is called the Plain of Truth, in which lie the designs, moulds, ideas, and permanent examples or samples of all things that ever were or shall be.”⁹⁹ Some have suggested that the three-cornered plain in question is the Nile Delta,¹⁰⁰ and it is not surprising that Plutarch’s image of things was Christianized by an Egyptian, Clement of Alexandria: “That which Christ brings forth (is) transformed into an Ogdoad . . . and through three names is liberated as a

⁹³Ascension of Isaiah 1:4:15–17, in R. H. Charles, *Ascension of Isaiah* (London: A. & C. Black, 1900), pp. 143–44.

⁹⁴Philo of Alexandria, *De opificio mundi*, pp. 70ff.

⁹⁵Pulver, “Jesus’ Round Dance and Crucifixion,” p. 188.

⁹⁶This is treated at length in our forthcoming *Abraham in Egypt*. Sorry, you will just have to wait.

⁹⁷Second Gnostic Work, 6a, text in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:230.

⁹⁸Yigael Yadin, *The Temple Scroll*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Shrine of the Book, 1977), cols. 34, 39–42.

⁹⁹Plutarch, *De defectu oracularum*, 22.

¹⁰⁰I.e., the so-called Pyramidologists. A hypocephalus like that of Facsimile No. 2 of the Book of Abraham depicts the geography of the earth as a reflection of that heaven, with the Delta in the center.

triad. . . . When you bear the image of the terrestrial world then you also bear the image of the celestial.”¹⁰¹

It is because each prayer circle is a faithful reproduction of the celestial pattern that impulses can be transmitted from one to the other by all who are in a receptive state; the thoughts of those in the circle are concentrated as in a burning glass, or, since the thing most emphasized as the indispensable requirement of the circle is the absolute purity of mind, concentration of thought devoid of any reservations or distractions, and since the communication is beamed from one Treasury of Light to others, the analogy of the laser is quite striking.¹⁰² The three who were sent to teach Adam and Eve the order of prayer gave them the pattern “after the manner of what is done above in the Treasury of Light.”¹⁰³ If that sounds too Gnostic, the same image meets us in the above-mentioned tenth page of the Manual of Discipline. In the Book of Adam, Adam is endowed

with the image and likeness of the Lords (above), while Eve is the Queen of this world. . . . I (God) provided [sent] the three visitors (*genies*) for their protection, and taught them the holy mysteries . . . and the prayers which they must recite . . . and I told them further, “I have provided for you this earth, in a dwelling-place fit for eternity. And then sitting near them I taught them the manner of calling upon the Lords to bless them.”¹⁰⁴

According to the Hasidic teaching, “the order of prayer is in accordance with the emanation of the Worlds,” since through prayer we become “attached . . . to Him Who is blessed”¹⁰⁵ and rules the worlds. In orthodox Judaism “the Talmud represents the Beth Dinn or Tribunal of Heaven, as a circle, in the centre of which, God is seated,” and the earthly Sanhedrin as a reflection of it.¹⁰⁶ The sympathetic vibration makes the individual also a microcosm responding to the cosmic forms, as we see in the Odes of Solomon, which echo the Dead Sea Scrolls with the ecstatic declaration, “The Lord is the Crown upon my head, I will not be shaken. Even though the universe is shaken, I will remain standing. . . . As I strike the chords of the lyre the Spirit of the Lord speaks in my members.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹Clement of Alexandria (dubia), from the *Oriental Teachings* of Theodotus, 80, in Migne, PG 9:696.

¹⁰²Second Gnostic Work, 8a, *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:231ff.

¹⁰³Pistis Sophia, pp. 10–11.

¹⁰⁴Book of Adam, in Migne, *Dictionnaire d'Apocryphes*, 1:87–88.

¹⁰⁵*Or ha-Meir*, ii, 109b, cited in J. G. Weiss, “The Kavvanoth of Prayer in Early Hasidism,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 9 (1958):182–83.

¹⁰⁶Isaac Myer, *Qabbalah* (Philadelphia: Isaac Myer, 1888), p. 306.

¹⁰⁷Odes of Solomon, nos. v and vi.

In forming the prayer circle one excludes the outer world, as families holding the Passover feast form closed circles with their backs all turned on the outer world, or as the true initiates from the inner or "esoteric" circle, leaving all the rest to the outer or "exoteric" world. The Lord explains this to the apostles, telling them of higher prayer circles as he takes each by the hand and introduces him into "the First Mystery," explaining, "That is why I said to you that you were chosen out of the world."¹⁰⁸ It was from such a circle in heaven that God at the creation of this earth chose those who would be his rulers in it, according to 1 Jeu, the Apocalypse of Abraham *and* the Book of Abraham 3:23: "And God . . . stood in the *midst* of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits."¹⁰⁹

The special object of Leisegang's study, an alabaster Orphic bowl depicting a prayer circle, bears an inscription beginning with "an invocation of the celestial force which moves the outermost sphere, encompassing all the spheres of heaven";¹¹⁰ the third line reads, "' . . . because thou movest in a circle,' " and "exhorts the readers to invoke the divine cosmic power, the sun which rules the infinite cosmic space over the heaven of fixed stars . . . carrying the reader's thoughts back to the primordial age before the birth of the cosmos."¹¹¹ For the rites in the circle "take place in the supercelestial space beyond the starry heavens."¹¹² Leisegang concludes that the many pagan versions of the thing "all bear witness to the mysteries, to the diverse yet always interrelated forms of the original Orphic-Dionysian cult . . . descended deep into the Christian world."¹¹³ His final word is that "all these rites were in some way related, though today the nature of the connection can only be surmised."¹¹⁴ They go much farther back than the Orphic-Dionysian tradition, however, since the old Babylonian hymn of creation, the *Enuma Elish*, tells how at the Creation God drew "the universal figure," the quartered circle, which is repeated at every level of existence,¹¹⁵ with the idea that whatever is done on one level or world is done in heaven also.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁸Pistis Sophia, pp. 10–11.

¹⁰⁹Cf. 1 Jeu, p. 10, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:53ff.; Apocalypse of Abraham 21–22. Italics added.

¹¹⁰H. Leisegang, in *Eranos Papers II*, p. 201.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 211, 215.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 233.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 259.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 240.

¹¹⁵*Enuma Elish* 1:60ff., 75–80; 6:51–70 (esp. 69), 4:136–46.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 6:113. It is the circle of time divided into 12 lunar positions, 5:1ff., 9 ff.

The only proper place for such activities is the temple, since that edifice is expressly designed for taking one's bearings on the universe in every sense. "The Temple is the center from which light goes forth, and which at the same time draws everything to itself and brings all things together."¹¹⁷ Its ordinances are those prescribed after the heavenly pattern (see Hebrews 8:5). We have written extensively elsewhere on the "hierocentric" layout of ancient temples, cities, camps, and other ritual complexes—of their universality and antiquity there can be no doubt. Nor is there any shortage of early writings to tell us what they signified to their builders.

In 3 Enoch, the Rabbi Ishmael mounting up to heaven must pass through six *hekaloth*, "'chamber within chamber', the Halls being arranged in concentric circles." The word *hekal* usually means simply *temple* (it is the Arabic word for shrine or temple), but in the Enoch literature it regularly refers to the chambers or rooms of the temple representing various steps of initiation.¹¹⁸ "Arriving at the entrance of the seventh *hekal*," Rabbi Ishmael reports, in the opening lines of his epic:

I stood still in prayer before the Holy One, blessed be He, and, lifting up my eyes on high (i.e. toward the Divine Majesty), I said: "Lord of the Universe, I pray thee that the merit of Aaron . . . who received the crown of priesthood from [in the presence] of Thy Glory on the mount of Sinai be valid for me in this hour" [no unclean thing can take this step otherwise].

One thinks of Moses also "clothed upon with glory" on the mountain (Moses 7:3; 1:2, 9). Rabbi Ishmael having reached the door to the presence of God must become a crowned king and a priest before he can enter. He asks for this because, like others who make this supreme prayer, he seeks to be delivered from his lower condition, that Satan "may not get power over me nor throw me down from the heavens,"¹¹⁹ i.e., even as they were, for on meeting Adam in the dark and dreary world, Satan boasts and taunts him, that he has caused him to be cast out of Paradise even as Adam had caused his expulsion from heaven at the time of the Creation.¹²⁰ In short, Ishmael utters the classic prayer of Adam, Moses, Abraham, and others,

¹¹⁷Second Coptic Gnostic Work, p. 1, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 8:226; Pistis Sophia, p. 65 (134).

¹¹⁸H. Odeberg, *3 Enoch or the Hebrew Book of Enoch* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, reprint, 1973), p. 3.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.

¹²⁰*Vita Adae et Evae*, xii–xvii, in R. H. Charles, *Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1964), 2:137.

and receives the proper reply when God immediately sends "Metatron, his Servant the angel, the Prince of the Presence" to instruct him and bring him farther on the way: "Forthwith the Holy One . . . sent to me Metatron, his Servant the angel, the Prince (*sar*) of the Presence," who came joyfully to Ishmael, grasped him firmly by the right hand in the sight of all, and said, "'Enter in peace before the high and exalted King and behold [comprehend] the picture [likeness] of the Merkabah.'" The use of special words (*hitsaqel*, "comprehend" for "see," *demuth*, "likeness" or "picture" instead of simply saying God, and *Merkabah* [that elaborate circumlocution]) all save the writer from further obligation to say just what it was Rabbi Ishmael saw—since it cannot be described to those mortals who have seen nothing like it. The same caution is expressed in Lehi's report that "he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open, and he *thought* he saw God sitting upon his throne" (1 Nephi 1:8; italics added). Rabbi Ishmael also reports, like Enoch (and he is reporting all this to explain what it was that *Enoch* experienced) that God had given him a throne "similar to the Throne of Glory [cf. Moses 7:59]. And He spread over me [before me, on my account—'*ali*'] a curtain [veil] of splendour and brilliant appearance, of grace and mercy, similar to the curtain of the Throne of Glory; and on it were fixed all kinds of lights in the universe."¹²¹ "The Curtain," comments Odeberg on this, "regularly represents the recording of the Divine decrees with regard to the world, the secrets of the world's creation and sustenance, etc., in short the innermost Divine Secrets"¹²²—the secrets, that is, of this earth and of all other "lights in the universe." We pointed out in the *Egyptian Endowment* that ancient temple veils represented the point or act of transition between man's sublunary life and the vast open reaches of the immensity of space beyond, into which one passes by passing through that veil.¹²³ They were cosmic veils, appropriately adorned, as Rabbi Ishmael reports, with astronomical marks and emblems.

Such a veil was discovered in a cemetery of Astana in central Asia by Sir Aurel Stein and has been hailed by De Santillana and Von Dechend as done "in true archaic spirit (which means that only hints are given, and the spectator has to work out for himself the significance of the details)."¹²⁴ It dates from the seventh century, was

¹²¹Odeberg, 3 Enoch, chap. 10, pp. 27–28.

¹²²Ibid., p. 28.

¹²³Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, pp. 245–49.

¹²⁴De Santillana and von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill*, p. 273, with reproduction.

found in position suspended from pegs on a wall; it is in Sassanian rather than Chinese workmanship and was found near the body of a man dressed in Sassanian style. "Near the head lay also the crown-shaped paper hat." An accompanying document says "that several sutras were copied and recited by monks" at the funeral of the man's wife: she was buried in 8 December 667, her husband in 689 A.D.¹²⁵ A mixture of cultures is apparent—the Sutras, Sassanian art and Chinese elements (the Chinese having moved in quite recently—640 A.D.)—and the ritual with which the parties are so much concerned may have been somewhat eclectic, with a foundation of Nestorian Christianity. In the veil in question, what first catches the eye are the signs of the square and the compass, boldly drawn as they are held up in the right and left hands respectively of the lady and her husband. To quote the official description: "Silk . . . perhaps originally white. Subject the legendary Emperor Fuhsi with his consort Nuwas facing each other . . ." about three-quarters life-size. "The bodies rise from a continuous flounce-like short white skirt"—an apron, "their two inner arms stretched stiffly and horizontally towards each other . . . the hand of each appearing under the opposite armpit of the other shows that they are embracing . . . Fu-hsi holds in his uplifted left hand a mason's square. . . . Nu-was holds in her right hand a pair of compasses. . . . From below issue two intertwined serpentine bodies which coil around each other . . ."—the well-known caduceus, of life and death, signifying that all things have their opposites (cf. John 3:14, etc.). The whole design is completely surrounded with diagrams of the constellations, while above the heads of the two figures "is the sun disc, white with red spokes" surrounded by twelve smaller circles, each connected to the next by a straight line to form an unbroken circle except at the very top where it is left open—plainly the circle of the months of the year.¹²⁶ Fu-hsi is not only the first king but also the patron of artisans, the Creator-god. As De Santillana and Von Dechend explain it, "The two characters surrounded by constellations are Fu Hsi and Nu Kua, i.e., the craftsman god and his paredra, who measure the 'squareness of the earth' and 'the roundness of heaven' with their implements, the square with the plumb bob hanging from it, and the compass,"¹²⁷ as they lay the foundations of the world. So the Pharoah would go out by night

¹²⁵Sir Mark Aurel Stein, *Innermost Asia*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), 2:665 ff.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 707.

¹²⁷De Santillana and von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill*, p. 273, with reproduction.

with the Lady Seshat to lay out the foundation of a new temple by taking direct bearing on the stars with the proper instruments. The Lady was his one indispensable assistant on the occasion.¹²⁸ Let us recollect that in the creation hymn of the Manual of Discipline the singer promises to gauge all his doings and mark the course of his ring-dance to the music of the spheres with the plumb-bob and line.¹²⁹ The constellations on the Astana veil are dominated by the Great Bear, indicating the center of the universe, the *omphalus* or *umbilicus mundi*, the navel of the cosmos.¹³⁰ Thus square, compass, and Pole-star designate the veil as the cosmic gate, curtain, or barrier to worlds beyond.

Rabbi Ishmael recited his prayer just before passing through to the throne which was behind a curtain, and he also informs us that God "made for me a garment of glory,"¹³¹ bearing the same markings as the veil and having the same cosmic significance, which reminds one of the close affinity between robe and veil in the very early Christian Hymn of the Pearl¹³² and also recalls how the Bishop leading the prayer circle in the Syriac Testament of Our Lord "stands with upraised hands and offers a prayer at the veil," after which he proceeds "to make the sacrifice, the veil of the gate being drawn aside . . ."¹³³ St. Augustine's version of the Priscillian prayer circle ends with the apparently incongruous statement, "I am the Gate for whoever knocks on me," which Augustine explains in terms of Psalms 24:7, referring to the veil of the Temple.¹³⁴

The fullest expression of that altruism by which one saves oneself in saving others is a simple but ingenious device employed in the prayer circle; it was the "diptych," a sort of loose-leaf notebook or folded parchment placed on the altar during the prayer. It contained the names of persons whom the people in the circle wished to remember. The diptychs are among the oldest treasures preserved in the oldest churches. The name means "folded double," though the documents could be folded triple or quadruple as well if the list of

¹²⁸Haus Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1952), p. 700.

¹²⁹IQS, chap. 10, above, note 91.

¹³⁰Another veil was found by Stein, sloppily executed by an artist to whom the details were a puzzle. His constellations are unrecognizable save for the Great Bear, which is identical on both veils. (Stein, *Innermost Asia*, 2:708.)

¹³¹This is made perfectly clear in 3 Enoch, chaps. 10 and 12.

¹³²Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, pp. 246, 271.

¹³³Above, notes 5 and 6.

¹³⁴Above, note 4; PG 33:1037ff.

names was very long.¹³⁵ The prayer for the people on the list was never part of the later mass but was always a *litany*, a special appeal for certain persons: "By litanies one intercedes for certain classes of persons."¹³⁶ The original diptychs were the Consular diptychs, carried around by top Roman officials—the mark of the busy pagan executive in high office. According to Leclercq, when bishops became important figures in city politics, high government officials would present them with diptychs "as flattering presents."¹³⁷ As notebooks they were convenient and practical—just the thing for keeping and handling important lists of names, and to such a use the Christians gladly put them.¹³⁸ "In the place of the diptychs properly so designated [those used in government business] there were substituted at an early time notebooks or leaves or parchment which one would place on the altar during the celebration of the Mass. . . . Gradually the reading of the names (out loud) was given up, and the priest merely referred to all the faithful whose names were written down on the diptychs or the leaves taking the place of diptychs."¹³⁹ The practice of laying names on the altar is of unknown origin though it is very old and, it is agreed, may well go back to the days of the Apostles.¹⁴⁰ Confusion with the old Roman pagan custom of reading off the names of donors from such lists caused it to be repeatedly denounced by the early fathers in the West;¹⁴¹ but the problem never arose in the East, and "the laying of a small tablet containing the names is to this day the practice in the Western Syrian rite."¹⁴²

At first the list of names was read aloud before being placed on the altar, but as that took up too much time (one of the surviving lists has over 350 names) the reading was phased out; "the list could be placed on the altar without any vocal reading of the names."¹⁴³ The common practice of scratching one's name on the altar to assure inclusion in the prayers forever after may go back to old Jewish practice, for in 3 Enoch when the ministering angels utter the prayer (the Qaddish) "all the explicit names that are graven with a flaming

¹³⁵O. Stegmüller, in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1957), 3:1138.

¹³⁶Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, 4:1050.

¹³⁷*Ibid.*, 4:1095–96.

¹³⁸*Ibid.*, 4:1046–47; Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1140.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, 4:1061.

¹⁴⁰Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1138, 1147; Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, 4:1051, citing Bona.

¹⁴¹Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1143ff.; Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, 4:1059, noting that the donor lists were unknown in the East until Constantine introduced them from Rome.

¹⁴²Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1144–45.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, 3:1147, citing the famous Bobbio Missal.

style on the Throne of Glory fly off. . . . And they surround and compass the Holy One . . . on the four sides of the place of His Shekhina.”¹⁴⁴

Since the purpose of the prayer circle was to achieve total unity of minds and hearts, “keeping in mind the absent ones,” it was natural to include the dead as well as the living in remembrance. One prayed for himself “and also for all my relatives and close associates (*consanguinitate vel familiaritate*) and for all the Saints of the Church of God, as well as for those who died in the faith, who are recorded in my Book of Remembrance.”¹⁴⁵ We pray for ourselves, our brothers and sisters . . . and for those who have paid their due to death, whose names we have written down or whose names appear on the holy altar, “. . . and all who stand in the circle with faith recognition, with devotion and honor to thee.”¹⁴⁶ But in the earliest times the lists of the living and the dead were kept strictly separate “in two separate books.”¹⁴⁷ For the work for the dead was something special and apart. “We remember the dead,” wrote Epiphanius in the 4th century, “(1) by performing ritual prayers, (2) by carrying out certain ordinances, and (3) by making certain special arrangements (*oikonomias*).”¹⁴⁸ In the Clementine Recognitions when Clement asks Peter “Shall those be wholly deprived of the kingdom of heaven who died before Christ’s coming?” he receives a cautious answer: “You force me, Clement, to make public things that are not to be discussed. But I see no objection to telling you as much as we are allowed to.” He tells him of the spirits of the dead “retained in good and happy places” but refuses to explain how they are to be redeemed.¹⁴⁹ Likewise when Mary asks the Lord on behalf of the Apostles how “a good man who has completed all the ordinances” may save an undeserving relative who has died, she is told that the good man must repeat all the same ordinances again while naming “the soul of such-and-such a person, on whom I am thinking in my heart (mind) . . .” whom he thus mentally accompanies through “the proper number of circles (*kykloi*) in the transformations (*metaboliai*), as he becomes baptized and sealed with the signs (*psephoi*) of the

¹⁴⁴3 Enoch, chap. 39.

¹⁴⁵Quote is from Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1140. The names in the diptych show “by this meeting of individuals the close bond of communion and love which united all the members of the church” (Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d’archéologie*, 4:1049).

¹⁴⁶Ibid., 4:1061–62.

¹⁴⁷Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1144–46.

¹⁴⁸Epiphanius, *Adv. haeres.*, 3:77; 7:21, in Migne, *PG* 44:641ff.

¹⁴⁹Clementine Recognitions, 1:52; also in Hugh Nibley, *The World and the Prophets* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1962), pp. 153ff.

kingdom . . . and so advances.”¹⁵⁰ What these circles are the reader may decide for himself. “We remember not only the saints,” writes the Areopagite, “but our parents and friends, rejoicing in their condition in the refrigerium and praying that we too may finish this life worthily. We all join together in this.”¹⁵¹ The *refrigerium* referred to by the Areopagite means those “good and happy places” spoken of by Peter and Alma. The Greek name for it is *anapausis*, a place where you rest for a time, and the famous Stowe Missal says the members pray for all who are in the *anapausis*, “from Adam down to the present day, whose names are known to God . . . and also for us (the living) sinners.”¹⁵²

Lists beginning with Adam smack of genealogy, and we have already noted one person who prayed for all those “even including the faithful dead who are recorded in my Book of Remembrance” (note 145). In the fierce contentions between churches, from the second century (the Age of Heresy) on, in which each sought to establish its priority in authority and doctrine, the lists of Bishops were brought forth as the strongest proofs of rival claims tracing the line of each church down from Adam, Abel, Seth, etc., thus combining the idea of dispensation with that of genealogy. The idea of keeping such Bishop lists was inspired in the first place, Stegmüller maintains, by the general practice of keeping family records and genealogies among the Romans and Greeks; indeed it may go back to what Mommsen called “the genealogical mania” of the Hellenistic world.¹⁵³ In one of the earliest of all orthodox Christian writings, the Pastor of Hermas, when the angel asks the writer if he knows the names of the Elect, he replies, “I cannot keep them in my memory; give me a book and I will write them down.”¹⁵⁴ In his Confessions, St. Augustine requests, “Whoever reads this, please remember my mother and father at the altar,” for which purpose he gives their full names.¹⁵⁵

St. Augustine makes a sharp “distinction between the martyrs to whom one prays and the living *for whom one prays*.”¹⁵⁶ Typically Roman, Innocent I condemned the old Gallic and Celtic practices of praying “for all the faithful of this place as well as our kinsmen and

¹⁵⁰Pistis Sophia, pp. 325–26 (322–23).

¹⁵¹Anonymous (attributed to Origen), Commentary on Job, in Migne, PG 17:517.

¹⁵²Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, 4:1073.

¹⁵³Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1146–47.

¹⁵⁴Pastor of Hermas, vis. 2, in Migne, PG 2:895.

¹⁵⁵St. Augustine, *Confessions*, ix.

¹⁵⁶Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, 4:105

servants in this place” and limited the prayer to the official dead and recognized Saints of the Roman church though the order was not enforced outside of Italy until Charlemagne cracked down.¹⁵⁷ In the Eastern churches the lists and the prayers were always separate; it is specifically for the living, Chrysostom says, “that we pray standing with upraised hands.”¹⁵⁸ As Cyril of Jerusalem explains it, “In the circle we pray for those who are sick and afflicted; in short, we pray for whoever is in need of help.”¹⁵⁹ Cyril does not mention the list of names on the altar in this account, but he does elsewhere, referring to this very custom and specifying separate lists for the living and the dead.¹⁶⁰ In the Eastern churches “they prayed mentally for the living,” while the memento for the dead was something else, requiring, of course, the actual speaking of their names at some time. The prayer uttered for those whose names were on the altar was not a fixed formula, to judge by one old rubric giving instructions: “He (the leader) joins hands and prays for a while (no set limit); then he proceeds with his hands stretched out (*extensis*, extended): and all those standing in the circle join in.”¹⁶¹

The physicist Fritjof Capra in his “Reflections on the Cosmic Dance”¹⁶² calls attention to that “system of archetypal symbols, the so-called hexagrams,” formed of trigrams which were “considered to represent all possible cosmic and human situations,” in the religious philosophy of the Far East. To convey their message “the eight trigrams [are] grouped around a circle to the ‘natural order,’” the circle among other things “associated with the cardinal points and with the seasons of the year.” These rings, based on multiples of six and eight, he compares with the latest schemes and formulas of advanced physics for interpreting the universe. Not only is the basic circle of eight hexagrams in the *I Ching* “vaguely similar” to the way in which “the eight mesons . . . fall into a neat hexagonal pattern known as the ‘meson octet,’” but also the great ring-dance, “the sixty-four hexagrams . . . the cosmic arch-types on which the use of the *I Ching* as an oracle book is based,” (p. 270) presents “perhaps the closest analogy to the S-matrix theory in Eastern thought,” both

¹⁵⁷Ibid., 4:1071ff., 1073. Alcuin introduced the names of the dead into the regular prayer-lists of our ancestors, where they first appear in an Irish canon of circa 700 A.D. (Stegmüller, *Reallexikon*, 3:1144).

¹⁵⁸Chrysostom in Migne, *PG* 11:204.

¹⁵⁹Cyril of Jerusalem in Migne, *PG* 33:116.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., Epistle to Bishop Attalos of Cyprus, in Migne, *PG* 146:1137–49.

¹⁶¹Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, 4:1067.

¹⁶²F. Capra, “The Tao of Physics: Reflections on the Cosmic Dance,” *Saturday Review* (10 December 1977), pp. 21ff., being a summary of his book, *The Tao of Physics* (New York: Bantam Books, 1977), to which following page references refer. These quotations occur between pp. 268 and 272.

being as near as the mind of man can get to explaining reality and matter.

The various patterns and designs produced by ancient oriental religion and modern Western science do look a lot alike, and this is no accident, according to Capra, because they both represent the same reality, though why that should be so, and exactly what the reality is, and how the two systems of thought are related is beyond human comprehension at present and may remain so forever. What bids us take both systems seriously however is that each is not only perfectly consistent within itself, but that without any collusion both turn up the same series of answers. So there must be something behind it. This reminds us of Leisegang's discovery that "all these rites are in some way related, though today the nature of the connection can only be surmised."¹⁶³ The many ring dances to which he refers were also cosmic circles and must somehow fit into the same picture.

Yet one closes Capra's book, and a lot of others, with a feeling of disappointment. Somehow this Mayahana fails to get off the ground. What is wrong? In giving us a picture of the entire universe, including ourselves, both the Eastern sages and modern physics, covering the same ground in different ways, seem to leave out something very important. They give us the stage without the play. Granted it is magnificent stage, a universal stage with self-operating scene-shifts providing constant display of ever-changing light, color and sound, filling the beholder with genuine religious awe; still the more we see of it the more restless and disturbed we become. We are taken on a tour of the studio, but that is all. The sets are overpowering, they include the most dazzling space-science spectacles, but our tour-group becomes restive. Where are the actors, where is the show, what is the play? What is supposed to be *going on* here? The cosmic dance of particles whose nature we can never hope to grasp is not ultimately satisfying, even after we are convinced that that is all there is. "The divine *lila* is a rhythmic, dynamic play," Capra tells us.¹⁶⁴ Yet "ultimately there is nothing to explain," and "as long as we try to explain things we are bound by *Karma*." What you have seen is the whole show, for "every part 'contains' all the others. . . . Every particle consists of all other particles."¹⁶⁵ The "bootstrap principle" would quiet all complaints with its neat circular argument; e.g., one hadron (particle) produces other hadrons and

¹⁶³Above, note 114.

¹⁶⁴Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, p. 78.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 381ff., 285ff.

they produce *it*—don't ask how, because the process cannot be grasped in terms of anything in our own experience. So the only solution is to stop worrying or looking for explanations; you must settle for that because that is all there is. Learn to live with it: "Don't expect more and you will not be disappointed"; that is the sum and substance of the Wisdom of the East.

The whole thing rests in the end not on reason or experience, we are repeatedly told, nothing can be described or defined, but all depends on feeling and intuition. But if that is so, must we not have respect for our own deep-seated feelings in the matter? The fact is that we cannot escape that haunting discontent; there is surely more to the play than the properties. The prayer circles, Christian and Jewish, give us assurance of that.

The old Christian prayer circle does not pretend, as the Orientals do, to embrace the whole universe and to sum up all knowledge; it is merely a timid knocking at the door in the hopes of being let into what goes on in the real world. Mr. Capra completely ignores the Near Eastern and old European schemes and patterns in his survey, and they are quite as rich and ingenious and probably more ancient than their Far Eastern derivatives. The Jewish and Christian systems are late and confused as we get them, they wander in an apocalyptic mist that cannot distinguish between revelation and speculation, but the dominant idea is that there is more, much more, going on than we have yet dreamed of, but that it is all on the other side of the door. The Oriental shuts his eyes in mystic resignation and with infinite humility makes sure that we are aware of his quiet omniscience. He knows all there is to know, and that is the message.

It is Joseph Smith's prayer circle that puts it all together. Not only did he produce an awesome mass of purportedly ancient writings of perfect inner consistency, but at every point where his contribution is tested—and since he affects to give us concrete historical material as well as theology and cosmology it can be tested at countless points—it is found to agree with other ancient records, most of which are now coming to light for the first time. The prayer circle is one example of that; we may not discuss his version too freely, but we have seen enough of the early Christian prayer circle to justify some important conclusions:

1. It always appears as a solemn ordinance, a guarded secret and a "mystery" for initiates only. This does not express a desire to mystify but the complete concentration and unity of the participants that requires the shutting out of the trivia and distractions of the external world.

2. It always takes place in a special setting—the temple. Even in Christian churches of later time there is a conscious attempt to reproduce as nearly as possible the original temple situation.

3. The words and gestures do not always make sense to outsiders—only “he who has ears to hear” may hear, and only “he who joins in the circle knows what is going on.” This is because the prayer circles are integral parts of a longer series of ordinances that proceed and follow them; taken out of that context they necessarily seem puzzling.

4. Though private prayer-circles would seem to be out of the question (quackery, magic and witchcraft made use of them), the members of the circle are never those of a special social rank, family, guild or profession—they are ordinary men and women of the church, with a high-priest presiding.

In the Cairo Museum written on a huge shard of red pottery is an ancient Coptic liturgical text which provides a remarkable link between ancient Egyptian and early Christian beliefs. It is a Christian “Book of Breathings” with the name of Osiris (representing the initiate) replaced by that of Adam, as if the “Egyptian Endowment” were organically linked to the Christian. Equally instructive is the predominance of the prayer circle in the text and the cosmic significance given it. As its modern editor, L. Saint-Paul Girard notes, it has eight main divisions.¹⁶⁶

A. *Calling upon God:*

Line 1. (The Tau-Rho sign).¹⁶⁷ Hail El! Fathouriel,¹⁶⁸ who giveth

¹⁶⁶L. Saint-Paul Girard, “Un Fragment de Liturgie Magique Copte sur Ostrakon,” *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 27 (1927):62–67.

¹⁶⁷The earliest signs of the cross were formed by a Greek Chi (X) with the vertical shaft of a Greek Rho (P) or Iota (I) through the middle, or by a RHO with a horizontal bar below the loop (⌘, ⌚, ⌞). They were interchangeable and are found in varying combinations, being closely associated also with the “Crux Ansata,” the famous Egyptian *ankh* or life symbol: ⚡. For many examples, see Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d’archéologie*, 3:1481–1534. The classic Latin cross does not appear in the West until the fourth century and like the others seems to have come from Egypt (ibid., 1485ff.), and Leclercq is puzzled “that the Christians adopted a sign which ran serious risk of being misunderstood” (p. 1483). Not to worry: these symbols had conveyed for centuries the very ideas which the Christians wished them to represent in a new context, just as they borrowed current alphabets and other symbols of general acceptance to convey their own peculiar ideas. The symbol prefacing our text is both the monogram of Christ and the earliest symbol of the crucifixion; as such, it also designates the victory of light over the darkness as represented in the performance of the mysteries.

¹⁶⁸Phathouriel for Bathuriel, from Heb. Bait-tsuri-el, “the house of my strength is God,” or “My God My Rock” (Girard, citing Moise Schwab, *Vocabulaire de l’Angelologie*, s.v. (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1897); cf. Tsouri-el, “My Rock Is God” [H. Leclercq in Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d’archéologie*, 1:145].) Since the names El, Adonai, Eloï, and Abrasax invoked together at the opening of the rites are all designations of the supreme God, Bathuriel, as second on the list, must be another epithet for El. *Tsur* is properly a stone and a foundation; coming at the beginning of the rites it strongly suggests the Stone of Truth in the Egyptian initiation rites and the Eben Shetiyah of Hebrew tradition. (Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, pp. 120–24.)

2. strength (comfort?), who gives replies [antiphonei] to the angels!¹⁶⁹
3. Hail Adonai (My Lord), Hail Eloi (My God), Hail
4. Abrasax! Hail Iothael!¹⁷⁰ Hail
5. Mistrael (for Mizrael) who has looked upon the face of the Father¹⁷¹
6. in the power of Iao!¹⁷² KHOK.¹⁷³

B. *Solemn adjurations. Adam as the type of initiate.*

- I adjure you (i.e. put you under covenant),¹⁷⁴
7. by the first seal placed upon the bo-
 8. dy of Adam. I adjure you (a different word: "give the hand to," "make to swear")¹⁷⁵ by the second
 9. [seal] which is upon the members of Adam. I covenant with you
 10. by the third seal which marked the vitals (bowels)¹⁷⁶
 11. and also the breast (heart, mind)¹⁷⁷ of Adam, when he was brought low (cast down) to become dust (earth)

¹⁶⁹Girard alters *ef-ti phone nenankelos* ("who gives a voice to the angels") to *ef [an] tiphonei nenangelos*, "whose voice replies to the angels," because he cannot imagine the meaning of the former (Girard, "Un Fragment de Liturgie," p. 66, n. 2). The first suggests the Creation Hymn, the second the exchange of expressions at the conclusion of the rites (lines 24–27 below).

¹⁷⁰The names of Adonai, Eloi, and Abraxas are the most common found on those carved Gnostic gems called "Abraxas" or "Abrasax" (H. Leclercq in Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 1:2087–88. Such gems representing "the world of Alexandria and the Egyptian-Greek magical papyri" consist of "stones which figure in other superstitions as well" (August Friedrich von Pauly and Georg Wissowa, *Paulys Real-encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* . . . [Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1894–19], 1:110; hereafter cited as *RE*). St. Augustine writes "Basilides gives to the Almighty God the portentous name of ABRAXAS, and says it contains the number of the course of the year in the Sun's circuit, while the Gentiles designate the same number by the name of Meithra" (*Comm. in Amos* i, iii, in *PL* 25:108). In our text, Abrasax is an epithet of God as the ruler of all and the director and guide of the Mysteries: The most common type of Abrasax gem (of Egyptian origin, though their meanings have never been explained—*RE* 1:109–10) depicts the god as Anubis with the staff of office that shows him to be the psychopomp, conductor of souls or *paraleptor* (guide) through the mysteries; as such, he is identified with the classic Mercury and the Christian Michael (Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 1:134ff.). He is often shown as the mummified Osiris, with or without a crown (*ibid.*, 1:2127, Fig. 653).

¹⁷¹Mizrael is the angelic embodiment of divine authority (Girard, cit. Schwab, *Vocabulaire*), which enables him to see behind the veil (below, lines 23–24).

¹⁷²Iao is the common equivalent for Jehovah and God (H. Leclercq in Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 1:147, 141).

¹⁷³KHOK occurs in lines 29 and 32 as KOK. It introduces a new phase or change of scene and indicates that at this point certain actions take place. Our text, in the manner of a prompting sheet, contains only words recited, without describing acts or rites performed but only the point at which they take place. The Coptic word KOK is the common word for "disrobe" and related concepts, and may indicate changes in costume.

¹⁷⁴*Ti-ork ero-tn*, the *ero-* indicating "the person adjured," here in the plural, while the *n-* is the thing sworn by (W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary* [Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1939]). To adjure is to place another under solemn obligation by entering a covenant with him.

¹⁷⁵*Titarko* means literally "give the hand to" in token of covenant (Wilhelm Spiegelberg, *Koptisches Handwörterbuch* [Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1921]), "make to swear, adjure, entreat" (Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*).

¹⁷⁶*Roobe e-* as here means to set a mark or stamp upon, to impress upon, to leave a mark on. For vitals the original has *t-tchot*, meaning size, age, form, which Girard emends to *tsblot*, meaning "Kidney, also the internal organs" [possibly from the root *tchlodj*, bend, be interlaced]. It is the Hebrew *kliyyot*, "the reins, kidneys, inward parts" (Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*).

¹⁷⁷*P-het*, heart, mind, thought, reason; cf. the Greek, *stethos*, the breast as the receptacle of principles of thought, and Hebrew *leb* "the heart as the seat of various feelings, affections and emotions . . . and of moral sentiments" (Benjamin Davies, ed., . . . *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* [Boston: A. L. Bradley, 1875]).

C. *The healing of the man Adam*

12. until Jesus Christ stand bail for him (lit. takes him by the hand) in the embrace
13. of his Father.¹⁷⁸ The Father hath raised him up (or met him).¹⁷⁹

D. *The Breathing (Resurrection) motif*

He hath breathed in

14. his face and filled him with the breath of life. Send to me
15. thy breath of life, (even) to this true and faithful one (or, to this vessel)¹⁸⁰ Amen, amen, amen!

E. *A Type of the Crucifixion*

16. Sousa, sousa, sousa!¹⁸¹ I covenant with you by the three cries (of distress) which
17. The Son uttered on the cross, namely: Eloi, Eloi, A-
18. *blebaks atōnē*¹⁸² That is to say, God, my God, why (*djou*) has thou forsaken me?

F. *The Hymn*

19. Holy, Holy, Holy! Hail David the father (ancestor)
20. of Christ! He who sings praises (psalms) in the Church of the First-born (pl.) of heaven, Hail
21. David, theopa [tor?] (ancestor of the Lord), of the joyful ten-stringed lyre¹⁸³ who sings
22. within (the veil of) the altar¹⁸⁴
23. the joyful one (either David or the altar). Hail Hormosiel, who sings within the veil

¹⁷⁸The verb for covenant is here *sh[e]p tore*, vb. intr., "grasp the hand, be surety for, undertake" (Crum, *Coptic Dictionary*); with the object *mmof* (as here) it means "be surety for." *Hn m-thidj m-pef-eiot* Girard renders "entre les mains de son Pere," i.e., "in his embrace."

¹⁷⁹*Tahof erat.f* can mean either "set up," "establish," "cause to stand," or "meet with," "reach another."

¹⁸⁰The Coptic word *pites* Girard reads as Greek *pithos*, vessel, though he finds the idea "bizarre." Early Christian and Jewish writers, however, speak of the living body (which is the subject of this passage) as a vessel (*angeion*). Barnabas calls the living body "the blessed vessel" (*to kalon skeous*, Epist. 21, end). On the other hand, *pithos* is an alternative spelling for *peithos*, a Greek equivalent for *pithanos*, "obedient," "receptive," a fit epithet for initiate.

¹⁸¹Girard makes no attempt to interpret *sousa*, but since this is a cry for help, one thinks of the Greek imperative *soze* (mid. *soso*) or infin. mid. *sosai*, meaning *to rescue*. Some maintain that the name of Abrasax is derived from Habros and *Soa*, "gentle Savior" or "le magnifique sauveur" (H. Leclercq in Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'archeologie*, 1:129).

¹⁸²Is the unfamiliar Aramaic the subject of mystic speculation or just confusion? Girard restores it to *elema sabaktani*. The trouble seems to be the scribe's insistence on reading the last three syllables as the familiar Adonai (*atōnē*).

¹⁸³Girard alters *thea* to *theo* and borrows the *pat-* from the next word to get *theopator*, "l'ancetre du Christ," an epithet of David in Byzantine liturgy. *Pa.ti.tshittharashe* is divided into [pa] *ti-kithara* [n]rashe tamēt nkap, the harp of joy of ten strings. The ten-stringed harp is a cosmic concept, ten being the perfect number of the Pythagoreans.

¹⁸⁴After writing "veil of the altar" the scribe erased the "veil." The expression *p-houn m.pthesastrion* is for the Greek formula *entos tou thysiasterion*, meaning "inside the sanctuary" (William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957]), though *thyastherion* properly means altar.

G. Prayer Circle

24. of the Father!¹⁸⁵ They repeat after him, those who are at the entrances (gates,
25. doors) and those who are upon the towers (i.e. the watch men at the gates) And when they hear what he says, namely the tribes (or gates?) who
26. are within the Twelve Worlds, they joyfully
27. repeat it after him: Holy, Holy, One (or Jesus) Holy Father.¹⁸⁶ Amen,
28. Amen, Amen. Hail Arebrais in heaven and earth!
29. Then you (pl.) bless (praise God, pray),¹⁸⁷ *KOK* (meaning that at this point certain actions are performed). Hail O Sun! hail ye twelve little children
30. who overshadow (protect?) the body of the Sun!¹⁸⁸ Hail ye twelve phials
31. filled with water. They have filled their hands, they have scattered abroad
32. the rays of the Sun, lest they burn up the fruits
33. of the field¹⁸⁹ Fill thy hands, pronounce blessing upon this
34. cup. *KOK* [another ordinance]

H. Entering the Presence

- Hail ye four winds of heaven!
35. Hail ye four corners of the earth! (the inhabited earth, *oikoumene*)¹⁹⁰
 36. Hail ye hosts (*stratia*) of heaven (i.e. the stars)! Hail
 37. thou earth (land) of the inheritance
 38. Hail O garden (or power, authority) of the Holy Ones (saints)
 39. [of] the Father!¹⁹¹ One holy Father
 40. Holy [Son] Holy Ghost
 41. Amen.

¹⁸⁵Harmosiel is the exalted angel who sounds the trumpet and shares with Mizrael the privilege of beholding the Lord behind the veil. The Priscillianists were accused of worshipping him.

¹⁸⁶Harmosiel instructs them? Girard: "Cieux qui sont sur les portes et les tours font echo a sa voix" is quite specific.

¹⁸⁷*Is per bakios* for the Greek formula *Eis Pater Hagios*, though *Is*, is the common writing for Jesus, and such an identity is monophysite making Jesus identical with the Father. As it is, Girard must insert another *hagios* to make a proper trishagion.

¹⁸⁸Girard: "*Salut, o douze petits enfants qui protegez (?) le corps du soleil.*" Though this can also be read "minor servants," the reference to the little children in our prayer circle situation recommends the former. Also the preposition *mmof* would justify "screen from him the body of the Sun" (Walter Till, *Koptische Grammatik* . . . [Leipzig: VEB Verlag Enzyklopadie, 1970], #258). See the following note.

¹⁸⁹The twelve water jugs and reference to the watering of vegetation recall the peculiar arrangements of the prayer circles in 1 and 2 Jeu. According to Pistis Sophia, p. 84, the earth must be shielded from the rays of the sun by veils or curtains lest all life be consumed. Today, the filtering of the sun's rays by layers of atmosphere of various particles is held to be essential to sorting out life-giving rays from deadly ones and thus making vegetation and other life possible upon the earth.

¹⁹⁰The imagery of the closing passage belongs to the coronation rites. The four corners of the earth motif is basic. (See Hugh Nibley, "Facsimile No. 1, by the Figures," A New Look at the Pearl of Great Price, Part 8, *Improvement Era* 72 [August 1969]:82ff.) Paulinus of Nola associated the coronation and universal rule with the types of crosses discussed above, note 1 (Poema XIX, lines 638-41, in *PL* 61:546), a teaching confirmed by St. Ambrose and St. Jerome.

¹⁹¹*P-tchom* means either garden or authority; both are appropriate, the garden as the sanctified inheritance of the Saints, the authority being that with which the exalted "Holy Ones of the Father" are invested. The original text, however, has *p-shom*, which also makes sense, since it means "summertime," i.e., the "Summertime of the Just" when the Saints receive their celestial inheritance, e.g., the Pastor of Hermas.

Latter-day Saint Prayer Circles

D. Michael Quinn

A central characteristic of religious devotion is the existence of ordinances, rites, and special observances that not only symbolize sacred relationships between Deity and mankind but also bind together the religious participants as a group distinct from the unenlightened, the unconverted, and the uninitiated. One immediately thinks of such examples as the ancient practice of ordination by the laying on of hands, the sacrifice of animals, the Abrahamic circumcision, the Mosaic ceremonial cleansings and dietary laws, and the Christian baptism and sacrament. These ordinances have not only been clearly recorded in sacred history but have also been witnessed by non-believers.

This binding process in religion has often been achieved through secret as well as public rites. Latter-day Saint scholar Hugh Nibley has devoted much research to ancient ordinances that were "hidden from the world" and were intended to be experienced in sacred seclusion.¹ The importance of such study lies in the fact that within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are certain nonpublic ordinances that Mormon leaders have repeatedly affirmed are divine restorations of ancient ordinances of God.² LDS prophets have identified these as "temple ordinances," known as washing, anointing, endowment, sealing, and second anointing.³

Like other temple practices, the existence of a special "prayer circle" ceremony has been referred to in official publications of the

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¹See, for example, his "The Idea of the Temple in History," *Millennial Star* 120 (August 1958):228-37, 247-49; "Christian Envy of the Temple," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 50 (1959-60):97-123, 229-40; *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975).

²James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord: A Study of Holy Sanctuaries, Ancient and Modern* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1912), pp. 18, 99-100, 234-38; Franklin D. Richards, "The Temple of the Lord: The Importance of Temples, Ancient and Modern," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 11 (October 1920):146-49; John A. Widtsoe, "Fundamentals of Temple Doctrine," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 13 (July 1922):129.

³Examples are in Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), p. 779; James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1833-1964*, 6+ vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-), 2:228, 5:112; Nels B. Lundwall, comp., *Temples of the Most High*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1975), pp. 269-74; *Young Women's Journal* 5 (August 1894):513.

LDS Church.⁴ The specific ceremony of prayer in the LDS prayer circle is known as the “true order of prayer”⁵ and has been described in Church-related publications. For example, in 1933 the Church periodical *Improvement Era* printed the following statement:

President [Lorenzo] Snow put on his holy temple robes, repaired again to the same sacred altar, offered up the signs of the Priesthood and poured out his heart to the Lord.⁶

Moreover, a recent biography of LDS President Spencer W. Kimball gives this description of the weekly prayer circle of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

Every Thursday the Council of the Twelve met in a room on the [Salt Lake] Temple’s fourth floor. The apostles sat by seniority in twelve large oak chairs, in a crescent around an upholstered altar. Harold B. Lee played a small organ in the corner as they opened with a hymn. Then all twelve, dressed in temple clothes, formed a prayer circle around the altar. The prayer completed, they changed back to street clothes to handle the Quorum’s business.⁷

In addition, LDS prayer circle organizations published their own histories in 1895 and in 1929.⁸ Thus, through publications of the LDS Church, one may learn that an ordinance of the temple is known as the prayer circle, that it requires the participants to pray in a circle as they are dressed in holy temple clothing, and that the prayer is accompanied by offering certain signs of the priesthood at an altar.

PRECEDENTS TO THE LDS PRAYER CIRCLE

One ancient predecessor of the LDS prayer circle is found in the ceremonies of the early Christian Church. Deriving from a practice apparently inaugurated at the Last Supper, this apostolic prayer circle is described in the apocryphal Acts of John (first published in English in 1897): “He bade us therefore make as it were a ring, holding

⁴*Deseret News*, 12 June 1923; Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols., 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970), 7:390, 552, 554 (hereafter cited as *HC*); and *Aaronic Priesthood Leadership Materials, 1973–1974* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1973), p. 7; Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:256.

⁵Bathsheba W. Smith, “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” *Juvenile Instructor* 27 (1 June 1892):345.

⁶LeRoi C. Snow, “An Experience of My Father’s,” *Improvement Era* 36 (August 1933):667.

⁷Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball, Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball: Twelfth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977), p. 207. See also Lawrence Clayton, ed., *William Clayton’s Journal* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1921), p. 203.

⁸*A Token of Love from the Members of the John Taylor Prayer Circle to Patriarch Joseph Horne* (Salt Lake City: The John Taylor Prayer Circle, 1895); *History of the Elders’ Quorum Prayer Circle, Salt Lake City, 1893–1929* (Salt Lake City: n.p., n.d.).

one another's hands, and himself standing in the midst he said: 'Answer Amen unto me.'"⁹ Hugh Nibley's research into a large number of Greek, Syriac, and Coptic texts has produced a composite overview indicating that certain elements of Latter-day Saint prayer circle ceremonies are recognizable on many occasions in these ancient rites. Some ancient texts require prayer circle participants to wash their hands, or to receive secret words and ordinances, or to be dressed in special clothing. Other texts require them to harbor no ill feeling toward their neighbors, to pray in the circle with uplifted hands, or foot to foot, or holding hands. Generally the participants in these ancient rites repeated the speaker's words in antiphonal manner and copied his actions as he led the circle in prayer either at an altar or at a veil.¹⁰

Closer to Joseph Smith's own time and place was the use of circle worship among nineteenth century participants in American Protestant revivals. At the most famous revival of that era in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, one eyewitness wrote in 1801 that the revivalists "collected in small circles of 10 or 12."¹¹ Moreover, in the Methodist Episcopal revivals of the 1820s and 1830s, "when the invitation was given, there was a general rush, the large 'prayer ring' was filled, and for at least two hours prayer ardent went up to God."¹² As is well known, Joseph Smith and most other leaders of the early LDS Church had observed or participated in Protestant revivals.

Contemporary with the impact of religious revivalism in America was the influence of Freemasonry. In Masonic ritual of that era there was a prayer ceremony which an official Masonic source described as follows: "...Lodges were opened at sunrise, the Master taking his station in the East and the brethren forming a half circle around him."¹³ From other sources it appears that after the Masons unitedly repeat the Masonic signs previously received, "The brethren

⁹Acts of John, 94-96, in M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), pp. 253-54. James dates this document as "not later than the middle of the second century" (ibid., p. 228). An English translation of the New Testament apocrypha had been available in print at least as early as 1820, but at that time the Acts of John was noted as one of "the Apocryphal Pieces not now extant." (See *The Apocryphal New Testament*, trans. William Hone [London: William Hone, 1820].) The Acts of John was first published in *Apocrypha Anecdota, Second Series*, ed. M. R. James in *Texts and Studies: Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature*, ed. J. A. Robinson, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891-1952), vol. 5, no. 1, p. ix.

¹⁰Hugh Nibley, "The Early Christian Prayer Circle," in this issue of *BYU Studies*.

¹¹As cited in Catherine C. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West, 1797-1805* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916), p. 79.

¹²Rev. James Erwin, *Reminiscences of Early Circuit Life* (Toledo, Ohio: Spear, Johnson & Co., 1884), p. 68.

¹³Albert G. Mackey, *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, 2 vols., rev. ed. (New York: The Masonic History Company, 1920), 2:577.

assemble around the altar, and form a circle, and stand in such a position as to touch each other, leaving a space for the Most Excellent Master; [who] . . . then kneels, joins hands with the others, which closes the circle.”¹⁴ Joseph Smith became a Master Mason on 16 March 1842, but had associated for a number of years with such loyal Masons as Hyrum and John Smith, Heber C. Kimball, Newel K. Whitney, James Adams, George Miller, and John C. Bennett.¹⁵

With its Methodist, Masonic, and early Christian antecedents, the LDS prayer circle did not arise without parallels. In fact, historical parallels are the strength of the firm LDS position that Mormonism is not a new creation but instead in its most essential features is a restoration of those sacred doctrines and practices revealed by God to man from the beginning. In Mormonism the reception of divine revelation is an active, responsive process, rather than a passive operation. If Joseph Smith had any knowledge of these earlier practices of prayer, then that partial understanding served as an incentive for him to seek divine and more complete instruction.

DEVELOPMENT OF LDS PRAYER CIRCLE (1829–1846)

Although conventional forms of public and private prayer were practiced within the LDS Church from its earliest years, there were significant variations in the conduct of prayer. Physical objects were sometimes used in connection with prayer. Between 1827 and 1829 the Prophet Joseph Smith sought revelation through the Urim and Thummim as well as through a Seer Stone.¹⁶ Oliver Cowdery was by revelation given the gift of working with a “rod of nature . . . and therefore whatsoever you shall ask me to tell you by that means, that will I grant unto you, that you shall know.”¹⁷ Moreover, during the

¹⁴David Bernard, *Light on Masonry: A Collection of All the Most Important Documents on the Subject of Speculative Free Masonry* (Utica, N.Y.: William Williams, 1829), pp. 116–17; also pp. 15, 28.

¹⁵For further analysis of this relationship, see E. Cecil McGavin, *Mormonism and Masonry* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956); Mervin B. Hogan, “Utah’s Memorial to Free Masonry,” *Royal Arch Mason* 11 (Fall 1974):199–204; and Kenneth W. Godfrey, “Joseph Smith and the Masons,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 64 (Spring 1971):79–90.

¹⁶B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century I*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 1:129, 2:106; Doctrine and Covenants, introductions to Sections 3, 6, 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, and 17.

¹⁷*A Book of Commandments for the Government of the Church of Christ* (Zion [Independence, Mo.]: W. W. Phelps & Co., 1833), p. 19. “In the revelation to Oliver Cowdery in May 1829, Bro. [B. H.] Roberts said that the gift which the Lord says he has in his hand meant a stick which was like Aaron’s Rod. It is said Bro. Phineas Young [brother-in-law of Oliver Cowdery and brother of Brigham Young] got it from him [Cowdery] and gave it to President Young who had it with him when he arrived in this [Salt Lake] valley and that it was with that stick that he pointed out where the Temple should be built.” Anthon H. Lund Journal, 5 July 1901, Archives Division, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Church Historical Department).

Nauvoo period Apostle Heber C. Kimball “inquired by the rod” in prayer.¹⁸

Prayer in a circle was inaugurated in the LDS School of the Prophets at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1833, according to a reminiscence of Zebedee Coltrin fifty years later:

They opened with prayer, Joseph then gave instructions to prepare their minds. He told them to *kneel and pray with uplifted hands*. . . . About the time that the school was first organized some wished to see an angel, and a number *joined in the circle, and prayed*. When the vision came, two of the brethren shrank and called for the vision to close or they would perish.¹⁹

In the LDS Church, prayer was conducted in a circle as early as 1833, but this was after the conventional manner of Protestant revival “prayer rings.” When Mormons prayed in a circle before 1842, they did not offer those prayers as a part of intricate rites as was done anciently and after 1842.

Even the revelation of 19 January 1841, which spoke of William Law’s receiving “the keys by which he may ask and receive blessings” (D&C 124:97), did not refer to the true order of prayer. Joseph Smith’s remarks to a theological lyceum at Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1841 indicate that the 1841 revelation had reference to the manner in which Deity is named:

The Great God has a Name By w[h]ich he will be Called Which is Ahman—also in asking have Referance to a personage like Adam for God made Adam Just in his own Image Now this [is] a key for you to know how to ask & obtain.²⁰

Not until 1842 did Joseph Smith give instructions and priesthood ordinances that constituted what was known first as “the holy order” and became known later as the “endowment.”

On 4 May 1842 Hyrum Smith, William Law, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, Newel K. Whitney, George Miller, William Marks, and James Adams met “in Joseph’s private office, where Joseph taught the ancient order of things for the first

¹⁸Heber C. Kimball 1844–1845 Journal, 6 June 1844, 5 July 1844, 25 January 1845, Church Historical Department.

¹⁹Minutes of the School of the Prophets, Salt Lake City, 11 October 1883, p. 69, Church Historical Department; italics added.

²⁰Record of William P. McIntire, Church Historical Department. McIntire’s record has no page numbers and is only sketchily dated. The first entry is mistakenly dated 8 January 1840, since the second entry is dated “Tuesday the 12,” which was Tuesday, 12 January 1841. From the latter date until his summary of the April 1841 conference, the meetings are indicated without any designation of date or day of the week. Apparently the lyceum met weekly, in which case the statement quoted in the text was given on 9 March 1841.

time in these last days, and recieved [their] washings, anointings and endowments.”²¹ It is very likely that the true order of prayer was included, for Heber C. Kimball wrote Apostle Parley P. Pratt on 17 June 1842: “We have recieved some pressious things through the Prophet on the preasthood that would caus your Soul to rejoice I can not give them to you on paper fore they are not to be riten.”²²

Although the order of prayer may have been instituted as early as 1842, the organization of a prayer circle was not complete until 1843. The initial meeting for this purpose occurred on 26 May 1843, involving eight of the men who had received the 1842 priesthood endowment, plus additional men. A summary of this May 1843 meeting is the first entry in a document at the LDS Archives titled, “Meetings of the anointed Quorum, Journalizing, 1843–4.”²³ The full establishment of a prayer circle that included women occurred on 28 September 1843, which is described as follows in the published *History of the Church*:

At half-past eleven, a. m., a council convened over the store, consisting of myself, my brother Hyrum, Uncle John Smith, Newel K. Whitney, George Miller, Willard Richards, John Taylor, Amasa Lyman, John M. Bernhisel, and Lucien Woodworth; and at seven in the evening we met in the front upper room of the Mansion, with William Law and William Marks. By the common consent and unanimous voice of the council, I was chosen president of the special council.

The president led in prayer that his days might be prolonged until his mission on the earth is accomplished, have dominion over his

²¹Elden Jay Watson, ed., *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801–1844* (Salt Lake City: Smith Secretarial Service, 1968), p. 116. HC 5:1–2 omits William Law and William Marks from the list of men, which is in error as shown in the following sources: Heber C. Kimball 1840–1845 Journal, before the 1845 entries in a passage in a section titled “Strange Events”: “June [sic] 1842 I was aniciated into the ancient order was washed and annointed and Sealled and ordained a Preast, and Soforth in company with nine others. Viz Josept Smith Hiram Smith Wm Law Wm Law Marks Judge Adams, Brigham Young, Willard Richards, George Miller–N K Whitney,” and in Heber C. Kimball 1845–1846 Journal (21 December 1845), p. 159: “About 4 years ago next May [i.e., May 1842] nine persons were admitted into the Holy order 5 are now living–B. Young–W. Richards George Miller N. K. Whitney & H. C. Kimball two are dead [James Adams and Hyrum Smith], and two are worse than dead [the apostatized William Law and William Marks].” HC 5:1–2 also errs in stating that in May 1842 these men obtained “the highest order of the Melchisedek Priesthood.” This particular entry was not a quote from Joseph Smith’s journal, which was not begun in the 1842 period until December 1842; the published HC entry appears instead to have been a reconstruction of the May 1842 event by the Church Historian several years later. It is clear from the organization of the Quorum of the Anointed on 28 September 1843 that the “highest order of the Melchisedek Priesthood” cannot be obtained by men alone but must be obtained by men in connection with their wives through the ordinance of second anointing. See discussion below, fn. 31, and D&C 131:1–4; 132:19–20.

²²Kimball to Pratt, 17 June 1842, Parley P. Pratt and Heber C. Kimball Papers, Church Historical Department.

²³“Meetings of the anointed Quorum, Journalizing, 1843–4,” included with Joseph Smith Journals; Joseph Smith, Jr., Journal, 26 May 1843, Church Historical Department; HC 5:409.

enemies, all their households be blessed, and all the Church and the world.²⁴

The reference to Joseph Smith's being chosen president of a special council has caused one historian and Joseph Smith's most recent biographer to conclude that this was an early organization of the theocratic Council of Fifty,²⁵ a misinterpretation which results from a textual alteration made in the published history. Instead of the words: "I was chosen president of the special council," the original record reads: "Baurak Ale was by common consent & unanimous voice chosen president of the Quorum & anointed & ordained to the highest order of the priesthood (& Companion—d[itt]o."²⁶ Baurak Ale was a designation for Joseph Smith, Jr., and his companion on this occasion was his wife Emma.²⁷ The "Quorum" mentioned was often designated the "Quorum of the Anointed," "The Holy Order of the Holy Priesthood," or "The Holy Order" in the diaries of its Nauvoo participants and in the official records available about its meetings. A reference to "quorum" in a diary or other record is too vague in itself to assume application to a prayer circle. Nevertheless, the sources are sufficiently abundant that by cross-checking different sources for the same date it is possible to identify the Nauvoo prayer circle when it was described by its various names.

Women were excluded from the Holy Order for more than a year after Joseph Smith administered the endowment to nine men in May 1842. This may have been the result of the scandals surrounding the apostasy of John C. Bennett. Bennett was disfellowshipped three weeks after Joseph Smith introduced the Holy Order, and within a month Bennett began publishing an exposé charging Joseph Smith with introducing spiritual wifery and a female lodge of Masonry (actually a reference to the Relief Society). In the cross-currents of

²⁴HC 6:39.

²⁵Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1967), p. 59; Donna Hill, *Joseph Smith: The First Mormon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), p. 367.

²⁶Joseph Smith Journal, 28 September 1843; "Meetings of the anointed Quorum," 28 September 1843; Manuscript History of the Church, 28 September 1843, Church Historical Department.

²⁷See D&C 103:21. Emma Smith's participating in the Holy Order continued into 1844, as indicated in the "Strange Events" section of Heber C. Kimball's 1840-45 Journal prior to his 1845 entries: "January 1844 my wife Vilate and menny females was received in to the Holy order and was washed and inointed by Emma." Also Heber C. Kimball's 1844-1845 Journal states on 4 October 1844: "4 Friday Met in council at Sister Emma Smith in Company with my Bre of the Twelve the Bishops and the Temple commity and expressed our feelings to her & [what] our intentions ware she seemed pleased with our course. it seamed like old times." The latter passages of this entry were omitted in HC 7:283.

charges and denials that Joseph Smith had proposed spiritual marriage to Sarah M. Pratt, wife of Orson Pratt, both Apostle Pratt and his wife were excommunicated from the LDS Church in the summer of 1842 by their own request. This seems to be what Heber C. Kimball was referring to in 1845 when he said that women were not admitted to the Holy Order at first because men had been led by their wives out of the Church.²⁸ When Bennett was falsely claiming in 1842 that Joseph Smith had established a female lodge of Masonry, there is no evidence that Joseph Smith even hinted that women would be admitted to the Holy Order, or endowment. It was not until the summer of 1843, six months after the Pratts were reinstated into the Church and after the Bennett scandal appeared to have faded away, that Joseph Smith prepared to admit women to the Holy Order.²⁹

Beginning 28 September 1843, the wives of previously endowed men were given the ordinances of anointing and endowment in order to join the prayer circle, and other men and women were admitted to the Anointed Quorum each week. By the time Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith were murdered in June 1844, more than sixty-five persons were members of the Quorum of the Anointed.³⁰ Following

²⁸Heber C. Kimball 1845–1846 Journal, 21 December 1845, p. 159. Bennett's allegations regarding the Holy Order, Sarah M. Pratt, and a female Masonic lodge appeared in *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, Ill.), 8 July, 15 July, 2 September 1842. Pratt's case is described in T. Edgar Lyon, "Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader" (Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1932), pp. 34–44.

²⁹HC 4:604 presents minutes of the Nauvoo Female Relief Society which would seem to indicate that as early as 28 April 1842, Joseph Smith had suggested that the women would one day receive the ordinances of the endowment and participate in the prayer circle: "He spoke of delivering the keys of the Priesthood to the Church and said that the faithful members of the Relief Society should receive them in connection with their husbands, that the Saints whose integrity has been tried and proved faithful, might know how to ask the Lord and receive an answer; for according to his prayers, God had appointed him elsewhere." However, none of the italicized words in this quote from the published *History of The Church* were in the original minutes. See Nauvoo Female Relief Society Minutes, p. 37, Church Historical Department. No document presently extant supports the conclusion that Joseph Smith suggested prior to 1843 that women would receive the endowment and participate in the prayer circle.

³⁰Alphabetical list of persons who were admitted to the Quorum of the Anointed during the lifetime of Joseph Smith and who participated with him in weekly prayer circle meetings: James Adams and wife Mary, Almon W. Babbitt, John M. Bernhisel, Reynolds Cahoon and wife Thirzah, William Clayton, Alpheus Cutler and wife Lois, Sister [Elizabeth?] Durfee, Joseph Fielding and wife Hannah, John P. Greene, Orson Hyde and wife Marinda Nancy, Heber C. Kimball and wife Vilate, Joseph C. Kingsbury, William Law and wife Jane, Cornelius P. Lott and wife Permelia, Amasa M. Lyman, William Marks and wife Mary Catherine, George Miller and wife Mary Catherine, Isaac Morley and wife Lucy, Fanny Young Murray, William W. Phelps and wife Sally, Orson Pratt, Parley P. Pratt and wife Mary Ann, Levi Richards, Willard Richards and wife Jenetta, Sidney Rigdon, Agnes C. Smith, George A. Smith and wife Bathsheba, Hyrum Smith and wife Mary, John Smith and wife Clarissa, Joseph Smith and wife Emma, Lucy Mack Smith, Samuel H. Smith, William Smith, Orson Spencer and wife Catherine, John Taylor and wife Leonora, Mercy R. Fielding Thompson, Newel K. Whitney and wife Elizabeth Ann, Lyman Wight, Wilford Woodruff and wife Phoebe, Lucien Woodworth and wife Phebe, Brigham Young and wife Mary Ann, Joseph Young and wife Clarissa. See the brief record of "Meetings of the anointed Quorum"; the entries in the Wilford Woodruff Journal from 2 December

the example of Joseph and Emma Smith, many of the members of this group received the second anointing during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, to which President Wilford Woodruff publicly testified.³¹ Others, like Sidney Rigdon and Orson Pratt, participated alone, and therefore did not receive the second anointing in connection with a spouse. Male membership in the first prayer circle included only the most prominent leaders of the Church and Kingdom of God; in most cases they were General Authorities, or prominent in the bishopric of the Church or leadership of the Nauvoo Stake, whereas the other men in the Anointed Quorum who were still faithful to Joseph Smith in the spring of 1844 also became members of the Council of Fifty.³²

Prior to the death of Joseph Smith, it is significant that the female members of the Quorum of the Anointed were in nearly every case the monogamous wives of the male members of the group. Exceptions were Lucy Mack Smith (the mother of Joseph the Prophet and the widow of Patriarch Joseph Smith, Sr.), Agnes M. Coolbrith Smith (the widow of Joseph Smith's brother Don Carlos), Fanny Young Murray (widowed sister of Brigham Young), Mercy R. Fielding Thompson (widowed sister-in-law of Hyrum Smith), and "Sister Durfee" (who may have been the widow Elizabeth Davis Brackenbury Durfee). Aside from Lucy Mack Smith, the other four women were polygamous wives. Mercy Fielding Thompson was the plural wife of Hyrum Smith. Agnes Coolbrith Smith, Fanny Young Murray, and Elizabeth Davis Durfee were identified in contemporary and later sources as plural wives of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Moreover, a special case was Marinda Nancy Hyde who had been sealed in

1843 to 26 February 1844; the entries for September 1843 to May 1844 in Joseph Smith, Jr., Journal, in Roberts' *History of the Church*, and in Manuscript History of the Church; the entries of 7 and 10 December 1845 in Heber C. Kimball Journal—all the above manuscripts at Church Historical Department; and the list of members of the Quorum of the Anointed in the Newel K. Whitney 1833–45 Account Book in box 6, folder 15, Newel K. Whitney Family Collection, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. In the LDS Genealogical Library at Salt Lake City, microfilm #183,371 of the Nauvoo Temple Supplemental Record of Endowments is a list on pp. 66–67 of persons who received the endowment prior to 1845. Only fifty-three of the more than eighty members of the 1843–45 Anointed Quorum are listed, and most of the dates are inaccurate.

³¹*Young Women's Journal*, 5 (August 1894):513. For contemporary evidence, see Wilford Woodruff Journal, 20 January, 25 January–4 February 1844 and corresponding entries in "Meetings of the anointed Quorum"; in the Manuscript History of the Church; in HC 6:181–96; in "History of Joseph Smith," *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 22:406, 455, 586; and in Joseph Smith, Jr., Journal.

³²Compare the list of members of the Council of Fifty in 1844, as found in Hansen, *Quest for Empire*, p. 223, with list in fn. 30 above.

1842 to Joseph Smith as a plural wife, but participated with her husband Orson in the Holy Order.³³

During the lifetime of Joseph Smith only about seventeen percent of the women in the Holy Order were plural wives and little more than one third of the men had married plural wives. These men and women of the Holy Order were a select group, a religious elite within the Church, yet plural marriage was a minority practice among them. Scores of men and women were not allowed to participate in the Holy Order until after 1844, even though they had entered into polygamy during the lifetime of Joseph Smith. Therefore, during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, polygamy was only an appendage "to the highest order of the priesthood" established on 28 September 1843.

This "quorum" or prayer circle practiced during the life of Joseph Smith the ordinances that were subsequently administered in LDS temples. This is indicated in a fall 1844 journal entry by Joseph Fielding, brother-in-law of Patriarch Hyrum Smith:

When [Sidney] Rigdon had thus selected A party, he taught them those things which he had learned in the Quorum as it is called (ie) a Company on whom Joseph had conferred the Endowment, being clothed in Garments and received the last ~~that~~ [sic] Instructions that Joseph could give them, being washed and anointed &c these things were to [be] kept sacred, as it was not to become a general thing till the Temple be finished, Rigdon was admitted there A short time be-

³³Andrew Jenson, "Plural Marriage," *Historical Record* 6 (May 1887):233-34, and Joseph F. Smith, Jr., *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1905), pp. 81-105, contain lists of the wives of Joseph Smith as well as the affidavits of other men and women who stated that they had entered into sanctioned plural marriages during the lifetime of Joseph Smith. Agnes Smith was shown as "Mrs. A**** S****" in the list of Joseph Smith's wives in John C. Bennett, *The History of the Saints; or, An Expose of Joe Smith and Mormonism* (Boston: Leland & Whiting, 1842), p. 256. In 1892, a formal plural wife of William Smith testified that when she married Smith in polygamy in 1843 she was living with Agnes M. Smith who was at that time a plural wife of Joseph Smith. This testimony was omitted from the abstract of evidence published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. See Testimony of Mary Ann West in U. S. Circuit Court (8th Circuit) Testimony (1892), Manuscript Transcripts, Church Historical Department, d 1160, box 1, folder 8, #23, questions 676-679, and compare with *Complainant's Abstract of Pleading and Evidence* ("Temple Lot Case") (Lamoni, Iowa: Herald House, 1893), pp. 381-82. Elizabeth Davis Durfee was listed by Bennett's *History of the Saints* as "Mrs. D*****" and she was identified elsewhere as a plural wife of Joseph Smith. (See Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, 2nd ed. rev. [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972], p. 469.) Mrs. Durfee was sealed by proxy to Joseph Smith for eternity under her maiden name Elizabeth Davis on 22 January 1846 in the Nauvoo Temple. Marinda Nancy Hyde was sealed to Joseph Smith in February 1842 according to an entry in the Joseph Smith Journal on the page following the entry for 14 July 1843. The best recent studies of Nauvoo polygamy are Daniel W. Bachman, "A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage before the Death of Joseph Smith" (Master's thesis, Purdue University, 1975), and William Lawrence Foster, "Between Two Worlds: The Origins of Shaker Celibacy, Oneida Community Complex Marriage, and Mormon Polygamy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1976), pp. 189-360.

fore these troubles took Place, almost the last that was admitted [as of the writing of this entry at the end of 1844].³⁴

The Quorum of the Anointed met for the true order of prayer and for ordinance work at least weekly in four separate locations during Joseph Smith's lifetime: from September to November 1843 in the front upper room of the Mansion House, from November to December 1843 in the southeast room of Joseph Smith's Homestead, from December 1843 until June 1844 in the Assembly Room over Joseph Smith's store, and on a few occasions in January-February 1844 in Brigham Young's house. After 1844 Emma Smith no longer participated in the Holy Order, and its meetings were held in the homes or stores of other members of the Anointed Quorum. Attendance at the prayer circle of the Holy Order varied from half a dozen to forty persons at each meeting.³⁵

Although this first prayer circle organization of endowed persons was called "the Quorum," there is no evidence that the Quorum of the Anointed functioned in any sense as a priesthood quorum in governing administrative matters of the Church and Kingdom of God. It is true that male members of the Anointed Quorum often met together for prayer meetings and to conduct administrative business, but in the context of these meetings it is obvious that these men were acting in their capacity as church leaders or as members of the political Council of Fifty. Had the Quorum of the Anointed itself been conducting church business, then female members of the "quorum" would also have been involved, which was not the case. Even when male members of the Anointed Quorum conducted administrative business, they sometimes made a distinct separation between meeting in their church capacity to discuss administrative

³⁴Joseph Fielding 1843-1859 Journal, pp. 63-64, entry for ca. Fall of 1844, Church Historical Department. In addition, Ebenezer Robinson, an editor of the *Nauvoo Times and Seasons* who became disaffected from the Church and left Nauvoo in 1844, later wrote: "We here state a few facts which came under our personal observation. As early as 1843 a *secret order* was established in Nauvoo, called the HOLY ORDER, the members of which were of both sexes, in which, we were credibly informed, scenes were enacted representing the garden of Eden, and that members of that order were provided with a peculiar under garment called a *robe*." *The Return* 2 (April 1890):252, reprinted in E. Cecil McGavin, *Mormonism and Masonry*, 4th ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956), p. 136.

³⁵For meeting places during Joseph Smith's lifetime, see Joseph Smith Journal, 28 September, 12 November, 2 December 1843, 22 January, 27 January, 12 May 1844. In Heber C. Kimball 1844-45 Journal are the following specific references: 11 August 1844: "we met in the Holly order at B Young," 1 October 1844: "had a meeting at my hous in the Evning of the Holy order praid fore the sick and fore the Govner," 26 January 1845: "in the Evning the Holly Preasthood meet Over Elder Parley P Pratt Store Elder Page Recieved his admittance in to the holy order," 20 March 1845: "The holly order met in the Evning at B Nobles," 4 April 1845: "Last Evning the holly order met at W Richards we felt the pawor of God," 29 October 1845: "The Brethren of the Holy Order met at John Taylors Morning and evening for prayer."

matters and meeting as the Quorum of Anointed to have a prayer circle about the matters discussed. For example, on 25 June 1845, five apostles and the two general bishops of the Church met to discuss letters from William Smith and General Jonathan Dunham. They ended their meeting at noon and reconvened three hours later with two other members of the Anointed Quorum to hold a prayer circle in which they prayed about the letters discussed at the earlier meeting. The difference between priesthood council and the function of the Holy Order was distinct.³⁶

The clearest evidence that the Quorum of the Anointed or Holy Order was not a governing council in the Church and Kingdom of God can be seen in a crucial incident that occurred on 11 December 1845 in the Nauvoo Temple. The men and women of the Anointed Quorum conducted a prayer circle in the Celestial Room of the temple, and "After we got through president Young called the following persons into Heber's Room viz. H. C. Kimball, P. P. Pratt, J. Taylor, O. Hyde, John E. Page, George A. Smith, Amasa Lyman, Newel K. Whitney, George Miller and Wm Clayton." Brigham Young presented to them a letter from Samuel Brannan which indicated there would be opposition by the U.S. government to the movement of the Latter-day Saints from Nauvoo into the Western regions. The men (eight apostles, the two general bishops of the Church, and the clerk) discussed this serious matter, prayed in the true order about it, and "After we got through there was a unanimous feeling that the Lord would answer our prayers and defeat our enemies. Prest Young said we should go away from here in peace in spite of our enemies."³⁷

If the Anointed Quorum had been a governing council, then it would have been presented with this potentially disastrous information and would have discussed and prayed about it. Instead, Brigham Young dismissed the Quorum of the Anointed and called together only the apostles, the general bishops, and a clerk for the meeting. Moreover, eight members of the Council of Fifty were excluded from this crucial meeting even though they had participated in the prayer circle of the Anointed Quorum immediately prior to the priesthood council.³⁸ All available evidence shows that the Holy Order's only

³⁶Heber C. Kimball 1840-1845 Journal, 25 June 1845.

³⁷Heber C. Kimball 1845-1846 Journal, 11 December 1845; Manuscript History of the Church, 11 December 1845; *HC* 7:544.

³⁸The members of the Council of Fifty who participated in the prayer circle of the Quorum of the Anointed but who were not invited to this important meeting immediately thereafter were—Alpheus Cutler, Isaac Morley, Orson Spencer, Joseph Young, Cornelius P. Lott, John Smith, John M. Bernhisel, John D. Lee, and William W. Phelps (Heber C. Kimball 1845-1846 Journal, 11 December 1845).

administrative function pertained to the conduct of the endowment ordinances from 1843 to 1845. For example, on 14 December 1845, the Anointed Quorum voted to sustain the rules Brigham Young had presented to them for the future conduct of temple ordinances.³⁹

Having thus conferred the keys and form of the true order of prayer, Joseph Smith apparently also authorized members of the Anointed Quorum to practice the order of prayer apart from the rest of the prayer circle. While Heber C. Kimball was campaigning for Joseph Smith's presidential candidacy in Washington, D.C., he recorded in his journal on 6 June 1844: "Last nite I clothed my self and offerd up the Sines of the Holy Preasthood—and called one the nam of the Lord he hurd me fore my heart was mad comfortable," and a month later he and Apostle Lyman Wight obtained confirmation of the actuality of the martyrdom in answer to the order of prayer.⁴⁰

During the life of Joseph Smith, the limited membership of the Anointed Quorum tended naturally to make its members feel that they were part of a spiritual elite. After the death of Joseph Smith, the perils of mob action and apostasy combined to cause the apostles and other leading men of the Anointed Quorum to decide on 9 August 1844 to add no new members: "Quorum [was] conversed about voted no ~~women~~ men to be admitted in the Quorum till times will permit."⁴¹ Both the camaraderie and isolation of the members of the Holy Order during this period are indicated in a letter of Wilford Woodruff to Heber C. Kimball on 12 May 1845: "Please remember me to all of the (Holy) Quorum. I should esteem it a great favour to meet occasionally with you or even to meet with any one who had received their endowment."⁴²

The membership of the Holy Order was temporarily restricted because, as Joseph Fielding had written in 1844, Joseph Smith intended the endowment "not to become a general thing till the Temple be finished." Apparently no new members were admitted between 14 May 1844 and 25 January 1845. Existing evidence indicates that only fifteen persons joined the Holy Order from January to December 1845.

In contrast to the composition of those admitted to the Holy

³⁹Ibid., 14 December 1845.

⁴⁰Heber C. Kimball 1844–1845 Journal, 6 June and 12 July 1844.

⁴¹Willard Richards Journal, 9 August 1844, Church Historical Department.

⁴²Woodruff to Kimball, 12 May 1845, Heber C. Kimball Papers. Parentheses in the original.

Order during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, most of the 1845 additions to the Quorum of the Anointed gave obvious prominence to the practice of plural marriage. Louisa Beaman, Eliza R. Snow, and Olive G. Frost had been sealed as plural wives to Joseph Smith during his lifetime, and after his death were married “for time” to Brigham Young prior to these three women’s joining Brigham Young in the Holy Order in 1845. Zina D. Huntington Jacobs had been sealed to Joseph Smith in 1841, and she apparently joined the prayer circle of the Holy Order in 1845. Lucy Decker married Brigham Young as his first plural wife in 1842, and she joined him in the Anointed Quorum in 1845. Her mother, Harriet Page Wheeler Decker, was sealed in polygamy to Brigham Young’s brother in 1843 and joined the Holy Order in 1845 sometime after her daughter was admitted. Sarah Ann Whitney Kingsbury and Sylvia P. Sessions Lyon had been sealed in plural marriage to Joseph Smith in 1842 and were admitted to the Holy Order in 1845, about the same time that they were also sealed “for time” to Heber C. Kimball. Apostle Kimball’s daughter Helen Mar Kimball, another plural wife of Joseph Smith, also entered the Holy Order in 1845. Joseph B. Noble had performed the first polygamous marriage at Nauvoo when he sealed his wife’s sister Louisa Beaman to Joseph Smith, and both Brother Noble and his wife Mary Adeline entered the Holy Order in 1845. Brigham Young’s effort to institutionalize the practice of plural marriage is reflected in the fact that of the fifteen persons admitted to the Holy Order in 1845, nine were women who had entered plural marriage with the sanction of the Prophet Joseph Smith.⁴³

⁴³Heber C. Kimball 1844–45 Journal, 25–26 January, 20–21 March, 17 April, 2 May, 31 July 1845, and Zina D. Huntington Jacobs Diary, 3 July 1845, both at Church Historical Department; and the list of members of the Holy Order in Newel K. Whitney’s 1833–45 Account Book, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU. Aside from those listed in the text, the above sources also show that John E. Page and his wife Mary, Charles Hyde, and Maria L. Tanner Lyman also entered the Holy Order in 1845. Whitney’s record presents the list of members in a manner that corresponds with the dates the individuals or couples (according to the husband’s entry date) were admitted into the Holy Order, with the last verified admission prior to the Martyrdom being that of Lyman Wight on 14 May 1844. Following Wight’s name are the names of thirteen persons, and the first seven of these names in Whitney’s list seem to correspond to the entries for 25–26 January 1845 in Heber C. Kimball’s journal. The last name in Whitney’s list is “Mrs Noble,” which would date his list about 20 March 1845 when Kimball’s journal shows that the Holy Order met at the home of Joseph B. Noble. Married women in Whitney’s list are indicated by the surname only, and two of these “Mrs” entries are smudged so that the surnames cannot be deciphered, even though other partially smudged names in the list can be deciphered. It is possible that these unreadable entries refer to Mrs. Lyman and Mrs. Jacobs. The entry date for Mary L. Lyman is not certain, for none of the other manuscript sources presently available about the Holy Order mention her until 17 April 1845 when the Kimball journal refers to her receiving the second anointing with her husband Amasa. Amasa Lyman was shown as an early member of the Holy Order by entries in the Joseph Smith Journal for 28 September and 12 October 1843, but he was not named again in any available source about the Holy Order until 26 January 1845 when his own journal indicates he attended a meeting of the Anointed Quorum. Serious illness, a proselyting mission, and change of residence

The exclusiveness of the Holy Order was soon to give way to the general admission of worthy Latter-day Saints to the endowment ceremonies in December 1845. Male members of the Quorum of the Anointed met for prayer circle in the Nauvoo Temple on 29 November, 30 November, and 5 December 1845, and at the later meeting it was decided:

On Sunday Morning at 9 O'clock all of the holy order will assemble fore prair and council. Our wives will come and pertack with us: the Sacrament will be administer[ed] the Sacrament [sic], and spend the day in those thing[s] that the spirrit shall teach this was the advise of President B Young ~~I will~~ this gave great joy to our wimmen.⁴⁴

When forty-two members of the Anointed Quorum met on Sunday morning, 7 December 1845, it was with a sense of pride that Heber C. Kimball recorded: "The following Persons are members of the Holy order of the Holy Preasthood having Recieved it in the Life time of Joseph and Hiram, the Prophets."⁴⁵

From this time onward, the membership restrictions that had been imposed on the prayer circle of the Holy Order gradually ended. On 7 December 1845, "Elder B Young said this quorum should meet here evry Sabath, and take the Sacrament." Exactly one hundred persons were newly endowed in the Nauvoo Temple from 11 December to 13 December 1845, but only four of these new people joined the Sunday prayer circle of the Holy Order on 14 December 1845. On 21 December, forty-five additional persons (less than a tenth of the newly endowed) attended the prayer circle of the Anointed Quorum and were formed into two concentric prayer circles. On 28 December 1845 "about 200 persons were present, clothed in priestly garments. . . . A circle was formed composed of about 20

kept Amasa Lyman from Nauvoo's meetings of the Holy Order. Zina H. Jacobs was attending a weekly prayer meeting prior to February 1845 that did not involve the Holy Order and which was apparently for the purpose of conventional prayer. See her diary, 23 January 1845, where a "Brother House" (not a member of the Holy Order according to Whitney's list for this period) took charge of the prayer meeting she was attending, an event that would never have occurred in the Holy Order where apostles attended and presided each week. The entry in the diary of Zina Huntington Jacobs for 3 July 1845, however, seems to refer to a meeting of the Holy Order: "At the thursday Prayer meeting Father John Smith made some exelent remarks concerning the Priesthood Prayer Endowments &c." If the smudged names of the two married women on Whitney's list do not refer to Mrs. Lyman (who definitely joined the Holy Order at least by April 1845) or to Mrs. Jacobs (who may have done so by July 1845), then at least two persons admitted to the Anointed Quorum prior to December 1845 are unidentified. Data on these 1845 additions to the Holy Order have been cross-checked with the findings of another researcher, Andrew Ehat.

⁴⁴Heber C. Kimball 1845-1846 Journal, 5 December 1845.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 35, 7 December 1845.

persons, most of whom had received the ordinances, and been admitted to the first quorum at a previous time." Therefore, the exclusiveness of the Holy Order's special prayer circle was temporarily preserved in December 1845 by admitting only about ten percent of those who were being endowed for the first time in the Nauvoo Temple. By January 1846, several thousand persons had been endowed and it was no longer possible for the single prayer circle of the Holy Order to exist even by restricting its membership to ten percent of those who were endowed. On Sunday, 4 January 1846, there was no meeting of the Anointed Quorum's prayer circle "on account of the floor being not stiff enough to support so large a company as would have come in, without swaying too much."⁴⁶

Thousands of persons received the endowment in the Nauvoo temple, and they became full members of the Quorum of the Anointed. In this regard, Heber C. Kimball told some newly endowed persons in 1846 that "it is necessary for *all who have been through the Temple to meet in quorum*, in order to become familiar with the signs and tokens, because they are the Keys of the Priesthood, in this the SEVENTH DISPENSATION."⁴⁷ The Holy Order, or the Quorum of the Anointed, organized by Joseph Smith in 1843 had at last achieved its ultimate purpose of including in its membership all the worthy Latter-day Saints who could receive the temple endowment. Those who had been privately introduced into the Holy Order during the lifetime of Joseph Smith would continue to feel a special attachment and status, but the sense of distinction and elitism that had characterized the Holy Order during the period 1842 to 1845 was now available to all endowed persons.

An odd result of the expansion of the Anointed Quorum to include all Latter-day Saints was the altered status of women in prayer circle meetings after 1845. The Anointed Quorum organized by Joseph Smith had included both men and women but stopped its separate meetings in December 1845. Heber C. Kimball indicated on 21 December 1845 that women could continue to participate with men

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 7, 11-14, 21, and 28 December 1845, 4 January 1846.

⁴⁷Catherine Lewis, *Narrative of Some of the Proceedings of the Mormons* (Lynn, Mass.: Catherine Lewis, 1848), p. 11; italics added. She was relating her own observations of the teachings and practices of the Latter-day Saints at Nauvoo, where she received the endowment in the temple under the direction of Apostle Kimball, in whose home she lived. In Utah, the phrase "endowment company" was substituted for the use of "quorum" to designate persons participating in the endowment ceremony. Also, by the 1870s in Utah, LDS leaders had so long discontinued the earlier use of "Holy Order" that they used the term to describe the economic United Order and to refer to polygamy. See remarks of Brigham Young and Erastus Snow in James G. Bleak, "Annals of the Southern Utah Mission," Book B, typed, p. 221, and Book C, MS., 15 December 1878, Church Historical Department.

in separate prayer circle meetings when he stated to newly endowed persons: "The Sisters ought not to gather together in schools to pray unless their husbands or some man be with them."⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the available records of the special and ecclesiastical prayer circles from the 1850s to the 1950s describe only one instance in which women met with their husbands in prayer circle meetings. A meeting of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in January 1896 shows that it was the policy after 1846 to exclude women from men's prayer circle meetings:

The subject of permission to the sisters to meet in prayer circles was discussed, as the question had been asked whether it would be right or whether they could be permitted to meet with their husbands in a prayer circle, seeing that sisters had been admitted to prayer circles in the Nauvoo Temple. It was shown, however, that on such occasions it was for the purpose of teaching the order of prayer as it is now the custom in the Temples. It was decided that if the sisters desired to meet for prayer they could do so as members and officers of Relief Societies in their regular places of meeting, but that it would not be advisable for them to meet at circles or to participate in prayer-circle meetings.⁴⁹

So far as the records of men's prayer circles exist, there was one occasion in 1958 when Elder Joseph Fielding Smith authorized members of the newly organized Smithfield (Utah) Stake Prayer Circle to include their wives in a prayer circle meeting once a year.⁵⁰ From the records in the LDS Church Archives it would seem that in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries after 1846 it was uncommon for women to participate with their husbands in prayer circle meetings that convened apart from the endowment ceremony. This policy, perhaps unintentionally, restricted the status of women.

Despite the disapproval of women's joining their husbands in prayer circle meetings, there is evidence that Latter-day Saint women in the nineteenth century met in their own prayer circles. It appears that under the direction of Eliza R. Snow, female members of the Church met for prayer circle during the pioneer exodus and in the Utah settlements.⁵¹ Although this was not in accord with Heber C.

⁴⁸Heber C. Kimball 1845-1846 Journal, 21 December 1845.

⁴⁹Journal History of The Church, 30 January 1896, p. 2, Church Historical Department.

⁵⁰Smithfield (Utah) Stake Prayer Circle Minutes, 25 May and 1 November 1958, Church Historical Department.

⁵¹The Eliza R. Snow Journals for 1847-1849 at the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, make many references to her attending prayer meetings with the sisters of the Church. In a conversation with Hugh Nibley on 28 March 1975, he said that his mother had participated in a Relief Society prayer circle organized by Eliza R. Snow in Utah.

Kimball's 1845 instructions, such practice appears to have had priesthood sanction, at least in some cases. In 1893, for example, a General Authority and member of the Salt Lake Temple presidency approved the prayer circle meeting of some sisters in preparation for the rebaptism of a sister: "The sisters, quite a number, came to have a prayer meeting, so bro. [John R.] Winder took us up to the Elders room where there was an altar around which we knelt, Aunt Zina [Young] being mouth and the rest repeating after her. I was then baptized, Frank Armstrong officiating."⁵² Even after the decision of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve in January 1896 advising against Relief Society prayer circle meetings, some ward Relief Societies continued holding occasional prayer circles:

We then attended a prayer meeting in the afternoon of the Relief Society. All the sisters are members of our society was presant at this meeting but one member all of us fasting that day. and part of us having kept our fast for two days that the Lord would hear our prayers that me and Cecelia would be healed.

We knelt in three different prayer circles. Then I offered up a prayer by my self. I felt if the Lord would heal me I would devote the remainder of my days to His service.⁵³

Rarely privileged to join their husbands in the separate prayer circle meetings after 1846, Latter-day Saint women also discontinued even occasional Relief Society prayer circles by the early twentieth century.

During the five years after the Saints' departure from Nauvoo, separate prayer circles appear to have been restricted to a few ecclesiastical and administrative units. The elders, seventies, high priests, and high council had separate prayer circle meetings in the Nauvoo Temple, and it is possible that they continued to do so during the exodus to Utah and the establishment of Church headquarters there. The only groups for which existing records show a pattern of prayer circle meetings between 1846 and 1851 were the Council of Fifty and the combined First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.⁵⁴

⁵²Mary Ann Freeze Diary, 19 September 1893, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU.

⁵³Hannah Adeline Savage Journal, p. 25, 7 May 1896, Church Historical Department; also diary of Lucy Hannah White Flake, 1 March 1895, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU.

⁵⁴Willard Richards May–August 1846 Journal, 30 May 1846, p. 42; *William Clayton's Journal*, pp. 40, 203. For the meetings of elders, seventies, and high priests prayer circles in the Nauvoo Temple, see HC 7:390, 552–54 and Heber C. Kimball 1845–1846 Journal, after entry for 11 December 1845.

SPECIAL PRAYER CIRCLES (1851-1929)

In 1851 the conduct of prayer circle meetings was restructured in a manner reminiscent of the Anointed Quorum organized by Joseph Smith in 1843. Beginning in February 1851, a separate prayer circle was organized in Salt Lake City for each day of the week, but admission was not according to one's membership in any particular priesthood quorum or organization. The presidents of these nightly prayer circles in 1851 were—Sunday, William C. Staines; Monday, John Young; Tuesday, Albert P. Rockwood; Wednesday, William Snow; Thursday, Norton Jacobs; Friday, James Fife; and Saturday, Heman Hyde. Although a member of the First Council of Seventy, Albert P. Rockwood, was the president of the Tuesday Evening Prayer Circle, only two other members of the First Council of Seventy were members of his circle, whereas five bishops of Salt Lake City wards were admitted to his circle. This mixing of ecclesiastical positions in the membership of the Salt Lake City prayer circles of 1851 suggests that when a man was appointed president of one of these special prayer circles, he could recommend for membership anyone worthy of such opportunity, regardless of ecclesiastical position.⁵⁵ For ease of identification, these circles will be denominated here as special prayer circles, in contrast to ecclesiastical prayer circles where membership was determined by Church position.

The special prayer circles of the 1850s were not restricted to Salt Lake City or even to Utah. Although data are insufficient to identify the locations of all special prayer circles during this period, it is possible that they were functioning in each of the major Mormon settlements established in the American West. The Mormon colony in San Bernardino, California, and the St. Louis (Missouri) Stake were both far distant from Church headquarters, yet the former had a prayer circle as early as 1854 and the latter organized a prayer circle in 1857.⁵⁶

The tendency for special prayer circles to include men of various quorums of the priesthood, as well as men not presiding in any office, was also reflected where it might be least expected: in the prayer circle of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve

⁵⁵Attendance rolls of these prayer circles, 1851-1853 at Church Historical Department, catalogued either under the name of their president or being transferred to the Prayer Circle Collection from the Utah Territorial Collection at Church Historical Department.

⁵⁶San Bernardino Mission 1852-1855 Journal, entries beginning 23 April 1854, Amasa M. Lyman Papers, Church Historical Department; Erastus Snow Journal, 9 February 1857, Church Historical Department.

Apostles, which also met on Sundays. The 1853–1854 rolls, for example, show that in addition to the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, the circle membership included Edward Hunter (the Presiding Bishop), Jedediah M. Grant and Daniel H. Wells (prior to their becoming counselors in the First Presidency), Joseph Young (a member of the First Council of Seventy), Thomas Bullock, Truman O. Angell, Nathaniel H. Felt, William W. Phelps, Edwin D. Woolley, Albert Carrington, Levi Richards, and Isaac Morley.⁵⁷ Whether presided over by a General Authority or by another priesthood member, these special prayer circles made it possible for men to fellowship in this sacred ordinance who were united in ways other than by membership in a particular priesthood quorum.

The basic structure of these special nightly prayer circles remained intact until 1858. On 25 July 1858, Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal the next development in the history of the prayer circles: "The Presidency wished the Twelve to get up a company, each one of them to Form a Prayer Circle."⁵⁸ Whether every member of the Quorum of the Twelve in 1858 became president of his own prayer circle is not presently certain, but available records show that the following members of the Quorum organized their own Salt Lake City circles in 1858: John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, Ezra T. Benson, Erastus Snow, and Charles C. Rich. The prayer circles of these six men and that of the combined First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve on Sunday night accounted for one special prayer circle each night of the week. Members of the Quorum of the Twelve continued to act as presidents of special prayer circles for seventy years.

Although apostles were made presidents of these special prayer circles after 1858, non-General Authorities continued to preside over other such circles. These special prayer circles, like those organized in 1851, were independent of stake or quorum organization. Contemporary with the prayer circles after 1858 that were presided over by apostles, additional special circles met in the Salt Lake Endowment House, presided over by such men as Edwin D. Woolley, Joseph Horne, Alonzo H. Raleigh, John D. T. McAllister, Amos M. Musser, Elijah F. Sheets, Jeter Clinton, James W. Cummings, Samuel W. Richards, Elias Smith, Edward Snelgrove, and George C. Lambert.

⁵⁷Sunday Prayer Circle of President Brigham Young and the Quorum of the Twelve, Record of Attendance, 1853–1854, being transferred from the Utah Territorial Collection to the Prayer Circle Collection.

⁵⁸Wilford Woodruff Journal, 25 July 1858.

Occasionally, a non-General Authority became president of a special prayer circle when an apostle had to resign the presidency because of a church calling. Thus, Joseph Horne took over the presidency of John Taylor's prayer circle in 1882 in view of President Taylor's responsibilities as President of the Church, and Jeter Clinton took over the circle of Erastus Snow in 1862 when the latter received a mission call.⁵⁹

Whether presided over by an apostle or by a man with lesser priesthood jurisdiction, the operation of these special prayer circles was the same. Established by the authority of the First Presidency, the prayer circle was actually organized by either a member of that body or of the Quorum of the Twelve. Prospective members were nominated by the president and current members of the circle. After being unanimously voted on by the prayer circle members, the names of prospective members were recommended to the First Presidency for approval. Once approved by the First Presidency, the men were admitted.

In 1851 these special prayer circles met in dedicated rooms of residences, but subsequently convened in the Lion House or in the Salt Lake Endowment House (1855–1889), in the Gardo House or private residences (1889–1893), and in the Salt Lake Temple (1893–1929). In some cases, prayer circles distant from a temple met in residences rather than in chapels. It was common for the circle president to admit his relatives since these special prayer circles included men irrespective of priesthood calling. Moreover, these special prayer circles often included men from various wards and stakes in the Salt Lake Valley. Men were released from a special prayer circle only in the event of unwillingness to attend regularly or if they ceased to be members of the Church in good standing.

It was a distinct honor to be a member of such a prayer circle, but it was an honor denied to thousands of worthy men who resided both inside and outside the Salt Lake Valley. By 1929 the growing membership of the Church had highlighted the inequity of having such special prayer circles for the privileged few. Because of their increasing exclusiveness, special prayer circles were discontinued by the First Presidency in 1929. On 29 March 1929, Apostle James E. Talmage explained this decision to his own prayer circle:

⁵⁹See the prayer circle rolls in Church Historical Department, catalogued according to name of the president of the circle, or located in the Prayer Circle Collection.

Bro. Talmage acknowledged the benefit of the administration he received last week. He also explained the history of the organization and carrying on of prayer circles both in and out of the Temple and then explained that it was decided by the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve that all special circles would hereafter be discontinued. . . . He explained that membership in circles was of necessity a special privilege which of necessity couldn't be extended to all who were worthy and might desire membership, whereas the temple ordinance work, which is of greater importance and included the circle ceremony is available to every worthy Latter Day Saint who desires to avail himself of the advantage.⁶⁰

The inequality of these special circles was reduced in the ecclesiastical prayer circles that continued to exist in the stakes and wards of the LDS Church after 1929.

ECCLESIASTICAL PRAYER CIRCLES (1845–1978)

Although the high council of the Nauvoo Stake had a separate prayer circle as early as December 1845, the history of subsequent stake circles is incomplete due to an absence of records in the LDS Church Archives. Available records indicate the existence of stake prayer circles for only ten percent of the stakes that were organized during the period for which stake prayer circle records can be found. Nevertheless, sufficient information about stake prayer circles is available to provide a general outline of their history.

Stake prayer circles have continued to be organized down to the mid-twentieth century. A recent formation of a stake prayer circle occurred on 8 December 1957, when Elders Joseph Fielding Smith and Mark E. Petersen organized the Smithfield (Utah) Stake Prayer Circle. Other stake prayer circles may have been established in more recent times. Although Provo (Utah) Stake had a prayer circle almost immediately after the stake was formed in 1939, other stakes indicate the opposite trend. In most instances a prayer circle was not begun until the stake had existed several years.⁶¹

These delays in forming stake prayer circles may have derived from two factors. Oftentimes the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve considered organizing stake prayer circles only after a formal request for that privilege had been made by the stake president.

⁶⁰James E. Talmage Prayer Circle Minutes, 1912–1929, 29 March 1929, Church Historical Department; James E. Talmage Journal, 29 March 1929, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU.

⁶¹See the records of Juab, Bear Lake, Sevier, Summit, Wasatch, Maricopa, St. Joseph, and Smithfield stake prayer circles, Church Historical Department, catalogued according to the current name of the stakes, and compare to the dates the stakes were organized.

If the president of the stake did not feel inclined to have a prayer circle, such an organization was usually not imposed upon his jurisdiction by the General Authorities. Moreover, there also seemed to be a preference for having a current or former temple worker as a member of the stake prayer circle. This may have been the primary reason for the delays in forming stake prayer circles.

Membership in the stake prayer circles was determined by one's position in the stake, but this criterion varied from stake to stake. Some stakes included only the stake presidency, high council, and stake clerk. It was more common, however, for the stake circle to include the stake presidency, high council, stake clerks, patriarchs, and high priest quorum presidency. The largest known stake prayer circle was that of the Alberta (Canada) Stake, which in the 1948–1950 period had more than eighty members, including the previously mentioned officers, plus all ward bishoprics, seventies presidents, and seminary teachers of the stake.⁶² Even though the officers to be included varied between stakes, the inequalities of the special prayer circles were avoided by making membership in the ecclesiastical prayer circle a result of one's position in the stake rather than by the choice of the prayer circle president and members. With membership established on the basis of stake position, entry and release from the prayer circle automatically reflected each man's tenure in Church positions.

In addition to stake prayer circles, ecclesiastical prayer circles have been conducted by wards, priesthood quorums (e.g., the Salt Lake Stake Elders' Quorum, 1893–1929), and by temple presidencies and temple workers. Usually, these ecclesiastical prayer circles, even in local wards, were organized by members of the First Presidency or the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. For example, on 18 December 1880 the President of the Church, his counselors and two apostles organized prayer circles in each of the Ogden, Utah, wards.⁶³ Nevertheless, the presence of an apostle was not always required, since in 1937 Edward J. Wood, president of the Alberta (Canada) Stake and president of the Cardston Temple, organized a prayer circle in the Hillspring Ward.⁶⁴ The number of ward prayer circles is not readily apparent, but in 1900 Apostle Reed Smoot said: "I hope that there will not be a ward but what will have a prayer circle inaugurated for

⁶²Alberta (Canada) Stake Prayer Circle Minutes, 1948–1950, Church Historical Department.

⁶³Robert McQuarrie 1845–1887 Journal, 18 December 1880, p. 435, Church Historical Department.

⁶⁴Journal History, 2 May 1937, p. 8.

it is a strength to the Church.”⁶⁵ With such encouragement, it is probable that ward prayer circles have been as common by proportion as stake circles.

Whether a man became a member of a prayer circle by virtue of his ecclesiastical position or by the choice of a special prayer circle, a question remains as to whether there were any special requirements for membership. The example of the Juab (Utah) Stake Prayer Circle is probably representative. When that prayer circle was organized in 1880, the following questions were asked of each member:

1. Do you strive to live the principles of righteousness according to the requirements in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants?
2. Do you pay your tithing and offerings according to your covenants, agreeable to the Law of God and the requirements of the Holy Priesthood?
3. Are you striving to pay all your just debts, that you may “owe no man anything,” according to the exhortation of the Apostle?
4. Do you strive to magnify your calling, have family and secret prayer, and sustain faithfully the presiding Priesthood by your vote, faith, and prayers?
5. Are you willing to consecrate your time, talents, and means for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God and the establishment of His righteousness, to cease to speak evil, find fault, and all manner of unrighteousness?
6. Have you any hard feelings or bitterness in your bosom to anyone, or is there any of the undersigned whom you could not meet with in a prayer circle?⁶⁶

It is to be noted that despite the emphasis by the LDS Church leadership on entering into plural marriage during the 1880s, there is no evidence that membership in the prayer circle elite was dependent in any way upon entering into Mormonism’s polygamous elite. Nevertheless, prospective members of prayer circles were cautioned that they must believe in *all* gospel principles, as indicated in the 1909 instructions of Apostle Francis M. Lyman to a ward prayer circle:

Also that members must believe in every principle of the Gospel. Spoke especially on the principle of plural marriage said that members should be firm believers in the principle but it was to be clearly understood that the carrying out of the principle was in abeyance at the present time.⁶⁷

⁶⁵Juab (Utah) Stake Prayer Circle Minutes, 1898–1914 Book, 21 October 1900, p. 34, Church Historical Department.

⁶⁶Ibid., 1880–1887 Book, loose pages at front of book; punctuation added.

⁶⁷John M. Whitaker 1908–1910 Memorandum Book, 7 November 1909, John M. Whitaker Papers, Western Americana, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

A more recent summary of the requirements for membership in a prayer circle states: "They should be men who are true, tried, active, devoted, strong in testimony, integrity, faithful, honest, obedient, submissive, prayerful, loyal, sustain authority without hard feelings and without guile, whose houses are in order."⁶⁸ Having complied with the requirements of worthiness, members of prayer circles met weekly, biweekly, or monthly (as the particular circle might choose).

PURPOSES OF THE PRAYER CIRCLE

At a minimum, the prayer circles have been for the observance of the true order of prayer, but additional activities have also been conducted in prayer circle meetings. As discussed previously, the first organized prayer circle was a vehicle for the administration of the anointing and endowment ceremonies of the priesthood from 1843 to 1845. This facet of organized prayer circles was of short duration, but other activities characterized prayer circle meetings throughout their history in the Church. At these meetings, it was often customary to consecrate bottles of oil for the anointing of the sick.⁶⁹ Prayer circle meetings from the days of Joseph Smith to the present have also been occasion for testimony bearing and discussion of basic, inspirational gospel doctrine.⁷⁰ In addition, prayer circles were occasions where participants covenanted to live more fully certain commandments.⁷¹ Rarely has extensive Church business been conducted in connection with the prayer circle meeting, the exceptions to this being the prayer circle meetings of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve, those of the Council of Fifty, and those of the Salt Lake Stake.

It might be wondered whether the prayer circle is intended to be a means of summoning special revelations or manifestations. The primary purpose of any prayer is to commune with God and to receive

⁶⁸"Requirements and Instructions for Setting Up Prayer Circles in Stakes," undated, typed document, d4564, Church Historical Department.

⁶⁹For example, on 17 December 1845, seven men participated in a prayer circle in the Nauvoo Temple for the purpose of dedicating and consecrating forty-five bottles of oil for use in temple ordinances (Heber C. Kimball 1845-1846 Journal, 17 December 1845).

⁷⁰Wilford Woodruff Journal, 7 January 1844: "Mrs. Woodruff and myself met with the quorum and we had an interesting time of instruction. I spoke during the day upon the relationship that we sustained towards our Progenitors & posterity in the resurrection of the dead." Salt Lake (Utah) Stake Prayer Circle Record, 1904-1920, p. 8: "On April 5, 1905 it was decided that at each meeting of the prayer circle held thereafter, or until other arrangements should be made, a member of the circle should give an address on a section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants."

⁷¹Heber C. Kimball 1840-45 Journal, 24 July 1845: "The Holly order met at the usual place for prair," and Willard Richards Journal for 24 July 1845: "4 P.M. prayer meeting—after which the Quorum agreed to take no more snuff & tobacco for 6 weeks."

the instruction and influence of God. Under difficult circumstances, faithful persons may seek special manifestations of God's power, as on 9 June 1844 when Vilate Kimball wrote to her husband that the weather at Nauvoo had been so cold and wet that Newel K. Whitney and Dr. John M. Bernhisel thought the Anointed Quorum needed to assemble to ask the Lord to change the weather to avoid an epidemic of sickness among the Saints.⁷² Also, with the approval of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the members of the 1833 School of the Prophets joined in prayer for a special visionary manifestation.⁷³

According to the will of the Lord, divine manifestations may accompany or follow prayer, but there is little evidence that the order of prayer observed in prayer circles was intended to summon special manifestations. In fact, there is at least one occasion in which members of a prayer circle were admonished not to seek such signs. On 22 March 1846, Samuel W. Richards recorded in his journal that in the prayer circle of his seventies quorum it was proposed "that we pray for the Prophet Joseph to come into our midst and converse with us." The uncomfortable similarity between such an act and a spiritualistic seance was apparent, and "it was decided by the President, that we had no right to pray for that thing, and all was again right."⁷⁴ Obviously, a prayer circle may result in divine manifestation of a spectacular nature, but the available records concerning prayer circles indicate that rarely is such a manifestation sought.

The purposes of the prayer circle are outlined in a recent instruction from the LDS Authorities:

The purpose of the prayer circle: The true order of prayer, Get Close to the Lord, Spirits drawn out to God and His Son, Hearts Humble, contrite and at peace, Soften hearts of participants and draws them near to God, Perfect love and harmony, Pray for the sick, Pray for the advancement of the Lord's work with His blessings upon the people and His leaders.⁷⁵

For men who were generally unable to attend religious instruction in priesthood quorums and Sunday Schools due to administrative assignments, the special and ecclesiastical prayer circle meetings were opportunities to receive the spiritual instruction that was paradoxically denied to them by their Church callings. Moreover, the

⁷²Vilate Kimball to Heber C. Kimball, 9 June 1844, continued as a letter dated 24 June 1844, Church Historical Department.

⁷³See fn. 19, above.

⁷⁴Samuel W. Richards Journal, 22 March 1846, Church Historical Department.

⁷⁵"Requirements and Instructions for Setting Up Prayer Circles," Church Historical Department.

prayer circles encouraged the bonds of fellowship and loyalty naturally expected of men who served in Church leadership. Although the organized prayer circles may have given the impression of a church-within-a-church, they provided a great spiritual strength to thousands of priesthood leaders during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁷⁶

The conducting of separate prayer circles has continued until recently in some wards and stakes. However, on 3 May 1978, the First Presidency announced that all prayer circles except those conducted as part of the endowment ceremony in the temples were to be immediately discontinued. As the number of stakes in the LDS Church reached nearly a thousand, the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles decided that it would be too difficult to comply with all the requests for new prayer circles.⁷⁷

⁷⁶The estimate of "thousands" is not extreme in view of the fact that the published history of a single prayer circle lists 286 members. See *History of the Elders' Quorum Prayer Circle, Salt Lake City, 1893-1929*.

⁷⁷Spencer W. Kimball, N. Eldon Tanner, and Marion G. Romney to All Stake Presidents and Bishops, 3 May 1978. A comment about this announcement appears in "Update," *Sunstone* 3 (July-August 1978):6.

The Priesthood-Auxiliary Movement, 1928–1938

Richard O. Cowan

While reviewing the chronology in the Sunday School handbook, I was surprised to learn that priesthood classes were conducted with the Sunday School not too many years ago. Even though I had studied twentieth century Church history extensively, I had never heard of this combination. Most Latter-day Saints regard priesthood correlation as a phenomenon beginning in the 1960s, but I was amazed to learn that many correlation principles were emphasized during the 1930s.

The decade 1928–1938 witnessed a series of extensive restructurings of Church activities and meetings. Most of these changes combined formerly separate priesthood activities with either the Sunday School or Mutual Improvement Association; hence the name, “Priesthood-Auxiliary Movement.” Major features of this relatively unknown movement have continued to influence the Church. The significance of these developments is most apparent when they are viewed as a continuation of even earlier efforts at correlation.

ANTECEDENTS

Although priesthood quorums and the auxiliaries were established during the nineteenth century, there was a substantial increase in the programs and activities sponsored by these organizations during the opening years of the twentieth century. For example, the Relief Society and Sunday School launched their classwork for adults and the MIA adopted such age-group programs as the Boy Scouts and Beehive Girls. The auxiliaries also commenced publishing their own periodicals including the *Improvement Era*, *Juvenile Instructor*, *Children’s Friend*, and *Relief Society Magazine*.

Amid this proliferation of auxiliary programs, President Joseph F. Smith looked forward to the time

when every council of the Priesthood . . . will understand its duty, will assume its own responsibility, will magnify its calling and fill its place in the Church. . . . When that day shall come, there will not be so

much necessity for work that is now being done by the auxiliary organizations.¹

The General Priesthood Committee was formed in 1908 to help vitalize the priesthood. Under the chairmanship of Elder David O. McKay, this committee introduced weekly ward priesthood meetings and the practice of ordaining young men to Aaronic Priesthood offices at specified ages. In some cases stake presidents sought permission to combine these priesthood sessions with either Sunday School or MIA in order to avoid adding an extra meeting to the existing schedule. At first the priesthood gatherings were scheduled on Monday evening, but by the early 1920s Sunday morning had become more popular.

Church leaders felt a definite need for correlating these expanding activities. In 1907 the Committee on Adjustments, representing various auxiliary organizations, recommended merging the similar Primary and Religion Class programs for children and also consolidating the Church's magazines for adults.² Many years passed before these recommendations were implemented. In 1913, President Joseph F. Smith organized the Correlation Committee "to prevent unnecessary and undesirable duplication of work in the various auxiliary organizations." Elder David O. McKay became chairman of this body as well as of the General Priesthood Committee.³

In 1920 an expanded correlation committee was assigned to define the relative roles not only of the auxiliaries, but of the various priesthood quorums as well. The committee formulated three basic premises to guide its work: (1) The auxiliaries are "helps" to the priesthood and therefore subject to its authority. (2) Programs exist only to meet the needs of Church members. (3) All organizations should adhere closely to their original inspired assignments. A specific recommendation was that the Sunday School should be given the responsibility of formal theological instruction; it should be extended to two hours and absorb priesthood class instruction.⁴

Even though the First Presidency concluded that "under existing circumstances" some of the proposed changes were "unnecessary and

¹Joseph F. Smith in *Conference Report of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, April 1906, p. 3.

²Marba C. Josephson, *History of the YWMA* (Salt Lake City: Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1955), pp. 182-84.

³Marion G. Romney, "The Basics of Priesthood Correlation," General Priesthood Board Meeting, 8 and 15 November 1967, p. 2, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁴Report of the Correlation-Social Advisory Committee to the First Presidency, 14 April 1921, MS., pp. 1, 6-8, 25, Church Historical Department.

undesirable,”⁵ many of the committee’s recommendations received continued consideration. For example, in 1923 the First Presidency urged stake presidents and ward bishops to conduct monthly correlation meetings with their auxiliary executives.⁶ In addition, Church leaders gave particular attention to the Aaronic Priesthood and in 1925 issued a list of “Standards” which emphasized the importance of quality supervision and regular quorum activity.⁷

NEW MEETING PATTERNS

By 1927 steps were being taken to implement sweeping modifications Church-wide. Under instruction from the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve “sponsored the move.” A special committee consisted of Elders David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Stephen L Richards.

Fundamental Principles

Two important guiding principles determined the course followed in planning the “priesthood-auxiliary movement.”

1. The priesthood was to assume its proper place at the center and core of all Church activity. Declared the Presiding Bishopric:

The priesthood is the very foundation upon which the Church is built, as also the framework which supports the structure. It is the most potent means of real service. Unless the quorums of the priesthood generally are trained and active in the performance of their duties, there cannot be the progress that there should be.⁸

Official publications made frequent reference to President Joseph F. Smith’s 1906 prophesy of a time when the priesthood would more completely understand and fulfill its duty.

2. Church programs needed to be simplified. Because all Church organizations served the same groups of members, Elder Melvin J. Ballard asserted that “there must be one unified, simplified program for this work. No one organization in the Church can do everything for the entire group. There has been delegated to each organization its specific field.” He noted the frequent duplication in the lessons and activities of the priesthood quorums and auxiliary organizations

⁵First Presidency to the Council of the Twelve, 7 June 1922, Church Historical Department.

⁶First Presidency, circular letter, 8 March 1923, Church Historical Department.

⁷“Aaronic Priesthood Standards,” *Improvement Era* 29 (December 1925):203-04.

⁸“Weekly Ward Priesthood Meetings,” *Improvement Era* 31 (January 1928):257.

and explained that the priesthood-auxiliary plan “was conceived as a solution to a rather complicated situation that was arising because of this competition and rivalry and multiplicity of meetings.”⁹

The “Church Sunday School”

President Heber J. Grant made the first public announcement of the “priesthood-auxiliary movement” at the October 1927 general conference when he explained that theological instruction was being shifted from weekly priesthood meetings to the Sunday School.

This plan was amplified the following month in instructions from the Council of the Twelve and from the general superintendency of the Sunday School. Quorums or priesthood groups as such would no longer meet weekly, but only monthly to consider their duties and assignments.

The hours from ten to twelve Sunday morning have been designated as a most suitable time for the study of the Gospel by all members of the Church, both male and female. It is suggested, therefore, that all members holding the Priesthood meet at this time, not as Quorums, but as members of the Church Sunday School, in which classes will be organized to suit the age, capacity, and calling of each.¹⁰

Youth age groupings were adjusted to coincide with priesthood divisions. Three classes would serve all boys and girls of deacon, teacher, and priest ages respectively, with lessons prepared under the direction of the Presiding Bishopric. A new one-year missionary training class was created for twenty-one-year-olds and those called on full-time missions. The “Parents Class” for adults was renamed “Gospel Doctrine” and would study courses provided by the Council of the Twelve and the First Council of the Seventy. Priesthood quorum and Sunday School officials were to cooperate in selecting class instructors who would be subject to Sunday School regulations.

Sunday School superintendent, David O. McKay, declared that 1928 marked a “distinct epoch” in the seventy-nine-year history of Sunday School because courses of study were now prescribed by the General Authorities, departments were adapted to the needs of priesthood quorums, Sunday morning was set apart as the best time for gospel study for all members of the Church, and priesthood

⁹Melvin J. Ballard, “New Priesthood—M.I.A. Plan,” *Improvement Era* 31 (July 1928):744–45.

¹⁰“The Church Sunday School,” *Juvenile Instructor* 62 (November 1927):620–21.

courses were now studied coeducationally. He observed: "The Sunday School takes its proper place as a helper, as an aid to the Priesthood."¹¹

The Priesthood-MIA

Even though the Twelve's official instructions concerning the Church Sunday School recommended only monthly rather than weekly priesthood meetings, the General Authorities—notably the Presiding Bishopric—still felt the need of the weekly gatherings. The Bishopric stressed the need for "the training of all priesthood members in the performance of their duties and for developing quorum identity."¹²

The concept of holding these weekly "priesthood activity meetings" in conjunction with the Mutual Improvement Association was developed during the opening weeks of 1928, and in March Church leaders announced the new Priesthood-MIA plan.

President Rudger Clawson of the Council of the Twelve explained: "By revelation, the Lord has indicated two great avenues through which the Priesthood of his Church should function; viz., in study and in activity." Therefore the duties of the priesthood bearers would include studying the gospel in the appropriate class on Sunday mornings and also attending an "activity meeting" in conjunction with the MIA on Tuesday evenings at which time assignments for priesthood service would be considered. A separate weekly priesthood meeting was thereby eliminated. Elder Clawson urged each stake to initiate the new plan as soon as possible. "We recognize that the plans and work herewith submitted are comprehensive and, to some extent, novel. Questions will naturally arise as they are put into operation." He promised that the General Authorities would be available to answer these questions and to confer with stake leaders concerning their problems.¹³

The plan for Tuesday evenings called for a forty-five-minute business and instruction meeting for each priesthood quorum or group within the ward. During this same time the Young Ladies' departments would consider lessons related to "the growth and de-

¹¹Ibid., pp. 620-26; David O. McKay, "The Church Sunday School: Its Growth and Comprehensiveness," *Juvenile Instructor* 63 (June 1928):299-303; "The New Priesthood Plan," *Improvement Era* 31 (July 1928):792-94.

¹²Presiding Bishopric, circular letter, 21 October 1927.

¹³"The Priesthood-M.I.A. Plan," *Improvement Era* 31 (April and July 1928):516-17, 744; "Priesthood Quorums," *Improvement Era* 32 (October 1929):1036.

velopment of girlhood, young womanhood, and motherhood." Afterwards, the MIA would sponsor an hour-long "activity period" for all members, "each one going to the group to which he or she *has been assigned*, according to age groups and preference." These activities would be social, literary, recreational, etc.¹⁴

Age groups for the young men were coordinated with the priesthood ordinations. Deacons would be Scouts; the new Vanguards program was created for young men of teacher age; M-Men would include priests and unmarried elders. Similar programs were provided for the girls, with the "Seniors" being renamed "Gleaners."

The same persons were to direct both the priesthood meetings and the MIA activity periods. "Remember," MIA officials pointed out, "the best men should now be available for these positions, as they will give leadership to both groups."¹⁵

Church leaders saw this plan as placing the MIA in its proper role as an auxiliary to the priesthood. "We recognize that the priesthood is the very life of the Church." While the Sunday School provided the setting for gospel study, the MIA could "help the Priesthood in the leisure time field." "... if we are yielding something," Elder Ballard commented, "it is to help keep the Priesthood where it belongs, at the head of the procession."¹⁶

REVITALIZING THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

Church leaders expressed their hopes for the Melchizedek Priesthood in these words:

For over a hundred years the Lord has had in his Church ... a force for good; but until recently part of this force (the quorums of the Priesthood) has been left unutilized. ... The clarion call for the present is to turn this potentiality into actuality.¹⁷

First Melchizedek Priesthood Handbook 1928

In 1928 the Church issued *A Guide for Quorums of the Melchizedek Priesthood*. In his preface, Elder Rudger Clawson wrote:

This guide contains suggestions for the promotion of the spirit of brotherhood and of personal and quorum activity among those who

¹⁴"The Priesthood-M.I.A. Plan," *Improvement Era* 31 (April 1928):517-19.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 524-25.

¹⁶*Handbook of the Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations* (Salt Lake City: General Boards of the MIA, 1928), pp. 22-24; Ballard, "New Priesthood-M.I.A. Plan," *Improvement Era* 31 (July 1928):744-45.

¹⁷*In the Realm of Quorum Activity*, Published under the authority of the Council of Twelve Apostles (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1931), p. 3.

hold the Priesthood; the essential thought being that by a simple but definite organization for quorum activity, the miscellaneous and scattered undertakings of the Priesthood may be concentrated and made more effective for the good of the Priesthood and the Church.¹⁸

The *Guide* may well be recognized as the Church's first Melchizedek Priesthood handbook. Its material was quoted repeatedly and extensively in subsequent instructions, and it became the foundation for later handbooks. When Elder John A. Widtsoe compiled his *Priesthood and Church Government* a decade later, he drew heavily from this work.

Quorum Objectives

In his preface to the guide, Elder Clawson challenged priesthood quorums to reach their potential.

The Priesthood of God on earth has been organized into quorums for the mutual good of the members, and for the advancement of the Church. A quorum, which meets merely to study lessons, only partially accomplishes its purposes. . . . The spirit of brotherhood should be the directing force in all the plans and operations of the quorum. If this spirit be cultivated, wisely and persistently, no other organization will become more attractive to the man who holds the Priesthood.

Every quorum member should so thoroughly identify himself with his quorum that it would become as it were a clearing house for all the serious affairs of his life. For example, the spiritual labors of the Priesthood, such as ward teaching, visiting the sick, of service in the auxiliary associations, should be reported to the quorum as the converging point of his Church activities.¹⁹

"A main purpose of a quorum of the Priesthood," the *Guide* asserted, was "to help every individual member of the quorum, and his family, to attain a condition of thorough well being in body, mind, and spirit. Every need of a man holding the Priesthood should be the concern of the quorum to which he belongs." The handbook continued: "One great purpose of the Priesthood quorum is to develop a group of brethren who will care for each other's welfare."²⁰

Church leaders described the "new era confronting the Priesthood" as "characterized by greater activity." They affirmed that:

Every quorum should have something to do—that an idle quorum is not only a useless, but potentially a dangerous unit in the Priest-

¹⁸*A Guide for Quorums of the Melchizedek Priesthood*, 1928, p. 4.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 24, 26.

hood. It is vital to the Priesthood that it be kept active; to allow any quorum to stagnate is to invite decay.²¹

In the same spirit, Elder Clawson concluded: "If the quorums of the Priesthood are to achieve and maintain the high standard of efficiency that is expected of them, they must keep as their constant aim service to their members and to the church."²²

Standing Committees

A Guide for Quorums of the Melchizedek Priesthood outlined the creation of four "standing committees" whose duties reflected priesthood concerns.

1. The Personal Welfare Committee was concerned with personal fitness—spiritual, intellectual, and financial as well as physical—and with the individual's relationships to his family, church, country, and fellowmen.

2. The Class Instruction Committee distributed lesson leaflets and directed how courses of study were to be taught.

3. The Church Service Committee promoted ward teaching, missionary work, and other activity in Church organizations; it also encouraged instruction in performing ordinances.

4. The Miscellaneous Activities Committee gathered and compiled useful information, planned social and athletic events, and assisted with transportation.

This "committee system" of administering quorums, though modified somewhat from time to time, continued until 1964 when it was supplemented by the home teaching program.

STRENGTHENING THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

The 1928 "priesthood-auxiliary movement" continued the emphasis on improving Aaronic Priesthood programs and leadership which had begun earlier during the decade. Church leaders devoted considerable thought to how the Aaronic Priesthood should be strengthened even further. Their attention focused on qualifications for missionary service and on the various Church organizations working with the youth. Expanding on the concept of the Priesthood-MIA, they realized that "there should be, and necessarily must

²¹"Organizing the Quorum for Service," *Improvement Era* 31 (May 1928):614.

²²Council of the Twelve, circular letter, 31 May 1930.

be, correlation of the work of these various agencies . . . to prepare young men for missionary activity.”²³

Aaronic Priesthood Correlation Plan, 1931

After extensive preparation, the “Aaronic Priesthood Correlation Plan” was introduced at a special meeting held 4 April 1931 in conjunction with the general conference: Quorums would emphasize performance of ordinances and other priesthood duties, and would provide for social and fraternal needs. The Sunday School would teach gospel principles and ordinances, Church history and doctrine. Programs of the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association would provide “proper application of Gospel principles to personal habits and conduct.” This would include the physical, moral, mental, social, vocational, recreational, cultural, as well as the spiritual dimensions of the young men’s lives. Seminaries were to provide week-day formal education in the scriptures and Church history.²⁴

The above assignments did not represent a redefinition of the roles of these Church organizations, but the contribution of the new plan was to correlate the work of these agencies more completely than ever before. Under the personal direction of the bishopric a monthly ward “correlation meeting” coordinated the efforts of executives and teachers working with the boys in Aaronic Priesthood quorums, Sunday School and YMMIA. Special attention was given to leadership training and to involving the youth in planning and directing their own activities.²⁵ More importance was placed on the men working directly with the youth. Church leaders reaffirmed that the same outstanding individuals who served as leaders of the Scouts, Vanguards, and M-Men should also be the supervisors of the deacons, teachers, and priests quorums respectively. This consolidation would not only bring desired correlation but would also expand the influence of these key leaders. The Presiding Bishopric had declared: “There is no work required of those who hold the Priesthood which carries with it greater responsibility and greater opportunity for real service than training young men.”²⁶

The Place of the Auxiliaries

Under the new “correlation plan,” each auxiliary was to have a

²³Minutes of the Aaronic Priesthood Convention, 4 April 1931, p. 3, Church Historical Department.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 4, 9–10.

²⁶“Aaronic Priesthood Activity,” *Improvement Era* 32 (September 1929):957.

definite role to play. Elder George Albert Smith, who served as YM-MIA superintendent, agreed:

We have stressed Sunday School; we have stressed M.I.A., and have succeeded wonderfully, but while we have been doing that in some instances we have overlooked the fact that Sunday School is but an auxiliary, M.I.A. is but an auxiliary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, while Priesthood is an essential part of the Church. Some Priesthood leaders have felt that they did not have the cooperation of the auxiliary workers, and some of the auxiliary workers have thought that the men in the Priesthood were not interested in the auxiliaries. Some who have majored in Sunday School have apparently thought that it was the most important, and some M.I.A. leaders have appeared to be little concerned about the Sunday School or the Priesthood, but have been enthusiastic about M.I.A.²⁷

Elder Melvin J. Ballard, also a member of the YMMIA superintendency, wanted every boy to be active in Scouting, "which is the first stepping stone to bring him into the Deacons Quorum." Similarly, he saw sponsoring basketball as a means to a greater end. The emphasis on physical conditioning and on the team's being successful should help the young man "to put his life into such shape that he can succeed."²⁸

Elaborating on the role of the auxiliaries, President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., urged that the MIA, like other organizations, should stress building testimonies of the gospel so that the youth "may live in accordance with its lofty principles." There were also other "great truths" which should be taught; he believed that the Primary and the MIA were particularly well suited to give "spiritual instruction" in music, art, literature, drama, etc. Nevertheless, President Clark concluded, these cultural activities should be the "handmaid of righteousness and spirituality."²⁹

OTHER ACTIVITIES CORRELATED

The prime thrust of the "priesthood-auxiliary movement" was to coordinate more fully the programs of various agencies serving given groups of Latter-day Saints. This spirit of correlation and consolidation affected a variety of Church activities.

²⁷Minutes of the Aaronic Priesthood Convention, 4 April 1931, p. 6.

²⁸Melvin J. Ballard, "Aaronic Priesthood Correlation and the Y.M.M.I.A.," *Improvement Era* 35 (May 1932):424.

²⁹J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "The Place of the M.I.A. in the Church Programs," *Improvement Era* 39 (March 1936):133-35.

The 1928 Priesthood-MIA program provided that genealogy might be one of the electives for the Adult Department during the MIA-sponsored activity period on Tuesday evenings. By 1929 most wards had opted for this alternative and were therefore able to eliminate the formerly separate weekly genealogy meeting.

Similarly, the "priesthood-auxiliary movement's" spirit of simplifying Church programs was seen in the decision to combine the two MIA-sponsored magazines. Since 1889 the *Young Women's Journal* had served the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association as its official organ. In 1897 the *Improvement Era* replaced the *Contributor* as the official publication of the Young Men's association. As the work of the two MIA's came more and more to be united, the idea of consolidating these two magazines gained popularity. At the 1929 June conference, a storybook wedding dramatized the union of the two publications. The name *Improvement Era* was retained because it fit the two associations equally. The first of the combined issues appeared in November 1929. Not only had the size been enlarged, but other improvements in format were made as well. As noted above, the consolidation of these magazines had been proposed as early as 1907 by the Committee on Adjustments.

Another of this committee's recommendations was also carried out during the year 1929. Beginning in 1878, the Primary Association provided religious training for boys and girls one afternoon each week. Another program organized in 1890 to supplement secular instruction in public elementary schools was the Religion Class. This auxiliary usually met on Thursday afternoons and stressed religious *instruction*, while the Primary met earlier in the week and focused on religious *activity*. In 1929 the First Presidency approved the consolidation of these similar weekday programs for elementary school children.³⁰

DIFFICULTIES IN THE "PRIESTHOOD-AUXILIARY MOVEMENT"

As has been seen, the "priesthood-auxiliary movement" inaugurated in 1928 called for the elimination of separate priesthood meetings. Quorum members were to study gospel doctrine in the "Church Sunday School." "Priesthood activity meetings," held in conjunction with MIA on Tuesday nights, were to include discussion of quorum business and instruction in priesthood duties.

³⁰First Presidency, circular letter, 29 May 1929.

As early as 1929 Church leaders acknowledged that even though the Sunday morning study program was functioning well, the Tuesday evening "activity meetings" were not being conducted with "that degree of clearness and energy" necessary to maintain interest. Consequently priesthood meeting attendance declined from 21% in 1926 to 15.5% in 1928.³¹ The presidents of many "leading stakes," the Presiding Bishopric reported, hoped that in the near future the priesthood might again meet separately from the MIA. Concerned about this decline in attendance, the Bishopric recommended returning to the former pattern of holding priesthood meetings on Sunday morning in order to better train priesthood bearers and to build quorum identity.³²

Adjusting Priesthood Meeting Schedules

In 1930 the Presiding Bishopric authorized local leaders to schedule priesthood meetings at whatever time would "secure the best attendance and activity" and could remain unchanged throughout the year. Specific options included holding these meetings Tuesday night with the MIA or on Sunday mornings, either in conjunction with or apart from the Sunday School.³³

A review of minute books from this period reveals that many wards never made the shift to Tuesday night in the first place and that Sunday morning continued to be the overwhelmingly preferred priesthood meeting time.

Allowing more flexibility led to new problems; many wards experienced difficulties in scheduling priesthood meetings. To eliminate this confusion, beginning in 1933 the General Authorities directed that priesthood business be conducted in the Sunday School class, either before or following the lesson.³⁴ Beginning in 1935 another plan provided for half-hour quorum business meetings and separate sessions for sisters to follow directly after the Sunday School lessons.³⁵ A third modification in 1937 provided for twenty-five-minute Aaronic Priesthood and simultaneous girls' sessions to precede Sunday School lessons and for Melchizedek Priesthood business to be conducted in the Gospel Doctrine class.³⁶ None of these variations

³¹"Priesthood Quorums," *Improvement Era* 32 (October 1929):1036-40; statistics supplied by the Church Historical Department.

³²Presiding Bishopric Journal, 11 March 1929, 3 February 1930, Church Historical Department.

³³"Priesthood Quorums," *Improvement Era* 33 (October 1930):816.

³⁴Council of the Twelve, circular letter, 31 January 1933.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 10 September 1935.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 15 January 1937.

proved completely satisfactory, and many wards ceased holding priesthood meetings altogether.

Discontinuing the "Priesthood-Auxiliary Movement"

Petitions from stakes to hold priesthood meetings before Sunday School continued in a steady stream. By 11 May 1937, Bishop Sylvester Q. Cannon recommended to the First Presidency that "Aaronic Priesthood meetings be held at a separate time from any other organization."³⁷ A committee representing the Twelve, Presiding Bishopric, and Sunday School considered this matter during the following months. A "very thorough and extensive questionnaire covering every phase of the problem" was sent to ward, stake, and quorum leaders. It disclosed an "overwhelming sentiment in favor of a separate meeting for the Priesthood," preferably scheduled near the Sunday School hour.³⁸

The change was announced by the Council of the Twelve in a circular letter in October 1937. A separate hour-long quorum or group meeting should be held each week just before or following Sunday School or on a weeknight. Additional monthly meetings would be required only if a quorum's membership was divided among two or more wards. Sunday School was shortened to ninety minutes and assumed the pattern which would characterize its work for many years.³⁹

Thus ended the "priesthood-auxiliary movement" which for a decade had sought to combine weekly priesthood meetings with those of the Sunday School and MIA. Introducing the 1937 announcement, Elder John A. Widtsoe declared that the change was "in line with progress." He affirmed that:

The foundation of the Church . . . is its authoritative Priesthood. . . . The Priesthood gives life to the Church. . . . The progress of the Church depends upon the activity of the Priesthood. When the Priesthood is active the Church surges forward; when inactive, the Church creeps along.

Elder Widtsoe declared that the priesthood quorums must be examples to all other organizations. "Necessarily, if a man must choose between loyalty to his Priesthood quorum and some other Church

³⁷Presiding Bishopric Journal, 18 February 1935, 17 November 1936, 11 May and 22 September 1937.

³⁸Minutes of the Joint Committee of the Council of the Twelve and First Council of the Seventy, 5 October 1937, p. 107, Church Historical Department.

³⁹Council of the Twelve, circular letter, 28 October 1937.

organization however good, his duty is to the quorum." Elder Widtsoe believed that priesthood quorums must assume preeminence in all Church activities and so suggested the slogan "The Priesthood Quorum First."⁴⁰

Notice how Elder Widtsoe's language closely paralleled statements made when the program was inaugurated ten years earlier. This is a classic illustration of how specific programs and activities may change while basic principles and goals remain constant.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE "PRIESTHOOD-AUXILIARY MOVEMENT"

Although the "priesthood-auxiliary movement" as such lasted only ten years, its achievements have continued to influence Church organizations and activities. It focused attention on principles that would later be reemphasized with the implementation of priesthood correlation in the 1960s.

The General Authorities placed great stress on the primacy of the priesthood in Church organization and function. The auxiliaries' role as "helps" to the priesthood was reflected in the Sunday School's assuming responsibility for basic theological study and in the MIA's being described as the "activity arm" of the priesthood. The Church's first Melchizedek Priesthood handbook sought to strengthen quorums by defining their objectives, emphasizing the vital importance of activity and service, stressing a spirit of brotherhood, and by outlining a more effective organization.

The "priesthood-auxiliary movement" also encouraged a conscious effort at simplifying Church meetings and activities. General Authorities declared that there must be but one unified program serving any given group of Latter-day Saints. Specific consolidations that continued to benefit the Church included shifting the formerly separate weekly genealogy class to the MIA, merging the *Young Women's Journal* with the *Improvement Era*, and amalgamating the afternoon programs of the Religion Class and Primary. The "Aaronic Priesthood Correlation Plan" instituted monthly correlation meetings to coordinate the efforts of all organizations working with the youth. Unifying the age-groupings in these organizations further facilitated cooperation. In fact, the ideal was to have the same qualified people serving a given youth group in both priesthood and auxiliary capacities.

⁴⁰John A. Widtsoe, "The Priesthood Quorum Comes First," *Improvement Era* 40 (December 1937):760.

Not all these goals were achieved during the 1930s, but they were not forgotten during later decades. Many have now been attained. As Church leaders direct the unfolding of priesthood correlation, they can rely on experience gained during the relatively unknown yet significant "priesthood-auxiliary movement."

Notes and Comments

LYMAN SHERMAN—MAN OF GOD, WOULD-BE APOSTLE

Lyndon W. Cook

Anomalies in Church history are interesting and generally merit some attention. The story of Lyman Sherman seems to be a case in point. Sherman was chosen to fill a vacancy in the Quorum of Twelve Apostles but was never notified of his calling or ordained.

Lyman Royal Sherman, son of Elkanah Sherman and Asenath Hulbert, was born 22 May 1804, in Monkton, Addison County, Vermont.¹ As early as 1829 he moved to Pomfret, Chautauqua County, New York, where he married Delcena Didamia Johnson, 16 January 1829.² Sherman, as well as others of his wife's family, was converted to the Church in Pomfret by Elders Joseph B. Brackenbury and Edmund Durfee in January 1832.³ The Shermans moved to Kirtland, Ohio, probably in June 1833, with Mrs. Julia Johnson and family,

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¹"Family Group Sheet," microfilm, Brigham Young University Library. See also Dean C. Jessee, "The Kirtland Diary of Wilford Woodruff," *BYU Studies* 12 (Summer 1972):382. Joseph Fielding Smith's *Essentials in Church History* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), p. 587, has Sherman's birthplace as Salem, Massachusetts. Vital records of Salem do not contain any record of Sherman's birth there. (See *Vital Records of Salem, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849, vol. II—Births* [Salem: The Essex Institute, 1918].) Correspondence with the town clerk of Monkton, Vermont, also failed to establish Sherman's birthplace but did verify the marriage of his parents on 7 December 1802. (Mrs. C. Burritt, town clerk of Monkton, to Lyndon W. Cook, 8 March 1977.)

²Marriage date is found on "Family Group Sheet." The couple had six children. Delcena, who reportedly was a plural wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith, later married Almon W. Babbitt on 24 January 1846, and was sealed to Sherman the same day. She died in Utah on 21 October 1854. Sherman is listed as a head of family on the 1830 New York Census. The county clerk's office did not have any record of Sherman's owning land in Pomfret. (Chautauqua County clerk to Lyndon W. Cook, 17 November 1977.)

³Sherman and his mother-in-law, Julia Hills Johnson, were apparently baptized first. (See Benjamin F. Johnson, *My Life's Review* [Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing & Publishing Co., 1947], p. 12. See also Journal of Joel H. Johnson, typescript, BYU Library, p. 12.) Sherman's parents as well as others of his family were baptized in May of 1832 by Sylvester Smith and Gideon Carter. (See Journal of Gideon Carter, Church Archives, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.) Interestingly enough, both of Lyman Sherman's proselyting benefactors met untimely deaths. Brackenbury died in Pomfret in 1832 (shortly after baptizing members of the Johnson family), ostensibly from the "effects of poison secretly administered to him" by opposers. (See Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols., ed. B. H. Roberts [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970], 7:524; hereafter cited as *HC*.) Joel H. Johnson credited Brackenbury's death to "billious cholic" (see Johnson Journal, p. 12). Durfee was murdered by a mob at Green Plains, Illinois, 15 November 1845. (See *HC* 7:523–25.) A branch of the Church was organized in Pomfret. (See Journal of Zebedee Coltrin, May 1833 [p. 4], Church Archives.)

where they resided until 1838.⁴

In 1834, Sherman joined Zion's Camp, and upon his return from Missouri was ordained a president of the original Quorum of Seventy, 28 February 1835.⁵ He was released from this position in April 1837.⁶

Apparently an intimate friend of Joseph Smith, Sherman was one of the first to learn of the principle of plural marriage. Benjamin F. Johnson, his brother-in-law, noted: "Sherman, who was close to the Prophet, [learned in 1835] that the ancient order of Plural Marriage was again to be practiced by the Church."⁷

In April 1835, in a meeting called at Sherman's home in Kirtland, Ohio, for the purpose of giving patriarchal blessings to the members of the family, Church Patriarch Joseph Smith, Sr., told Lyman that he would help gather Israel and that since his father had passed away, "and thou hast no father, God shall be thy father and he shall comfort thee."⁸

The day after Christmas, 1835, Sherman approached the Prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland and said, "'I have been wrought upon to make known to you my feelings and desires, and was promised that I should have a revelation which should make known my duty.'"⁹ The Lord's promise was fulfilled to Sherman, for Joseph received a revelation for him that very hour.¹⁰ The revelation said in part:

Verily thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Lyman: Your sins are forgiven you, because you have obeyed my voice in coming up hither this morning to receive counsel of him whom I have appointed.

⁴See Johnson, *My Life's Review*, p. 15. Sherman owned land in Kirtland as early as 1835. (See "Deed Records, Geauga County, Ohio," Book 929, p. 366, microfilm copy in BYU Library.)

⁵See Joseph Young, *Organization of the Seventy* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Steam Printing Establishment, 1878), p. 4. See also HC 2:203. Benjamin F. Johnson remembered Sherman's assisting in the laying of the cornerstones of the Kirtland Temple in July 1833. (Johnson, *My Life's Review*, p. 16.) Sherman is not included, however, on George A. Smith's list. (See Journal History, 23 July 1833.)

⁶HC 2:476. Sometime after the Quorum of Seventy was organized, members of both the high priest's and seventy's quorums began arguing as to who held the greater office. When the discussion turned into jealous debate, the Prophet called the Seventy together for council. "After it was assembled he asked the newly-organized quorum if any of their number had been ordained to the High Priest's office, previous to their ordination as Seventies. . . . [Since five out of the seven presidents had previously been ordained high priests, Lyman Sherman being one,] the Prophet invited them to take their places in the High Priest's quorum again. . . . He thought that this was the best way to settle the difficulty and remove all feelings, without deciding the question as to which was the greatest" (Young, *Organization of the Seventy*, p. 5). Joseph Young places the date of this change in November 1835, not April 1837. (Ibid.) The latter date is correct. (See Seventy's Book A, p. 18, Church Archives.)

⁷Benjamin F. Johnson to George S. Gibbs, "An Interesting Letter," (n. p., 1911), p. 8.

⁸Mention of the April 1835 meeting as well as the patriarchal blessing to Lyman Sherman is found in the Journal of George W. Johnson, typescript, pp. 16-17, BYU Library. See also Patriarchal Blessing File in Church Archives.

⁹HC 2:345.

¹⁰Doctrine and Covenants, Section 108.

Therefore, let your soul be at rest concerning your spiritual standing. . . . And arise up and be more careful henceforth in observing your vows, which you have made and do make, and you shall be blessed with exceeding great blessings. . . . Therefore, strengthen thy brethren in all your conversation, in all your prayers, in all your exhortations, and in all your doings. And behold, and lo, I am with you to bless you and deliver you forever. Amen.¹¹

Shortly after receiving this revelation, Sherman participated with those of his quorum in several meetings in the Kirtland Temple in early 1836 wherein anointings and blessings were given to the brethren.¹² On 8 January 1837, he met with others in the Kirtland Temple to worship. After the sacrament had been administered, "Elder Sherman sung in the gift of tongues & proclaimed great & marvelous things while clothed upon by the power & spirit of God."¹³

On 1 October 1837, Lyman Sherman was called to replace Jared Carter as a member of the high council in Kirtland,¹⁴ where he served until at least mid-November of that year.¹⁵ He was also included as a charter member of the Kirtland Safety Society,¹⁶ but there is no record of his ever holding any stock in that institution.¹⁷

After the Prophet's flight to Missouri in early 1838, dissenters in Kirtland sought to use the printing office and materials to "bolster up a church organization opposed to the Prophet."¹⁸ In an attempt to curtail such action, the printing office was set fire and destroyed.¹⁹ While Church leaders in Missouri presumed this act of arson to have been perpetrated by the "Parrish party,"²⁰ it was Lyman Sherman who started the fire to thwart Joseph's enemies.²¹ He then moved to Missouri sometime prior to October 1838²² and was made a tempo-

¹¹The revelation was first published in the *Deseret News* on 10 July 1852.

¹²HC 2:352-428.

¹³Jessee, "Kirtland Diary of Wilford Woodruff," p. 382.

¹⁴"Kirtland Council Minute Book," p. 247, Church Archives (hereafter cited as KCMB). The KCMB records Sherman's being "Ordained an high priest and Councillor" on 2 October 1837 (ibid.). That he was ordained a high priest on this date must be an error.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 259.

¹⁶*Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 3 (March 1837):467.

¹⁷See Marvin S. Hill, C. Keith Rooker, and Larry T. Wimmer, "The Kirtland Economy Revisited: A Market Critique of Sectarian Economics," *BYU Studies* 17 (Summer 1977):466-70, where a listing of stockholders is found.

¹⁸Johnson, *My Life's Review*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰HC 3:11.

²¹Johnson, *My Life's Review*, pp. 29-30.

²²Benjamin F. Johnson, who arrived in Far West, Missouri, in October 1838, indicated that Sherman was already there. (See Johnson, *My Life's Review*, p. 35.) Sherman's fifth child was born in Far West, Missouri, 21 October 1838. See "Family Group Sheet." Available land records for Caldwell County do not reveal Sherman's owning any land in that county.

rary member of the high council in Far West on 13 December 1838.²³

Lyman Sherman's crowning call to become an apostle came while the Prophet and others were prisoners in Liberty Jail. On 16 January 1839, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Hyrum Smith wrote a letter to Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young instructing them to "get the Twelve together, [and] ordain such as have not been ordained."²⁴ George A. Smith was chosen to replace Thomas B. Marsh, and Sherman was to replace Orson Hyde.²⁵

Elder Smith learned of his call in late January 1839 from Don Carlos Smith, the Prophet's brother.²⁶ Lyman Sherman, however, was never notified. While both Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young knew of Sherman's appointment well before his death, they chose not to tell him. Although no clear explanation was given for not disclosing this highly important information, it appears to be related to the fact that Sherman was suffering from his final illness when Brigham and Heber learned of his call.²⁷

While he is not included with the Quorum of Twelve Apostles in any official listing of General Authorities of the Church, Lyman Royal Sherman is remembered for his faithfulness and testimony of the restored gospel. Benjamin F. Johnson said of Sherman: "He was a man of great integrity, a powerful preacher and by revelation was called to the Apostleship but died before receiving his ordination."²⁸ Lyman Sherman died in Far West, Missouri, in February 1839.²⁹

²³"Far West Record," p. 175, Church Archives. It is not known when Sherman left Kirtland. He was planning on being absent from Kirtland during the winter of 1837-38. (See KCMB, p. 249.)

²⁴Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Kimball Family, 1888), p. 238.

²⁵Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 23 October 1859, Church Archives.

²⁶George A. Smith, "My Journal," *The Instructor* 82 (March 1947):119.

²⁷Heber C. Kimball records in his journal: "On February 7th (1839) I accompanied Brother Brigham to Liberty to visit Joseph and the brethren in prison. We . . . stayed at Liberty over night. Next morning we were permitted to visit the prisoners . . . and returned during the day [February 8] to Far West. When we left there [Far West] Lyman Sherman was somewhat unwell. In a few days after our return he died. We did not notify him of his appointment" (Journal of Heber C. Kimball, microfilm of typescript). Wilford Woodruff, recording the substance of a meeting in February 1859, wrote: "Brother [Heber C.] Kimball said . . . Joseph named G. A. Smith to take the place of Thomas B. Marsh and Lyman Sherman was appointed to take the place of Orson Hyde but Brother Sherman was ~~taken~~ was very sick & died ~~in 3 days~~ shortly after. Brother G. A. said when he heard of Brother Sherman's death he thought his time would come soon. Brother Kimball said it was not the will of God for a man to take Brother Hyde's place" (Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 23 October 1859). Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith were ordained apostles on 26 April 1839. Orson Hyde, whom Sherman was to have replaced, was restored to his priesthood office in June 1839. (See Reed Durham, Jr., and Steve H. Heath, *Succession in the Church* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970], p. 43.)

²⁸Johnson, *My Life's Review*, p. 53.

²⁹Sherman's death date in Smith, *Essentials*, p. 587, is in error. Sherman's death probably occurred around 15 February 1839. Benjamin F. Johnson, who was absent from Far West, learned of Sherman's death by 1 March 1839. (See Johnson, *My Life's Review*, p. 55.)

Book Reviews

HART, EDWARD L. *Mormon in Motion: The Life and Journals of James H. Hart, 1825-1906, in England, France, and America*. Provo, Utah: Windsor Books, 1978. 313 pp. \$15.00.

Reviewed by Charles D. Tate, Jr., professor of English at Brigham Young University and editor of *BYU Studies*.

Mormon in Motion is most certainly a contribution to Mormon biography. It is a vivid account of James H. Hart, one of the early Saints who spent his life building the Kingdom. It is the second significant Mormon biography to appear in 1978.

But this book is different from the other significant biography, *Spencer W. Kimball*, in its accomplishment for Church members. This second biography is a successful study written in spite of a rather severe lack of materials. Where Ed and Andy Kimball had more materials than they could possibly use (plus a living subject to talk with), Ed Hart had only four small journals that covered but a small part of the life of his grandfather. Because this is the kind of problem many of us face in writing of our forebearers, *Mormon in Motion* demonstrates how it can be done successfully. Too many "biographies" simply print the available journals, with very little study, or interpretation, or editing; there is little attempt to set them in their milieu or to fill in the subject's life before and after the period the journals cover.

In *Mormon in Motion* Professor Hart has done an admirable job. Recognizing that the journals had to be the main part of his book, he has spent many years searching to gather everything available about his grandfather's life before and after the years covered by the journals. Even so, the gaps in information of the life of James H. Hart are significant, especially in the later years. Professor Hart sets an example in his decision to treat the materials by subject rather than by straight chronology. Some readers may find this treatment disconcerting, but, even so, what is important is the example and the success achieved; Professor Hart shows others how this common problem of incomplete information can be handled. His book was not dashed off in a couple of weeks before a family reunion but was a project of years of scholarly research and study. Though the major part of the manuscript won the First Prize Award in the Utah State Institute of Fine Arts competition for biography in 1973, it was

some five years later before Professor Hart felt the manuscript was suitable for publication.

Part II, the journals, is of course the best part of the book. Professor Hart has provided excellent explanatory notes throughout. When the journal entries are in French, translation is provided. But the real fascination of the journals is not simply informational; it is the presentation of James H. Hart, the real man, who came through trials of life more severe than most of us will ever face, and emerged with a steadfast faith that the Lord was just and would set all seeming injustices right. There are numerous incidents of his great faith and devotion. He had an absolute faith in the brethren; he truly sustained those who were placed over him. This is exemplified in his record of the difficulty he had with his mission president to whom he was first counsellor. This mission president was obviously in error and in fact was very rude to the Harts. It was a most difficult time, for James H. Hart was married at the time and his wife was expecting their first child. Yet, as he wrote about the conflicts, he maintained his position as a faithful Latter-day Saint, retaining his absolute faith in the brethren, remaining in his calling and serving the Lord even after his wife miscarried, most probably from the emotional complications of their situation. Totally trusting in the Lord's justice, Hart said after they had lost the baby, "All will be well" (p. 88). And it was. In time, he and his three wives had ten children.

Mormon in Motion presents James H. Hart as an exemplary representative of the Mormon pioneer of the last half of the nineteenth century, especially in his blend of practicality and spirituality. Hart was always ready to bear testimony, to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to baptize those who came believing. He himself had great faith. He believed in miracles and expected them. He often scolded his companions for not having more faith, for not anointing their sick, and for not healing them through the power of their faith and priesthood. But, at the same time, he was a man of great works who often insisted on reasonable and logical explanations for things that faith apparently did not explain.

Mormon in Motion builds testimony. One cannot read it without being affected by the life of James H. Hart, one who fought the good fight and won. His life inspires us all to fight harder, to sacrifice more willingly, and to build the Kingdom wherever we may be.

CANNING, RAY C. and BEVERLY BEETON, eds. *The Genteel Gentle—Letters of Elizabeth Cumming, 1857–1858*. Salt Lake City: Tanner Trust Fund, University of Utah Library, 1977. 111 pp. \$12.50.

Reviewed by Eugene E. Campbell, professor of history at Brigham Young University.

This handsome book, published in a limited edition, is number eight of the series, "Utah, The Mormons, and The West," which has included such valuable works as Elizabeth Wood Kane's *Twelve Mormon Homes* and Annie Clark Tanner's *A Mormon Mother*. These letters, eighteen in number, were written by Elizabeth Cumming, wife of Utah's first non-Mormon governor, during the time that she accompanied her husband, Alfred Cumming, and the elements of the U.S. army assigned to act as a *posse comitatus* to guarantee his acceptance by the Mormons as Brigham Young's successor in Utah. Three of the letters describe the trip from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Bridger; eleven were written from Camp Scott near burned-out Fort Bridger; and the remaining four give her impressions of Salt Lake City and the Mormons in the spring of 1858. Filled with interesting observations and details about the religion and people she encounters, Mrs. Cumming's letters provide a fresh view of the Utah Expedition. Her assertion that the winter months spent living in tents at Camp Scott were the "happiest and pleasantest months" of her life, while contemporary army diaries were filled with descriptions of the cold, miserable, boring—even desperate—time they were experiencing, probably tells more about her character than the actual conditions. Since her life to this point had not been unpleasant, one must conclude that here was a woman who enjoyed challenges and new adventures and who was able to see the bright side of a difficult situation. This buoyant attitude colors her descriptions of the landscape, her encounters with Indians, her attempts to entertain guests on holidays with limited supplies and facilities, and her observation of the Mormons and their accomplishments in Salt Lake Valley. Having both the time and the inclination to write detailed descriptions and observations, Elizabeth Cumming produced letters that are a valuable source of the woman's point of view.

Ever loyal to her husband, Alfred Cumming, Elizabeth in her letters portrays the new governor as the principal peacemaker and suggests that he risked his life when he chose to follow Thomas Kane's advice and enter Salt Lake City accompanied only by Kane and Mormon guards. She believed that her husband had accomplished "all alone" what the peace commissioners were sent to achieve, and she

has valid reasons for her position. Certainly Alfred Cumming's efforts to apply the laws of the country and yet mollify the Mormons and protect them in their constitutional rights in face of a bitter and embarrassed army is a human drama that needs to be publicized.

The wide-page format of the book permits the extensive notes to be printed in smaller type in a column paralleling the text of the letters rather than at the bottom of the page or at the end of the chapter. This device ties the notes more closely to the text and almost demands that the reader study them. Unfortunately, it detracts from getting the continuity of the letters and gives the reader the feeling that he is reading two different stories at the same time. Perhaps it would be best to read the entire letter first and then to study the notes and the letter in conjunction with each other.

The authors have written an excellent introduction, giving the background of Governor and Mrs. Cumming, and a survey of the Utah Expedition. They have also provided a substantial bibliography and index, as well as the copious notes based on such sources as Captain Gove's *Utah Expedition*, Lt. Marcy's *Army Life on the Border*, and the biography of Wm. Stowell, the captured Mormon soldier who supplied Mrs. Cumming with much firsthand information about the Mormons and their beliefs.

In summary, it is a beautiful book that should interest both the scholar and the history buff and is a must for anyone who teaches Utah history.